

Steel 721

Chapter 721 Drinking from Uroarbrunnr

Berengar gazed at Wyrd with a stoic expression on his face. The little girl's smile sent shivers down his spine. This was not the pleasant smile of a normal girl, but instead that of a supernatural being who wanted to devour his soul. If not for his boon of courage, he might have collapsed in the face of such a terrifying being.

Honorai was confused about everything that was happening. She was uneducated on matters of Germanic mythology and its various branches. She did not know what the World Tree was or its significance to the Germanic pantheon. Nor did she understand that this woman was the Norse equivalent of the Moirai.

As for Alexandros, he was too afraid to even move, and stayed within his mother's grasp, fearful of the little girl who was awfully reminiscent of his other mommy Adela. Though the woman he knew was far older, and more developed than this little girl.

The fact that this supernatural woman had proclaimed that Berengar was the cause of many headaches for her and her sisters meant that she was naturally hostile towards his existence. Despite the frightening gaze the young girl was giving him behind her blindfold, Berengar felt compelled to ask the questions within his mind.

"If you are a weaver of fate, and my existence causes an unbalance in this regard, why am I here? For what purpose was I reincarnated into this world? It appears to be a phenomenon unique to me, but none of the deities I have been in contact with have explained it."

The adolescent blind girl giggled when she heard this. Her brow was visibly raised as she questioned the sheer extent of Berengar's hubris.

"You think you are the only one? It is possible for most gods to bring a being from another timeline into this world. It is just rare, as it costs a considerable amount of power. You should be joyous, as the All father himself is the architect of your rebirth. Though by doing so, he has made himself weak."

This statement immediately confused Berengar. He did not know how much power the gods wielded as they seemed to play a background role in this world, nor how they gained their powers. He quickly inquired further about this matter.

"What are you saying? Why would he expend so much power just to bring me here?"

Wyrd smiled and approached Berengar while holding a bucket filled with the starry water in her hands. She quickly dipped a ladle into the mysterious water and shoved it into the man's face.

"I have no intention of sitting around for days on end and explaining to you the complexity of the gods and their machinations. If you want answers, you must seek them out yourself. I must warn you, such a path is a treacherous one, and you are not likely to survive. However, if you are hellbent on hunting down the gods and compelling them to answer your questions, I can give you a gift to help you on your journey."

However, I will warn you, out of all the poor souls who have found their way to the world tree and drank from the water of the cosmos, none have remained intact. If your mental strength is not strong enough to endure the truth of the universe, your mind will fracture, forcing you to become nothing more than a rambling madman. Do you honestly believe you can endure such a thing?"

Perhaps it was because of the boon of courage that Baduhenna had given him, or it was due to his personal ego. Whatever the reason, Berengar did not hesitate and immediately gulped down the whole contents of the ladle, shocking the little girl in the process. He was supposed to take a small sip, not drink the entire ladle!

In the next moment, Berengar's eyes rolled to the back of his head, and he collapsed to the floor, completely unconscious. Though it startled Wyrd at first, she quickly broke out into a fit of laughter as she gazed upon the poor state of the man.

"By the all-father! I can't believe it, he just drank the entire ladle! He's a goner for sure! What madness compelled him to do such a thing?"

The norn who took the appearance of a young Adela sighed heavily as she kneeled down and placed a flower in Berengar's ear. She shook her head as she muttered the words.

"Such a pity..."

Honoriam immediately cried out in fear as she saw what happened to her husband, and called out his name, hoping it would bring him back to the light.

"Berengar! Stay with me!"

This response caused Wyrd to sneer in disdain. The ancient weaver of fate had enough of this foreign whore who entered her lands unannounced. She quickly rolled up her sleeves as she stood in front of Honoriam with a cruel smile on her face.

"You know, I may tolerate his existence because he is chosen by the all-father, but you I really can't stand. Just what right do you have to sit here in front of me and listen to my words? Since your man is basically dead, how about I send you to join him in the afterlife? Don't worry, I have the power to ensure you both end up in the same place!"

Wyrd was just about to punch through the Honoriam's chest and rip out her heart when a firm grip latched onto her dainty forearm, preventing her from doing so. The girl gazed over in shock as she witnessed a peculiar sight.

Berengar was glaring at her fiercely. His sapphire blue eyes were glowing like neon lights, and it was clear to her that even his wounded eye had temporarily regained sight. The ancient norn could only stare in disbelief as she uttered her thoughts aloud.

"Impossible..."

Berengar smirked when he saw the surprised look on Wyrd's face, making a bold proclamation as he did so.

"I have seen a thousand lifetimes, and the potential realities that I can create. In none of them are you capable of laying your hands on my woman!"

After saying this, Berengar threw the norn across the grove and into a nearby tree, nearly knocking her unconscious. Wyrd could only gaze up at the juiced up human with a genuine sense of fright in her heart. Honoria used this opportunity to hug onto her husband and check on his condition.

"Berengar? Are you alright?"

Berengar smiled as he gazed into the fog above, as if he was staring into the universe itself. He had a confident smile on his face as he said his thoughts aloud.

"I know what I must do now..."

As Berengar said this his eyes faded back to their natural state, and he collapsed into Honoria's arms, creating some difficulty for the woman as she tried to keep the man standing. Though it may have seemed like Berengar was unconscious for a matter of seconds when he initially drank the mysterious water. In reality, his life rapidly flashed before his eyes, showing him all the potential fates he could create in this world by being a transmigrator.

Unfortunately for him, he could learn nothing about any other potential transmigrators in this world. Even if their fates were intertwined with his own, they were not revealed to him. Thus, he was entirely unaware of Itami on the other side of the world. Still, he had gained some inkling about the gods' plan for him, and where to find them.

Wyrd struggled to rise from her spot while blood dripped from her mouth. The impact was too much for her. Though she wasn't severely wounded, her pride had definitely been torn apart. She gazed at the exhausted state Berengar was in and cursed him.

"How the hell did you survive that? Not even I can drink so much water from my well without consequences. Yet here you stand, perfectly unphased! A human's mind can't possibly endure such a thing. Just what in Niflheim are you?"

This statement confused Berengar, but he ultimately mocked the woman as he approached her, and put his boot on her pretty little head.

"I suggest you and your sisters let my men go now. I have gotten what I came here for, and I no longer have a use for you."

In response to this, Wyrd broke out into laughter as she swiped Berengar's leg off her head with an agitated expression on her pretty little face.

"Look at you struggling to stand! Admit it, you no longer have the juice to harm me. You are in no position to make demands of me, Berengar von Kufstein! However, since I don't want to entangle myself in your affairs any longer, I will be benevolent and let your men go this time. You and your followers are free to exit the forest, but should you return to these lands, my sisters and I will be far more hostile!"

Berengar chuckled and patted Wyrd's golden hair like he was toying with a young Adela. He wore the same warm smile on his face like when he used to have when he dealt with the girl when she was younger. As far as he was concerned, Wyrd was just throwing a tantrum, and thus, he coddled the girl.

"Oh, I am sure you will be furious the next time I visit. Don't worry, I know where you live now and remain unafraid. You have not seen the last of me!"

Wyrd's pale cheeks reddened as she heard this, and her face contorted into a pout. She immediately swiped Berengar's hand away while cursing him once more.

"Piss off!"

Berengar only laughed as he regrouped with his wife and son, before leading them out of the forest where they rendezvoused with their soldiers, who had dazed expressions on their faces. When he was out of sight, the other two norn sisters appeared in front of Wyrd. They too wore blindfolds. However, their appearances were of beautiful women that Berengar would not recognize. Skuld was the first to ask the question that she and her other sister Verdandi both had in mind.

"How was he?"

Wyrd averted her gaze and blushed when asked such a question. She knew she could hide nothing from her sisters and muttered under her breath in a voice so low she hoped they didn't hear it.

"He wasn't entirely bad..."

Verdandi, who took the form of a busty mature beauty, grabbed hold of Wyrd and stuffed her head into her substantial bosom while mocking her.

"Oh, our sweet little Wyrd has a crush!"

Wyrd immediately fought out of her sister's embrace and stormed off in a fit of rage, echoing the same sentiment she said to Berengar before he left.

"Piss off!"

Chapter 722 Arriving in Copenhagen

Having met completed his objective in the mysterious forest. Berengar regrouped with his soldiers, who completely lacked any memory of their supernatural encounter. As far as they were aware, they were guarding the woods while their Kaiser went to explore it. From their perspective, only a few minutes had passed since Berengar and his family entered.

After gathering his party, Berengar was quick to give the orders to head to the coast, where they could set sail for Copenhagen. The rest of the journey to the capital of the Kalmar Union was smooth sailing, with Berengar and his host reaching the city with no issues.

When Berengar encountered the Kalmar King, he was still dressed in his military style attire, whereas the man in question was garbed in fashion similar to what was popular among the German nobility. It became obvious to Berengar that Germany had heavily influenced its allies in culture, especially regarding fashion.

King Alvar had grown larger since the last time he saw the man, evidently he was enjoying his wealthy lifestyle, which gained from trade with the German Empire. The man was quick to greet his German counterpart with a wide smile on his face.

"Kaiser Berengar von Kufstein, it has been too long since we last met. The last time I saw you, you had just crowned yourself as an emperor, something which greatly upset my Catholic subjects."

Berengar smiled when he saw the man while shaking his hand.

"King Alvar, you seem to be doing well for yourself..."

The intent behind Berengar's words was clear, and they immediately caused King Alvar's eldest daughter to giggle, which immediately caught the Kaiser's attention. King Alvar's daughter had grown since the last time he saw her, then again, it had been close to five years since he last visited Copenhagen.

She was no longer a girl who could not even catch Berengar's interest but was a full grown woman, with a hefty bosom, and a pretty face. The young woman had long platinum blonde hair, pale skin, and ice-blue eyes. If someone were to use the term "Nordic Woman" then this girl would be the first thing that came to mind.

The lustful gaze Berengar gave the young woman immediately caused his wife Honoria to frown as she jabbed the man in the ribs with her elbow, causing him to behave himself. King Alvar took notice of this and immediately smiled fiendishly as he introduced his daughter to his ally from the South.

"Ingrid, you remember Berengar? The last time the two of you met, he was a Duke. Now he is an Emperor."

The girl smiled pleasantly at Berengar. Truth be told, he did not even remember the girl's name, or her face. His last visit to the Kalmar Union was brief, and at the time he was more concerned about establishing a non-aggression pact with the major power to the North than he was getting to know the man's family. King Alvar immediately noticed Honoria's glare and welcomed the woman, while allowing Berengar to speak to his daughter.

"Princess Honoria, you are as beautiful as ever. And who is this little guy?"

Alvar greeted Alexandros, who stood firmly by his mother's side. The woman sighed in defeat as she introduced her son.

"This little stowaway is my son, Alexandros. He's in big trouble for his actions, so don't treat him too kindly."

It surprised Alvar to see that the kid sneaked onto his parents' journey, but he still smiled nonetheless and introduced himself.

"I am King Alvar, ruler of the Kalmar Union. It is a pleasure to meet you, Prince Alexandros."

While this was going on, Berengar was speaking with Ingrid with an awkward expression on his face.

"Ingrid was it? You would have to forgive me. My memory is poor, and I don't recall ever speaking to you before this moment."

The young blonde woman smiled as she responded to Berengar's claims.

"That is alright, I was pretty shy as a child, and never spoke with my father's guests. I would be surprised if you did remember me..."

Berengar was about to compliment the woman's appearance when Honoria interrupted. Naturally, she did not use the term she referred to Berengar as in private, as that would be woefully inappropriate.

"Dear, it has been a long journey. Can we please cut the pleasantries short and go to our room?"

Berengar felt dismayed that he did not get a chance to properly mingle with the beautiful nordic woman and apologized to Alvar for Honoria's rudeness.

"I apologize for my wife's remarks. The journey was cumbersome to her, and she desires to get some decent sleep for once."

Alvar suspected this would be the case. He did not know why Berengar had wanted to take the long route to Copenhagen, but the man was adamant, and he knew it was unwise to offend the Kaiser. Thus, he simply smiled as he nodded his head and ordered his servants to take Berengar and his party to their quarters.

"No need to apologize, I assure you. Your rooms have been waiting for you for some time now. If you will follow my servants, they will take you to your allotted quarters. I hope you enjoy your stay here in Copenhagen."

Berengar thanked the man before running off with his wife and child. As for Alvar, he stayed behind with his daughter and only spoke to her after the Kaiser was out of earshot.

"So... How did it go?"

Ingrid sighed heavily before shaking her head with a disappointing expression on her face.

"I fear that I did not get to say enough for him to form a proper opinion of me. His wife seems adamant about getting in the way. I don't know if it will be easy to secure the alone time I need to be with intimate with the man."

Alvar frowned when he heard this, before patting his daughter on the back.

"The German Empire grows stronger with each passing year. If we wish to deter them from making us a subordinate state like Lombardy, then we will need to secure an alliance with marriage. The fact remains that we are his only ally who does not have a member of our royal family married to him. This needs to be remedied. I know this is a bit much for you, but do your best to seduce the man. It should not be hard to do. From what I hear, he is quite the womanizer."

Ingrid scoffed when she heard this last part before rebuking her father for his words.

"And that is supposed to make me feel better about all of this?"

In response to this, Alvar wore a bitter expression on his face before hugging his daughter. He understood that she did not want to marry a man who had several wives. After all, she did not agree with that aspect of the German Reformation. However, she was the only one who could fulfill the role, and thus Alvar reminded her of this.

"I know you don't want this, Ingrid, but your sisters are too young to marry, and if we don't secure an engagement with the man while he is here, we will probably miss the opportunity altogether. This is more than just your future we are talking about."

It is the future of the Kalmar Union. Like it or not, the balance of power in Europe is tied to Berengar von Kufstein and his dynasty. Once they defeat the Catholic Church, Germany will become the new hegemon

in the region. If we do not secure a long-term alliance with the man, then we will fall behind the other kingdoms."

Ingrid could only sigh as she heard this. What her father said was true, and if she was the sacrificial lamb to ensure her family's power for generations to come, then so be it. After all, she wouldn't want to force this fate on her little sisters. Thus, she could only nod her head in agreement with her father's words.

"I will do my best, but I won't make any promises...."

This was the best Alvar was going to get from his daughter, and thus he patted her on the head. He had other matters of importance to tend to, like setting up a feast for Berengar. He was aware of the culinary culture that had risen in Austria and spread across the reich.

The Kalmar union had fallen behind Germany in this regard, like most other aspects of society, and because of this, Alvar was fearful that the Kaiser might be upset with the meal he prepared. Thus, the man had spared no expense in hiring the best chefs he could find to prepare the tastiest dishes his Kingdom had to offer.

The future of his Empire depended on this diplomatic visit. Either Denmark would rule over the Kalmar Union as a true imperial power for years to come, or the Union would collapse. It all relied on the influence of the German Empire over the other Scandinavian Kingdoms. Thus, while Berengar was settling into his quarters with his family, the Royal Family of Denmark schemed to add their eldest daughter to the list of their guest's lawful wives.

Chapter 723 Discussing Marriage in Copenhagen

After relaxing in the quarters that were prepared for them, Berengar and Honoria made their way to the dining hall, where they were summoned to share a meal with King Alvar and his family. Alexandros was being punished for his actions, and thus he was grounded during the duration of their stay in Copenhagen. He was not even allowed to attend the meals.

As for Berengar, he was once more treated as an esteemed guest, and was given a prominent place at the table. Interestingly enough, Alvar had ensured that his daughter Ingrid was sitting by his side. Berengar felt comfortable having two pristine beauties sitting next to him. However, Honoria was visibly vexed by this seating arrangement.

Berengar quickly noticed that there was a distinctive lack of Catholic priests at the table. In his previous visit, the Kalmar Union was split between their own variant of reformists and the Catholic Church. Today, it appeared that every member of the clergy who was sitting at the table as a part of the host were all distinctive members of the Nordic Reformation. Curious about this change in the status quo, Berengar immediately voiced his thoughts aloud.

"Where are all the Catholics? The last time I checked, Catholicism still had a major influence in the Kalmar Union..."

Before King Alvar could speak about this, Ingrid beat him to the punch. With a pleasant smile on her face, she shared the changes that the Kalmar Union had gone through over the past few years.

"That was a long time ago. Since then, the Nordic Reformation has taken prominence in both stately affairs and in the lives of the public. The people have become increasingly aware of the corruption in the

Catholic Church, and their lies about reformist movements. Because of this, the overwhelming majority of people in our Kingdom are now Reformists.

You could say that the influence you had on Germany has spread to the Nordic kingdoms. The primary difference between the Nordic Reformation and its German Counterpart is we do not believe in polygamy. Such a thing is considered antiquated and outright sinful."

Berengar scoffed when he heard this, it was clear that Ingrid was a devout Nordic Reformist who considered the German Reformation's stance on polygamy to be blasphemous. Which Berengar quickly countered with his own arguments.

"Monogamy is a Roman ideal, not a christian one. Though the book of Corinthians does state that a man should have one wife, and a wife should have one husband, this is in reference to the leaders of the church, not the average man. Since I am not a Roman, I see no reason to abide by their ancient laws and traditions. Do not forget that our ancestors engaged in polygamy, at least at the highest level of society.

A thousand years ago, you would be but one of many wives of a powerful chieftain or monarch. Instead, you now preach monogamy as if you are a proper roman subject, and use an obscure verse as your defense. Such a thing is pitiful, you should embrace your Germanic heritage and take the most exceptional man you can find as your husband, even if he already has another wife."

Ingrid wore a cunning smile on her lips as she used this statement that Berengar had made as a gateway to proposition him.

"Tell me, oh great Kaiser of Germany, are you implying that I should become your wife? After all, who is more exceptional than you, a man who rose from the position of a lowly baron, to that of an emperor through his own force of will? A man undefeated in battle, and more handsome than any other man I have laid eyes upon."

While Berengar smirked at this response, Honoria was livid. She had stopped eating the moment she heard this and was about to make a harsh remark of her own when Berengar interrupted her.

"Though such a union would be beneficial to both our realms, I think it is a bit redundant, since my son Kristoffer is already engaged to a member of your house. As per German law, I am only able to lawfully marry one more woman, and I'm saving it for someone special.

Not that your offer isn't enticing. After all, you are a beautiful young woman who clearly has an educated mind. However, I fear as if our views on the world are too opposed, and we would only be bickering with one another should I invite you into my house. I'm afraid you must settle for a man who is lesser than myself."

Though Ingrid was internally pleased at being rejected by a womanizer like Berengar, Alvar did not share the same sentiment. In his eyes, it was highly unlikely that Kristoffer would come to the throne. Rumors of Hans' superior intellect had made their way to Copenhagen, and the man felt that it was only a matter of time before the child of Linde was named the crown prince.

When that happened, his alliance with the von Kufstein Household would be less powerful than those of Germany's other allies. It was because of this that the man felt like his Kingdom and those of the union would become a client state of the Reich like the Kingdom of Lombardy had become. If he could not

marry Ingrid to Berengar, then he only had one other option to go with to secure the future of his people.

"If you're uninterested in Ingrid, then perhaps your son Hans would be? I hear you have engaged him to the Princess of Bohemia, and Poland. What about my daughter Ingrid?"

Berengar gazed upon the curvy figure of Ingrid, and her hefty bosom, and nodded his head in silence. There was no doubt in Berengar's mind that his son Hans would grow up with a fetish for older women who had big tits.

By the time the boy came of age, Ingrid would be twenty-five, so she would not be too old to the point where she was rapidly losing her fertility. Honoria witnessed Berengar's lecherous gaze and nudged his ribs with her elbows while scolding him for his actions.

"Dear, you're being rude..."

Berengar immediately looked up and saw the flustered appearance on Ingrid's face. He immediately became defensive as he tried to explain his actions.

"Don't mind me, I'm just thinking. My eyes tend to wander when I space out. Anyway... It would not be implausible to marry the girl to my eldest son when he comes of age. I'm sure he would be thrilled to have such a beautiful older woman as his bride. However, these matters would have to be discussed in great detail."

The shamelessness of the Kaiser was on full display for every guest at the table. Even Honoria felt a bit embarrassed for him. Still, not a single soul dared to speak of this. Instead, they happily enjoyed their meals, while Alvar discussed the idea of engaging his sixteen-year-old daughter to Berengar's seven-year-old son.

Ingrid was actually relieved when it came to the idea of marrying Hans. Even though it would be a Polygamous marriage, she could use her age and wisdom to manipulate the boy into being the man she desired. Or so she thought.

She did not know that Hans had inherited his father's brilliance, and his mother's cunning. By the time he was of age, he would be a master manipulator, the likes the young woman had never encountered. It would be her who was following the whims and wishes of Hans.

The conversation between Berengar and Alvar continued for some time, before they were finally able to come to a proper agreement. They even signed the engagement into ink to protect Alvar's interests. Berengar did not mind this deal.

Ingrid was a beautiful young woman who, in a few years, would definitely be his son's type. He was sure Hans would be happy with this arrangement, but more importantly, this engagement strengthened his alliance with the Kalmar Union.

Berengar understood Alvar's concerns about marrying one of his granddaughter's to Kristoffer. Unlike Hans, Kristoffer was a normal child, and though in time he might be able to contend for the throne, at the moment it was looking to everyone with a modicum amount of intelligence that Hans would inevitably be proclaimed the crown Prince.

By marrying his eldest daughter to Hans, who was almost guaranteed to succeed Berengar later in life, then he would establish much stronger ties to the Reich and the von Kufstein dynasty. In doing so, preventing his fears from becoming a client state, rather than a long-term ally.

Thus, the diplomatic visit to Copenhagen was actually productive, and resulted in a good deal for both sides. Berengar ensured the loyalty and cooperation of his northern neighbors, and the Kalmar Union gained a much more secure political alliance with Berengar and his dynasty.

Ultimately, Hans was the real winner of these negotiations. By the time he reached the age of marriage, Ingrid would be the ideal wife for the young man. After all, he was clearly developing an interest in older women with large breasts.

Berengar and his host would stay in Copenhagen for a week before making their way back to the Reich. When they returned, Alexandros would be punished severely for his actions.

Chapter 724 Returning from Copenhagen

Upon returning home, Berengar was greeted by his family. The looks on Adela's and Linde's face when they found out Alexandros had stowaway'd on Berengar's journey were priceless. During the Kaiser's absence, his wives were anxious as can be, with Linde sending out a nationwide search for the missing Prince. It turned out that the boy had snuck into Berengar's supplies and joined his parents on their journey.

It was one thing to be lectured by Berengar, but to be scolded by all five of the boy's mothers at the same time, Alexandros swore he would never again in his life sneak out of the Palace. Naturally, the boy was grounded and confined to his room for the next six months, as Berengar had promised. He was only able to leave for classes and social events, such as family meals.

As for the Kaiser, he did not have the slightest bit of time to relax as his busty redheaded bride immediately sequestered him into his office, interrogating him about what he had seen in the sacred grove in Jutland.

Berengar pulled out three chalices of wine and handed one to Linde before telling the woman about his journey. Honoria was present for the meeting, but she sat by silently waiting for her husband to tell his tale.

"Well, we found the location you marked for us. I must say, I was surprised when I entered it..."

Berengar continued to tell everything he saw and witnessed, excluding the details about his glimpse into the fate of himself and his loved ones. After hearing everything, Linde nodded her pretty little head as if she had come to some form of understanding about these supernatural beings. After confirming everything Berengar said was true with Honoria, Linde had but one question in her mind.

"What did you see? After drinking the strange water, I mean."

Berengar's brain instantly hurt as his mind was flooded with the memories of what he saw that day. As a result, he took a heavy swig from his beverage in an attempt to dull his headache with alcohol before trying his best to explain everything to his wife.

"I saw a thousand lifetimes flash past my eyes. During my vision, I witnessed endless pathways that can change the world to my liking, or end terribly. It's hard to remember everything, even with a memory as great as mine. I feel as if the memories of my fate are rapidly fleeing from my brain."

Linde instantly understood Berengar's condition. Though the man had a photographic memory, and had seen a thousand potential realities that he could create in life. Such memories were not easy for a mortal man to access. After the effects of the starry liquid had ended, it was as if a dam was erected in his mind to prevent the memories from flooding his brain and drowning his consciousness.

She was hesitant to ask the question on her mind, knowing this was a potentially dangerous situation. Ultimately, it was Honoria who posed the question, as Linde feared too much for Berengar's safety.

"What did you see about these so-called gods and their plans for you?"

Berengar was visibly in pain as he tried to recall his memories of the fate he had witnessed. He forced himself to drink more alcohol in an attempt to alleviate his growing headache. In doing so, he was able to endure long enough to get an answer to his wife's question.

"It's just one pantheon that is looking after me... The great goddess of Teotihuacan took an interest in me because she was bored and lonely. The other pantheons seem to be competing with each other in the background of this world.

I don't know much about my fate, but I think the Germanic pantheon, specifically Odin, has chosen me to disrupt the stranglehold that the Abrahamic god has over the western world. What his exact goals are I do not know, but the Germanic pantheon appears to be pleased with my progress, hence why they are more open to showing themselves around me.

In my vision, I saw a few timelines where I encountered gods from other pantheons, and they were quick to strike me down. Apparently, summoning a being from another reality is rare, and those who are not within the Germanic pantheon will see me as a threat to their influence in the world."

Upon seeing that Berengar's headache had subsided for the time being, Linde sighed in relief and asked the next most important question on her mind.

"Did you see any paths towards meeting any other of these gods who are friendly to you? I don't want to have to wait my entire life knowing we can't be together in the afterlife!"

Berengar searched his memories once more, but the pain quickly blocked his ability to do so. He fell to his knees, gripped his head before vehemently shaking his head.

"I don't know. It's too much for me to handle right now."

Linde immediately responded to this by rushing to Berengar's side and placing his head in her lap. It was clear her question had forced him to overdo things and caused him great pain. She bit her lips in agony over the suffering she had caused her husband. After resting in the woman's lap for a bit, Berengar recovered his clarity and began to speak of an alternative option.

"I may not know how to find another deity at the moment, but I am sure that Wyrđ has the ability to release the claim that the Abrahamic god has over your soul. If I ask politely enough, perhaps she can help us."

Linde immediately smiled when she heard this. Finally, there was a chance to end the chain that haunted her day and night. She planned to immediately prepare a journey to Jutland when Honoria rained on her parade.

"Didn't Wyrd say the next time you visited, she and her sisters would be far more hostile? No offense, but I don't think it's a good idea to go back to the Sacred grove. That girl was frightening..."

Linde pouted when she heard this, before questioning Berengar, who was still resting on her lap pillow.

"Is this true? Why would you mention it then?"

Berengar chuckled when he saw Linde's worry and stroked her pretty cheeks before commenting on Wyrd and her self-proclaimed hostility.

"I think Wyrd isn't honest with herself. For a thousand plus year old weaver of fate, she behaves like a child. She was just upset that I bested her expectations. I'm sure if she's given enough time to simmer down, she will allow us back to the world tree."

Linde immediately glared at Honoria when she heard this. Why must the girl mislead her during such a crucial conversation? Honoria noticed this fearsome gaze and responded by looking towards Berengar with a pleading expression. The man could only chuckle as he tried to dissipate Linde's fury by burying his head in her mighty bosom.

"I missed these titties..."

Linde immediately flushed with embarrassment. Though they were in private, she was not expecting the man to be so shameless. However, she quickly lost her previous state of fury, and smiled lovingly as she stroked Berengar's golden hair while clutching him to her breast. Honoria gazed at the scene and felt a tad bit jealous. Not only was Linde getting all the attention from Berengar, but she also wanted to nuzzle her head against Linde's rack.

She immediately responded with this two-sided jealousy by grabbing Berengar's head and stuffing it into her own chest. Ultimately, her jealousy about the attention Linde was getting from Berengar won over her envy of the man. Linde scowled when her little pet had stolen her man right from the clutches of her bosom, and responded by taking the man back while scolding Honoria's shameless actions.

"You thieving bitch! Berengar is mine, now and forever!"

Honoria did not back down and quickly pressed her own chest against Berengar's head. The end result was the man using both of the women's sizeable breasts as pillows, with a wide grin on his face. A brief thought flowed through Berengar's mind as he enjoyed himself.

"This is bliss."

Linde and Honoria were glaring at each other, and fighting over his affections. Honoria stood up to Linde for once in her life, possibly because she had Berengar by her side to defend her.

"He is not just yours, he is all of ours! Your possessiveness of Berengar is your worst trait!"

Linde scoffed when she heard this before speaking her own thoughts about her obsessive nature.

"I'm not possessive. I'm overly affectionate. Besides, Master loves that aspect of my character!"

Berengar noticed the two women were about to get into a catfight over him, and he decided to end things peacefully.

"Ladies, ladies, you're both pretty! Now we can either fight with one another, or get along together? Which will it be?"

The two women broke out into laughter as they realized how childish they were being. Wasn't the answer to this question obvious? Thus, Berengar was given a King's welcome by two of his brides after returning home.

Chapter 725 Broken Survivor

King Aubry sat upon his throne as his sister Sibilla ranted to him about the current state of affairs for their Kingdom.

"I can't believe they betrayed you like this! Was this not a crusade to end the Saracen's control over the holy land? How could they do this? I am certain the Kaiser is behind this!"

Sibilla held an instinctive grudge towards the German Empire and its ruler due to the abuse she had suffered during her sentence to a labor camp. She felt she was unjustly accused and convicted. Though she had been a loose woman in her past, she never thought she would have to sell herself into prostitution in order to survive at any point in her life.

Aubry, on the other hand, knew his sister was not in her right mind, especially when misfortunes befell their household. Thus, it did not take him long to correct his sister's mindset.

"Are you daft? Why would the Crusader armies listen to the Kaiser? He is their mortal enemy. I was betrayed because an opportunity presented itself, and my rivals took advantage of it. I never should have sent my troops to the front lines.

It was my own carelessness, believing that these men had a single shred of honor. Who cares why it happened? What matters is how we proceed. My armies are destroyed, and I will have to empty out the fields to recruit more. Something I'm not willing to do.

Luckily, my enemies are more focused on their rivals in the middle east and Germany to dare advance into my lands. However, once they finally turn their sights on France, it will end poorly for the both of us. We have no allies, but we sure have a whole hell of a lot of enemies!"

Sibilla was flustered by her brother's thorough rebuking over her argument, but she did not dare yo continue insisting that Berengar was responsible for their current predicament. She wanted revenge after what had been done to her, but she lacked the means to achieve it. Every agent she had dispatched into the Reich had been discovered and executed for acts of espionage. Nobody left in her employment was willing to take such a massive risk.

All the woman could do was sulk, and grit her teeth in rage. However, the moment her brother, the King, made his next suggestion, she nearly strangled him.

"We have no choice... If the Catholic world wishes to make enemies of France, then we must side with their enemies. If I had known I would be forced to such a position, In ever would have attempted to

seduce Berengar. The man clearly will not tolerate my advances, and was offended by yours as well. I must settle this dispute with Germany if our dynasty wishes to have a chance of survival."

The rage that Sibilla felt when she heard that her brother wanted to bow down to her tormentor could be seen in her eyes. She rapidly approached Aubry and slapped him across his pretty face.

"You incompetent faggot! Don't you dare go begging the Kaiser for protection? I swear to God, if you do such a shameful thing, I will do everything in my power to disrupt your negotiations! That bastard took a year away from my life... The things I had to do to survive... They are unspeakable!"

Aubry was not aware to the fullest extent of what Sibilla had suffered through, after all, she never spoke about it. Even to her brother, who was her closest confidant. However, he knew whatever she had endured must have been brutal, as she was not the same woman he once admired.

Upon returning to France, Sibilla had become paranoid, short-tempered, manic, and anxious. There was no telling what words would set her off, and cause her to lash out at her subordinates or her King like a wild beast. Aubry could not help but sigh, and forced the woman to talk about her troubles.

"Sibilla, what exactly happened to you during your imprisonment? You are not the same woman you once were. Now you are more like a loose collection of character defects than a person. You are broken, and I can't help put you back together if you won't speak about your problems!"

Sibilla wanted to gouge her brother's eyes out in that moment, however all she could do was break out into tears and cry into his arms, while screaming hostilities against him.

"I hate you! You sent me there! None of this ever would have happened if you had just succeeded in your seduction like you always do! This is your fault!"

Aubry felt pain deep within his chest upon hearing his sister shove the blame and responsibility onto him. It was true that the only reason Sibilla was dispatched to Kufstein was because he had failed to seduce the Kaiser. Perhaps in another life, if he was not so slutty, he could have succeeded in his attempts. After all, it appeared that Berengar was utterly disgusted by "loose women."

Sibilla sobbed for some time before uttering something cohesive.

"1247 men... I was ravaged by 1247 different men during my imprisonment. I had to. There were not enough supplies to go around. It was the only way I could survive. More often than not, multiple men at once. I was nothing but a sack of flesh for the enjoyment of the male prisoners... And this is when I was not engaging in backbreaking labor!"

Aubry was instantly stunned by this revelation. He did not know that his sister had resorted to prostitution in order to survive. The feminine King could not fathom how one woman could sleep with so many different men. He could not help but ask about his sister about the details.

"How did you survive?"

Sibilla sniffled as she wiped the tears from her eyes before stating the complete truth.

"Alcohol and drugs helped. The inmate who ran the prison from the inside was also responsible for smuggling drugs and alcohol into the camp. If I fucked three guys in one day, I could make enough scrip

to buy a hot meal at night, along with a glass of fortified wine, and a hit of cannabis. The more guys I fucked, the more drugs and alcohol I could get my hands on."

Aubry could hardly believe his ears. Then again, this part was not surprising. As Sibilla had been reliant on cannabis imports from the Reich in order to get to sleep at night. She would smoke so much that she would just pass out on her bed and wake up from her daze twelve hours later. She was hardly productive these days, partially because of her mental state, but also because she had become addicted to drugs and alcohol.

Ultimately, Aubry sighed and nodded his head. If Sibilla was so terrified of the Reich, and what it had done to her, then he would not have an easy time convincing her to submit to the Kaiser. If that was the case, he needed allies who could deter the English and Burgundians from invading his lands.

However, this was easier said than done, as his enemies had already established alliances with all the other Catholic Kingdoms. As for those few realms that did not prescribe to the Catholic Faith they had aligned with Germany.

As it stood, there were only two paths to follow: align with the Reich, or ally with the Church. Since the Catholic Kingdoms had betrayed him in Jerusalem, they were no longer an option. Which meant he would either have to convince his sister to accept the idea of aligning with Germany, or rely on themselves for national defense.

King Aubry could only sigh heavily in defeat. If he could not align with either major faction in Europe, then he would have to become a wholly self-sufficient state. This was not an easy task, but if he could dispatch agents to the Reich and learn some of their older technology through espionage, then he might have a fighting chance.

Aubry kissed his sister's head as she cried into his chest and revealed everything she had endured during her time in a German Labor Camp. The more he heard, the more enraged he was at the Kaiser for treating his sister so poorly. It was simply inhumane. Where were his Christian ethics? He would ultimately write a strongly worded letter to Berengar about the ordeal Sibilla had gone through.

Naturally, Berengar was unaware of the corruption in the prison system. Nor the severe mistreatment of female prisoners. When Berengar had designed the Labor Camps as a system of punishment for hardened criminals, he had done so under the assumption that female prisoners would be few and far between.

There were certain protections established for the few female prisoners who existed in Germany, but the staff who were in charge of the camps often ignored these guidelines. After all, very little funding went towards the camps. The purpose behind the German prison system was not rehabilitation but punishment and deterrence. They were expected to be so brutal that any man who was released would think twice before engaging in crime once more.

When Berengar received Aubry's letter, he would thoroughly investigate the Labor Camps, and would be forced to draft laws to establish better protections for female inmates. The news of what Sibilla had suffered through made the Kaiser's skin crawl. As for the guards who facilitated the prostitution ring inside the camps, they would be tried and sentenced themselves.

Chapter 726 Procuring a Little Brother

Vászoly Noemi was a young girl who had immigrated to the German Empire from her homeland of Hungary due to the efforts of her elder brother. Despite being apart from her family, she was not alone, as she had a guardian assigned to her, who was a young woman.

As part of the immigration requirements, this woman was seeking was now seeking a German husband, and had made some success in the matter. After all, despite being an illiterate peasant, she was a foreign beauty, who spoke the German tongue, and had many of the qualities that German men found attractive in a woman.

This guardian was actually a young peasant woman by the name of Dudás Lilla who served as a maid to the noble born Noemi. As a result she was good at cooking, cleaning, sewing, and any number of talents that a wife was supposed to have according to the German ideal.

The girl's brother specifically selected Lilla to be her guardian because she looked after the young girl as if she were her own child. As a result, Lilla was provided with a monthly stipend from Noemi's family to look after the girl full time as they both pursued a life in the Reich.

Though it was a considerable sum, it was only enough to provide a middle class life for the two of them. Even so, they lived in a state of luxury and convenience that even the upper echelon of nobility within their home country would envy.

At night, after putting the girl to bed, Lilla would go out to an upscale tavern and search for a wealthy husband. This is where she met her current lover, who was a wealthy German entrepreneur who was keeping her as a mistress for the time being. The man was even considering proposing to Lilla and taking her as one of his wives.

As for the girl Noemi, she attended classes in the day, and learned valuable skills such as sewing, knitting, cleaning, cooking, etc. in the afternoon. She had lived in Germany for months, but only recently was able to attend classes at the prestigious Kufstein Royal Academy. Which was a public institution sponsored by the crown for raising the next generation of gifted children.

The Royal Academy had three distinct campuses based on the age groups of the children. Naturally, as a thirteen-year-old girl, Noemi would be attending the Middle School. Where she just so happened to find herself in the same class as the eldest Prince of the Empire.

She was curious about why such a young child was in such an advanced course. However, despite the age difference, she thought that Prince Hans was a little cutie, even though he had a standoffish temperament. Though Noemi treasured her old brother, she always secretly desired a cute little brother of her own. However, she was unfortunately not blessed with such a thing. When she first set her eyes on Hans, it was as if he was the physical manifestation of the perfect little brother she had always envisioned in her mind.

Hans was intelligent, yet cold to strangers. However, he seemed to be very pleasant to those who he was accustomed to, such as his young fiancée Veronika, who visited the school often, just to bring the boy lunch. The reason Veronika was not present in the Royal Academy was that she attended an all girl's school that was equal in prestige.

Noemi had been silently watching Hans for weeks now and, after formulating a proper evaluation of the boy and his character, she desired to approach him. She had come up with the perfect plan to do so.

Thus, when lunch period arrived, Noemi was quick to approach Hans before he could escape. She had a warm smile on her face as she cornered the boy at his desk.

"Hello, your majesty..."

Hans was still looking at his textbook when he heard this, and was about to respond with the words "piss off" until he gazed up and saw the girl smiling at him. If there was one student Hans was aware of in his class, it was Noemi. Why was that? It was because she had started developing earlier than the other girls, and already had a decent size bust despite her age. She also had a pretty face and a warm demeanor.

In fact, all the boys in the school were pining after her, but generally kept their distance as an unspoken agreement. Noemi was blissfully unaware of this fact, and had taken the opportunity to approach a boy of her own accord. Still, the boy she approached was the last person that the enviable youth would have expected. When Hans gazed upon Noemi's pretty face, his vicious words immediately caught in his throat, and he switched to a more friendly demeanor, albeit slightly so.

"What do you want?"

Noemi gazed upon the young boy with her shining violet eyes before swiping her fiery red bangs out of her face. She wore a deliberately bashful expression as she posed the question that dominated her mind.

"Well, you see... This morning I got carried away in the kitchen and ended up making two sandwiches by mistake. I was wondering if you wanted one?"

Hans stared at the girl with scrutiny. There was no way she could have made two sandwiches by mistake. Even if she had enough left over material for a second one, why would she pack it for lunch, unless she had an explicit intent?

The boy's mind worked differently than others, and he immediately suspected a hidden plot by the girl. Still, He could see the envy in the eyes of the boys in his class as Noemi approached him, and decided purely out of spite that he would agree to her request.

"Sure, I suppose I can spare some time."

Upon hearing this, Noemi practically jumped with joy as she expressed her happiness.

"Great, let's go to the cafeteria!"

With this said, the young girl began dragging Hans away from his desk by the hand. She led him to the lockers, where her sandwich was contained neatly in a mini cooler. After grabbing hold of her lunch, she led the boy to the cafeteria, where the two of them sat at Hans's normal table.

Noemi quickly handed one of the sandwiches over to Hans with a smile on her face. She had worked hard preparing the food. Having observed the boy and his lunches for weeks on end, she noticed he seemed to enjoy a tuna and onion sandwich that was made on a sourdough roll.

Hans only ate these sandwiches on Tuesdays, and today was Thursday, which meant one of his mothers had packed a casserole that he enjoyed less than the tuna sandwich. When Hans saw the girl had prepared him his second favorite sandwich, his favorite being a tuna melt, he immediately question her

intentions. It became obvious in this moment that she had been observing his behavior for some time, and was playing an angle. He just did not know what.

While the boy Prince was scrutinizing Noemi's actions, she immediately dug into the food with a pleasant smile on her face. She seemed to also enjoy the sandwich, thus putting Hans at ease. Though he could not say for certain whether the food was poisoned, it was a risk he was willing to take. Thus, he took a bite of the sandwich and found it to be pleasing.

He had to admit, the girl definitely had culinary talent. It was not easy to prepare tuna the way Hans most enjoyed. However, the girl's attempt was similar in composition to his mother's. Noemi noticed that Hans had a bit of tuna stuck on his mouth, and immediately pushed the boundaries of their newfound relationship.

"Oh, Hans, let me get that for you!"

Not only did she refer to him by his first name, but she also wiped the tuna off of his mouth with her finger, before eating it herself. The act of which caught Hans off guard. However, he did not despise the treatment he was receiving, and thus made no comment. Upon seeing that the boy was not the talkative type, Naomi pressed him to speak up by directly asking how he felt about her sandwich.

"Do you like it?"

Hans nodded his head and spoke the words on his mind as he devoured the sandwich with gusto.

"It's good, but mommy's tuna is better..."

This reaction caused Noemi to pout, as she lectured the boy on his rude remarks.

"Hans, You do know it is not polite to tell a girl who spent her precious time making a sandwich for you that her cooking is not as good as another woman's, right?"

This statement immediately stumped Hans, since when was he on such good terms with this girl? Still, she was pretty, and treated him well. Thus, he could only bow his head and apologize. Or so he was about to until the famous words of his father entered his mind.

"Hans, you may be a boy now, but one day you will be a man, and there is one piece of advice regarding women that I must give you, so that when the time comes, you can retain your dignity as a man. That advice is simply that you should never apologize to a woman. If you do it once, she will expect you to do it every time she thinks you're wrong. If she gets mad and leaves you, so be it. For men like us, there are plenty of women out there who would be happy to be with you."

Upon remembering this quote from his father, Hans immediately straightened his back and wore a proud expression as he revealed his thoughts on the matter.

"I was merely saying the truth. If it offends you, then we don't need to talk about this any further..."

This response caused Noemi to pout. This was not the answer she was expecting. Shouldn't this child behave like a cute little brother and apologize to his big sister for his misdeeds? She realized if she wanted Hans to be her precious little brother, then she needed to educate him thoroughly on manners. Thus the two of them spent the entire meal period passive aggressively arguing about manners and etiquette. A topic of which Hans found to be dreadfully boring.

Chapter 727 Building a Mythos

Berengar was sitting in his office with a stern expression on his handsome visage. Standing across from him was his wife, Linde, who was dressed in her intelligence uniform. The busty redheaded beauty was his director of intelligence, and she had received a radiotelegraph from the Byzantine Empire. She handed the communication over to her husband before summarizing its contents.

"Emperor Vetrans requests further military aid in the form of material support. He has lost control over large swaths of the Holy Land. His armies that can be deployed to the region have suffered heavy losses, and the Timurids are in a worse position.

He is afraid that the Crusaders will march south and attack our little project in Egypt. Egypt, as you know, is a considerable source of income for the Eastern Empire, and they are afraid of losing it. Thus, they are using our canal as a means to inspire us to help them."

Berengar read over the communication that was sent between the two Empires and gazed upon the intelligence report constructed by his agents in the field. It would appear that the Byzantine and Timurid Empire had suffered severe losses. More than Berengar had estimated.

These casualties were mostly the result of several tactical blunders on the part of the Strategos who were deployed the region. If Palladius had been tasked with leading the troops, the war would have been over already. Yet he was the man trusted with protecting the Balkans, and thus he could not move his forces further east.

The report also stated that the Byzantine Emperor would be calling for the heads of his generals who had failed so miserably to defend Jerusalem. As expected, the moment the Byzantine and Timurid forces lost the city, the Crusaders butchered its inhabitants. Only the catholic denizens were spared from the sword of the invaders.

The immense loss of life from this conflict, the damage done to the Byzantine and Timurid armies, and the turmoil in the Byzantine court had created the necessary chaos that Berengar was expecting. Thus, he sighed heavily before inquiring further about the political situation of his allies.

"What news do you have of the Dove faction? Have they made any moves to negotiate peaceful terms with the Papacy?"

Linde wore a smug smile on her pretty face as she handed over another document to the main. It was an intelligence dossier on the dove faction, which was led by the first prince of the Byzantine Empire, a young man named Quintus. She quickly summarized its contents in the easiest way to explain.

"The doves have caused quite the chaotic scene in the Byzantine Court. As the war progresses further into turmoil, they seek to end it via a peaceful negotiation. Prince Quintus has been very vocal about reaching a solution that the Catholics, Orthodox, and Muslims can all agree upon. He states this war is a result of your reckless actions, and that they must sign another treaty with the Catholic World.

However, such views are unpopular among the Timurids who seek to avenge their losses. If the Byzantine Empire were to sue for peace, all of your work to achieve peace between the Byzantines and Saracens would go to waste. How should we proceed?"

Berengar thought about this question for a while, before deciding on how to deal with the middle-eastern crisis. After several moments of deliberation, he voiced his conclusion aloud with a hint of pride in his voice.

"Use our agents who are embedded in Constantinople to work alongside Quintus in search of a peaceful solution to the crisis in the Holy Land. At the same time use our spies in the papacy to influence the Pope into making a horrific treaty that would cause the Byzantine Empire to suffer dearly.

Make sure these negotiations end in a way that heavily favors the crusaders and penalizes the Byzantine-Timurid alliance. I want Vetransis to know just how incompetent his pacifistic son is, especially within the field he supposedly specializes in.

Once Vetransis realizes that both of his sons are garbage, he will be open to the idea of placing Alexandros on the throne. Alexandros will become the light in the eyes of a nation filled with despair."

This remark slightly surprised Linde. She did not expect Berengar wanted the Byzantine Empire to plunge into the depths of despair. Such a thing would be difficult to achieve, but Berengar had long since formulated a plan for how to accomplish this. Thus, he continued on with his speech.

"I want you to secretly provide military aid to the Catholic forces, leak to them the knowledge of rifling, so that their infantry will be on par with the Byzantines. You can also sell off some of our black powder reserve through an unofficial channel to the crusader armies. Once the Crusaders are confident in their means to fully field firearms, they will easily take over the Holy Land and parts of Anatolia.

The Byzantine and Timurids will suffer heavy losses and will be forced to the negotiating table. Where they will accept whatever terms the Catholics give them. I want this conflict to end bloody. After the Catholics have won the war, our agents will influence the papacy, to negotiate a peace, that sees large sections of Byzantine and Timurid territory annexed by the Church and split into so-called crusader kingdoms. As part of the treaty, the Byzantines and Timurids will be forced to pay a large sum of gold, and will have to limit their army. This humiliation will drive a form of resentment towards the ruling dynasty and the Catholic World.

I want Alexandros to not only be the Emperor of the Romans, but the savior who restored their Empire to its former glory. I want him to end the Palaiologos dynasty's control over the Empire and forge his own. A cadet branch of both of our houses, the Palaiologos-Kufstein Dynasty. Naturally, Alexandros will have Germany's full support in these endeavors.

It may take years for the resentment of the Roman people to boil to a point that they demand Vetransis' replacement, but when the time comes, Alexandros will be ready to assume his role as the new emperor of the East."

Linde gazed in astonishment at her husband and the lengths of her machinations. She did not know that her husband wanted to forge a mythos behind his son to ensure that he was admired by future generations, much like he had done to Germany. She always assumed that Berengar just wanted Alexandros on the throne of Byzantium as a puppet.

Truth be told, the treaty of Versailles inspired Berengar in how to properly punish a nation in defeat. Despite reviling said treaty in his past life and seeing it as the cause of the Second World War, he knew

he needed to break the Byzantine people's spirit in order to make his son with Honoria venerated for centuries beyond his death.

Who would be the Hero to rise in a time of darkness and restore the Byzantine Empire to its previous heights? Why, the son of Berengar von Kufstein, of course. The father of Germany and world hegemon would foster two children who would become legendary figures in their own right. That was the legacy Berengar wanted to leave behind.

Naturally, nobody would know about Germany's involvement in the defeat of their allies, or their mistreatment caused by the abhorrent treaty. As far as the world was concerned, Germany would continue to provide military support to their allies via means of weapons and training until the end of the war.

Linde gazed upon her husband as if she no longer knew the man she was married to. To think that his machinations were beyond her exceptional understanding of his character. It surprised her that there was still more to this man's character that even she couldn't see through.

Such a thought compelled her to learn more about the man she loved, until she knew everything there was to know about him, something she had previously thought she already accomplished. A seductive smile formed itself upon the woman's pretty lips as she cocked her head to the side and spoke to the man sitting confidently in front of her.

"Master?"

Berengar's gaze shifted to the woman's odd behavior as he questioned her intentions.

"What is it?"

Linde quickly lifted the skirt of her intelligence uniform to reveal her pantyhose and thong, which were drenched in her juices. With a lust filled gaze in her sky-blue eyes, she revealed her thoughts to the man.

"I'm dreadfully wet right now..."

In response to this, Berengar smiled and rose from his seat, before walking over the woman and grabbing hold of her shoulders as he whispered in her ears.

"I think I might have a cure for what ails you."

After saying this, Berengar and Linde engaged in the throes of passion for the next hour, before sending off a variety of communications that would ultimately end the war in the middle east in Berengar's favor.

Chapter 728 The Grand Arena of Kufstein

The morning sun shone through the windows of the Kaiser's office and glanced off the back of his leather chair. Sitting in front of him was none other than his wife Adela, who had an excited smile on her face.

She had spent a long time working with the nation's best architects to come up with her newest idea of cultural unity. Adela placed the blueprints onto the table and handed them over to Berengar, who looked over them for a few minutes before questioning his wife's motives.

"You want to build an arena? Not only is this stadium larger than the ancient Roman colosseum, but it is also more opulent. Just what madness compelled you to design such a thing? Do you have any idea how much this will cost to construct? Why on earth would we need such a thing?"

The arena in question was designed to seat seventy-five thousand people. The bold, new architectural design was unlike anything Berengar had introduced previously. If the Kaiser had to put a label on the design, it was eerily similar to the Berlin olympistadion from his past life, with one major difference. It was a fully enclosed arena with a giant dome on top.

Adela was proud of the design that she had helped come up with and gazed upon her husband as if she was looking at a fool. Perhaps he had too little coffee this morning and was still drowsy. She sighed heavily before outlining her reasoning for making such a large request.

"Berengar, you are aware that the sports you have introduced at a national level are growing in popularity at a shocking rate, right? No holds barred fighting, in particular, has a large following among your people, and there are several professional leagues in existence. At the moment, these fighters have small venues to compete in, and it is simply not enough to accommodate all the fans!

I suggest that we build this stadium as a way to show our support for sports, and bring the various small fight leagues together to build one national league. We can even create smaller feeder leagues out of the lesser fighters out of there. Then once this stadium is completed, we can host national level tournaments, and championship events where we will sell tickets to those who want to watch.

With a national league, we can print the results in the paper, and use it as a means to foster camaraderie through the various german states through a common interest. People all over the reich will be able to display their love of our martial culture!"

Berengar had to admit, the girl made a persuasive argument. Though it would cost a considerable sum to establish the Arena, it was only a matter of time before someone came up with the idea. Why wouldn't the crown take the chance to personally profit from it? Thus, Berengar let out a heavy sigh as he agreed to the request.

"Alright, but it's coming out of our own treasury. Also, look for investors. I don't want to bear the sole cost of the construction of this damn thing."

Adela had a wide smile on her face as she hugged her man and kissed him on the cheek before praising him for his generosity.

"You're the best!"

Berengar brushed off the compliments as he sent the girl on her way. He then proceeded to thoroughly look over the reports he had gathered in the various fight leagues. In years past Berengar had introduced combat sports such as wrestling, boxing, kickboxing, and submission grappling. However, no holds barred fighting was the most popular sport of all. He had even given the sport an official name which was kampf or struggle.

Over the years, the sport took off like wildfire, and many of its fighters had been improving upon the basic techniques that Berengar taught them. Though the fighters were nowhere near the caliber of those professionals from his past life, they were rapidly improving their skills.

Many of these techniques were being taught to the German youth in the cadet corps, thus fostering an entirely new generation of talent for the sport. In Berengar's mind, a man who did not know how to fight was no man at all. Thus, he had emphasized martial training at a young age for the boys of Germany.

The firearms, and hand to hand combat training that was taught in the German cadet corps, was a large part of Berengar's plan to foster a martial society, the other major component being the popularity of combat sports. His own son supposedly had high marks in the physical aspects of the Cadet Corps training. This was unsurprising, as Hans had a head start over other boys his age, being trained in martial arts, and shooting at the age of five.

Berengar sat back and sighed as he drank from his coffee. Perhaps building such a monumental stadium in Kufstein would be a good idea after all. Still, he shivered at the expense. While he was overlooking the forms necessary to approve the construction of such a thing his wife, Yasmin entered the room with her daughter Zara in her arms.

Months had passed since the little girl was born, and she was growing at a rapid rate. Berengar smiled and got up from his seat to greet his wife and daughter. First by kissing the infant girl on the forehead, and then by kissing his wife on the lips. He was excited to see Yasmin, as he had not spent a considerable amount of time with the woman lately.

"Sweetheart, what can I help you with?"

Berengar was overly pleasant with Yasmin. Around her, he lost much of his domineering personality and instead behaved like a kindhearted husband and father. For whatever reason, the woman had such a unique effect on him, possibly because she was older by a few years, and far more mature than his other wives, who still acted like teenage girls in many ways.

Yasmin smiled when she saw Berengar approach them, and greeted him with a proper hug and kiss, before responding to his question.

"Husband, it is good to see you. I was just wondering if you had time to help our son Ghazi with some things. He is still young, and it is difficult for me to teach him how to behave like a proper ruler."

Berengar chuckled when he heard how much effort Yasmin put into making sure her son did not turn out like her now deceased idiot brother. Berengar brought Yasmin deeper into his office before sitting down and responding to her concerns.

"Relax dear, he's still nothing more than a pup. He has plenty of time to grow into a proper man. Let him enjoy his childhood when he can. Instead, you should leave matters of state to me. After all, I am the one fighting the war in Iberia."

Yasmin smirked smugly at her husband before chastising him for his words.

"You're fighting the war in Iberia? Last I checked, you were here in Kufstein delegating responsibility of the theater to your Generals."

Berengar feigned offense at this remark as he teased the woman for her blatant honesty.

"You wound me madame, if I could I would be kicking down doors in Spain, and dragging rebels from their homes with a rifle in hand. Alas, I cannot. I'm far too important for such grunt work."

Yasmin giggled when she heard this. Berengar always had a way of making her laugh, even if others might find him particularly funny. For whatever reason, she found the idea of a one eyed emperor kicking down doors and fighting rebels in Iberia to be humorous. As she thought about this absurd idea, she realized she had not investigated how the conflict was going and was quick to inquire about it.

"How fares my broth- I mean my son's troops..."

Berengar could tell that Yasmin had still yet to fully adjust to the idea that Hasan was dead, and her own son was now the Sultan. He grabbed hold of her hand and gave her some good news.

"Well, you will be happy to know that the conflict is settling down. With the introduction of shotguns, our troops are far more efficient at removing rebels. As for the Granadan Army, it is modernizing quickly, and growing in numbers. That's about the extent of the good news, though. The presence of German troops in the region and the Muslim minority rule are two enormous powder kegs.

Every time we wipe out one rebel cell, two more pop up in its place. If I can't find a way to bring the catholic Spaniards to accept the rule of our son, I'm going to have to resort to some inhumane tactics."

This line of thinking disturbed Yasmin, from the look on Berengar's face, even he doubted whether he should actually commit to such cruelty, she could not help but ask what horrible idea he had in mind.

"What is it that has you so concerned? You normally don't look so grim when talking about war."

Berengar could not deny such a statement. What he was planning was less of war and more of ethnic cleansing. He stood up from his seat with a grim expression on his face and looked out the window at the peaceful metropolis below. He spoke in a tyrannical voice as he explained his plans to force the Spanish population into submission.

"If the Spanish do not accept the rule of my son, then I will be forced to use chemical weapons. I can not keep sending young men to their deaths in a foreign land. At this rate, it is a conflict that Germany will be tied to for decades.

So, if the Spanish and Portuguese rebels do not lay down their arms and subject themselves to the rule of the Sultan, I will be left with no choice but to shell the city of Madrid with chemical weapons. Once every man, woman and child in the city are dead, I will use it as a threat. Continue to resist and you shall suffer the same fate. I'd like to see how many catholics are willing to take up arms and resist the Sultan's rule, knowing that by a simple command, their cities can become a wasteland completely devoid of life."

The thought that such powerful weapons existed horrified Yasmin. She knew little of chemistry, but was aware that Berengar's weapons were already terrifying, and she did not doubt the existence of weapons that could wipe out all life in a city. She now understood why the man was hesitant to take such action.

The reality was, Berengar was completely unwilling to lose Iberia. One could easily chalk it up to the sunk cost fallacy. He had spent too much effort, too many resources, and too many lives to unite Iberia under his authority to give up now.

The Kaiser refused to allow Iberia to turn into his Afghanistan. If he had to purge every Catholic from Iberia, then he would do so. He was a man determined to win his wars by any means necessary, and the Catholics could not resist his rule if they were all dead.

Yasmin could see the determination in Berengar's eyes and could only sigh in defeat before saying the words in her mind.

"I hope it doesn't come to that..."

Berengar nodded his head in agreement before speaking his thoughts on the matter.

"So do I..."

Chapter 729 Dreams of the Past Part II

Mizuno Ai sat in the library with a glum expression on her face. She was seated at the table where she and a peculiar young man usually sat across from one another. It had been two weeks since she met the arrogant bastard, and yet he still had not given her his name.

While it may be true that she also didn't volunteer such information, the man seemed to have a leg up on her as he somehow learned of her identity. Meanwhile, everyone she spoke to about the strange young man who reads alone in the library responded with the same comment.

"Who?"

She figured that today would be the day where she finally learned the man's name. Except he was nowhere to be found. This caused her to be quite troubled. Why was she troubled? That was a question even she did not know. Since when was she the type to get hung up on some asshole? At the moment, she was certain that she felt bitter towards the man, as he was the first person in her entire life who did not recognize her brilliance.

Inspired by Julian's hard work ethic, Ai had gone to great lengths to keep up with the man. In terms of completing school work ahead of time, receiving high marks in physical activities, and gaining knowledge from the books in the library. The one area she could proudly say she was ahead of him in was social life. Aside from the mandatory Cadet activities, Julian seemed to have no social life whatsoever.

Was she stalking the man? Not yet, primarily because she still didn't know his identity. However, she could surmise as much, because everyone she spoke to didn't have the slightest clue who he might be. If they did recognize who she was speaking about, they would only know him by the moniker "that loner in the library". However, nobody really knew his name or schedule.

Clearly, the teachers would know his identity, but she felt asking the faculty about who this guy was would possibly cause suspicion of fraternization. Thus, she was left to investigate this matter by herself. As she was thinking about such things, the man in question appeared before her with a stack of books in his hands. He promptly sat down across from her, without even paying the girl the slightest bit of attention.

He had grown accustomed to this thorn in his side, and tried to interact with her as little as possible. However, this had gotten the adverse reaction he desired. For whatever reason, this girl became more

interested in him and thus wasted more of his time. Thus, it was no surprise when she got upset over the fact that he ignored her existence.

"Hello? I'm sitting right here. Aren't you going to greet me properly?"

Julian had yet to even open a book and yet the nuisance was pestering him already. He sighed heavily as he grabbed the top book and opened it before chastising the girl for interrupting him.

"I'm dreadfully busy. We can exchange pleasantries later..."

Despite being treated so coldly, Ai's glum expression had disappeared and she now had a smile on her face. Julian thought this was peculiar, and immediately made an inappropriate comment, seemingly unaware that it was probably a question he shouldn't ask a woman he hardly knows.

"Why are you smiling? Are you perhaps a masochist? That would explain a lot... Please, whatever fantasies you may be having about me, keep them to yourself..."

The smile on the pretty Japanese girl's face immediately soured when she heard this remark. Smiling? Who was smiling? She certainly wasn't! She immediately harrumphed and crossed her arms, before opening a book of her own. Though she snuck a few glances from the edge of her book to see how the man reacted. His stoic expression only further enraged the woman. Thus, she decided to interrupt his precious reading time as payback.

"What was your name again? I forgot..."

Julian sneered when he heard this. Such a trick might work on your average troglodyte, but to a man of his intellect, he could clearly remember never giving this nuisance a name, and thus he responded with a smug expression on his face.

"How can you forget something which you never learned to begin with?"

This response only further outraged the young woman as she glared at the man sitting across from her before chastising him for his cruelty.

"Are you seriously not going to tell me your name? We've known each other for two weeks now!"

Julian merely responded with indifference to this question.

"Why would a stallion reveal its name to the fly that pesters it?"

Ai looked at Julian with shock as the man shamelessly said this. Did he seriously just compare himself to a stallion? No wait, what was that about a fly? Oh, he was going to get it now! Her brow was thoroughly furrowed with rage as she mocked the man for his analogy.

"You consider yourself a stallion? What a joke. I bet you are still a virgin!"

Julian did not even look up from his book as he properly responded to this insult.

"A virgin stallion is still a stallion. Why do you care how many women I have had intercourse with? Are you perhaps propositioning me? I'll pass. I have no interest in loose women."

Ai immediately blushed as she heard this response. How shameless was this man? Did he seriously just call her loose? She had lost all reason and immediately stood up and scolded the man for insulting her purity.

"I'm not loose! I'll have you know I am still a pure maiden!"

Julian finally reacted as he looked up from his book in surprise. This girl was the definition of "he who lives in a glass house should not cast stones." However, more importantly, her outburst had drawn unwanted attention. Julian was not the kind of man who enjoyed being the center of attention and immediately tried to placate the woman as he scolded her for her unruly behavior.

"Ahem. You should really take notice of your surroundings before you make such a bold statement..."

Ai immediately remembered she was in the library and looked around to see that all eyes were gazing at her and Julian. It shocked even the librarian that she had openly said such a thing. Ai immediately sank into her seat with a depressed gaze.

She realized she had made a huge mistake by letting this man rile her up like that. She wanted to commit seppuku in that moment. Seeing that the woman was not in the greatest mindset, Julian sighed before attempting to comfort the woman with a single word.

"Julian..."

Ai immediately snapped out of her funk and gazed at Julian with a curious gaze. She didn't quite hear what he said, and quickly asked for clarification.

"I'm sorry, what was that..."

Julian had an awkward expression on his face as he repeated what he had said.

"My name is Julian..."

Ai repeated the name a couple of times beneath her breath before wearing a pretty smile.

"It's nice to meet you Julian! My name is Ai!"

The cute expression on the girl's face caused Julian's heart to skip a beat, which instantly unnerved him. He was not accustomed to feeling emotions, or at least not positive ones. Since he did not know how to react to this new and alien feeling, he reacted by burying his head in his books and focusing on his studies.

Ai saw this response, despite Julian's best attempts to hide it and found it to be cute. Though the man was perfectly average in appearance, and an arrogant ass to boot. It was endearing to see him have such a reserved side to his otherwise foul character.

After thinking this, Itami woke up from her dream in a cold sweat. She immediately slammed her head on her pillow and pouted as she remembered what she had dreamt of very clearly. She screamed her thoughts into her pillow, which was thankfully muffled.

"Why am I so hung up on a dead guy?"

If her subordinates had known she was having such difficulties, they would probably use it as a chance to question her sanity and attempt another takeover. She did not understand why she was having such vivid dreams of her old memories from her past life. However, thinking back upon how many opportunities she had given Julian to go out with her, only for him to ignore the signals, instantly drove the woman mad.

Even if it was against the rules, she desperately wanted to be intimate with the man. Yet he had never taken notice of her feelings, hell she doubted if the dense fool ever thought of her as a friend. In fact, he had more than once stated he had no friends.

What did he mean he didn't have any friends? You don't get invited out to another university on your spring break by someone you knew in high school unless you were friends! Wait a second. There was something more important to be upset about. He had her as his friend the whole time! Gods, that aspect of his character was frustrating.

Upon realizing that there was no way she was going to get any sleep, Itami rose from her futon and prepared herself for a visit to her hot spring. She needed to sort out her thoughts before she could get any work done, and there was no better way to achieve that than a nice soak.

Chapter 730 Business is Booming

On the island once known as Cuba in Berengar's life, the colony of Lindstadt was booming with business. A large stone fort was erected on the coast, which housed the Mercenaries of the Gunther Merchant company. These men acted as the primary security force in the region.

Outside of this star fortress was a fully developed town which consisted of roughly 3,000 German residents. This town was the Colony of Lindstadt, which had formed in the months since the Gunther Merchant Company first arrived in this part of the world. Coincidentally, this town was built in the same location that Havana was built in the Kaiser's past life.

Beyond the borders of the township were vast plantations which utilized the native population of the island as its laborers. These plantations were the Gunther Merchant Company's newest enterprise, and would soon produce vast yields of Coffee Beans, Sugar Cane, and Cotton.

Currently, the German Empire relied on imports from foreign nations in order to meet the demands of these three industries. However, Gunther's plan was to grow them in the colonies and create a local and trusted brand of these products. After all, the Gunther Brand was well renowned across the Reich as being a high-quality product for a decent price.

Henrick had been tasked by his father, Gunther, to lead this expedition, and had worked long and hard over the past few months to establish a stable colony. Interestingly enough, this colony had become the gateway between Lindeheim and Adelheim, connecting the southern colonies with New Vienna via an extensive shipping network.

This shipping network made Lindstadt a central hub for explorers and privateers chartered by the Crown to rest their weary heads after a long voyage at sea. Though the number of German immigrants to the colonies was less than fifty thousand in total, they had created their own local, unique cultural aspects depending on the environment they found themselves in.

Lindstadt had developed its own unique culture that was different from anything across the Reich. It had become a den of vice, and hedonism where fortunes could be won or lost in a day. Why was this? It was because during the initial stages of establishing the colony, Henrick had lost a considerable sum to his mercenaries in a card game. After realizing how many visitors were partaking in the small gambling dens, he built the first ever Casino/Resort in the middle of the colony.

It was by no means a skyscraper, like those one would find in Berengar's past life, but it was noticeable enough that one could see the mighty building from the sea. This Casino was called "the Gilded Princess" inspired by the beauty of the German Princess Henrietta. Who was an object of Henrick's desire.

Currently, Henrick was overseeing operations of the Casino on the main floor, watching as men primarily from the Baltic, and Balkan portions of the Reich gambled away their hard earned coin in the Casino he had established.

He had personally abstained from playing cards. After all, he usually lost more than he won. However, that did not mean he could not enjoy the environment. Of course, if he knew about the grandeur of casinos in the Kaiser's past life, he would be depressed with how poor his personal casino was in comparison. The man noticed that business was booming, and because of that, he had a wide smile on his face. However, in the next moment, his mood soured as one of his subordinates quickly approached him.

"Henrick, sir! Your father is here!"

This news shocked Henrick. He had received no word that his father would be visiting the colony, so why was he suddenly in Lindstadt? He immediately followed the subordinate up the stairs and into the suite, where Gunther was sitting on a leather-bound sofa. The man had a sneer on his face as he gazed out the window and into the developing colony. Henrick immediately kicked the servant out and shut the door behind him as he greeted his father.

"Father, I was not expecting your visit! Why did you not send word in advance?"

Gunther scoffed as he heard this before voicing his displeasure with his son.

"What is this? When I sent you here to the New World, it was to establish an agricultural colony, and yet all I see is a den of vice, and hedonism! Prostitution, Gambling, Narcotics, and enough booze to drown the sea. The amount of rum you are producing in your distilleries is shocking. Who the hell is working the fields, if all the citizens are busying throwing away their money in your gambling dens?"

His father's criticism shocked Henrick. He did not expect the man to care so much about such frivolous details. He quickly defended his actions with a stern expression on his face.

"You sent me here to make a profit, and the businesses I have established here in Lindstadt would be producing an astronomical sum if the entire Reich knew of the New World's existence! As for the fields, they are being worked by the natives. It is a non-issue!"

Gunther was displeased with what he had witnessed for multiple reasons. Chief among them was the colony was named after the Second Empress, but it was a den of sin. How would that reflect a woman

that Gunther deeply admired? He quickly pulled out a bottle of locally produced rum that was on the counter and poured himself a drink before scolding his son.

"Either you cease your decadent enterprises, or you change the name of your colony. I will not have you tarnishing Linde's name, or her reputation with your little den of vice here in the New World. As far as profits are concerned, there are more important things. For example, you are aware that prostitution is outlawed in the Reich?"

Henrick wore a smug smile on his face as he countered his father's point while conceding to his request.

"Fine, I will rename the colony, but I will be keeping the name for the Island. I don't want to confuse the sailors who come here. As far as the laws of Prostitution go, that is only in concern to German citizens engaging in the trade. As you may have witnessed, all of my girls are natives or, in rare cases, immigrants. Therefore, I am not breaking any laws."

Gunther merely scoffed as he heard this, before placing his glass down on the table. He stood up from his seat and walked towards the door. When he was in the middle of the doorway, Gunther stopped in his tracks. In that moment, he decided to leave behind some choice words for his son.

"Your mother would be disappointed in you if she knew what you had done here. If this is how you run the first colony that his majesty has chartered us to produce, don't expect to inherit my position. You can stay here in exile as governor over whatever the hell this town is. However, you will not be returning to the fatherland. I can't have your avarice staining my family's reputation.

I will keep my mouth shut on the matter, so long as the agricultural yields continue to meet the standards I have set for you. Everything else is your own enterprise and cannot use my name as its brand."

Henrick was shocked when he heard his father say this. He did not understand why the man was so hostile to the atmosphere he had created in Lindstadt. Or whatever it's new name would be. However, there was one point he was uncertain of and quickly asked for clarification.

"Are you disowning me, father?"

Gunther scoffed once more when he heard this, before gesturing towards the luxurious trappings around him.

"You will be fine on your own. I am disappointed in you son, you had such an excellent head for business, and this is what you did with it. I hope what you have created here brings you some happiness, because you won't get any support from the family from now on. The charter for the colony is still in my corporation's name. You best remember that before you try to do anything stupid."

Henrick was astounded that his father was throwing him away for something so simple. Truthfully, Gunther was a pious man, who does not care for vice. He also looked up to Berengar, believing he was a man of virtue. If the man knew that this colony, which would later be renamed to Neuhafen, would become Berengar's favorite vacation spot, he would probably die of a heart attack.

As for Henrick, he would go on to form a prosperous corporation of his own called Bäcker Entertainment, using his surname as a means to spite his father for abandoning him in the new world. This company would become the world's largest gambling Corporation later operating casinos across

every land the Germans settled. However, Neuhafen would remain the premier destination for the world's wealthy elite.