

Tyranny of Steel

Chapter 2

Chapter 2: Life as a Baron's Heir

Henrietta re-appeared with the court physician not long after she had left. Though she wore an expression that showed a great deal of concern, the physician did not share her empathy. Berengar sat upright in bed, having a difficult time speaking due to how dry his throat was. Evidently, this body had sweat out most of its excess liquid while undergoing a fever. Few thought he would survive the night.

The Physician carefully examined Berengar and was shocked to see that the young man had recovered from the fever, as there was little hope for his survival previously. Despite being a medieval physician and having virtually no knowledge of practical medicine whatsoever, the man named Ewald showed a degree of competency after making his announcement.

"No need to worry, Lady Henrietta, your brother's fever has broken, and aside from being particularly parched, he is completely healthy."

After saying that, Ewald handed Berengar a glass of water and allowed the young man to drink his fill until his thirst was thoroughly quenched. After finishing the glass and wiping his mouth with his sleeve, Berengar nodded at the physician and thanked him for his service.

"Thanks, Ewald; I can always count on you in my time of need."

Internally Berengar's words were insincere; however, if two lives have taught him anything, it is that it was not wise to voice your condescension aloud. Thus he acted in a civil manner befitting of a Baron's heir.

After hearing that her brother was healthy for the first time in a long time, Henrietta smiled ecstatically; this was wondrous news to her. Berengar had always been prone to illness; He was born with a weak constitution and a frail body. Something in which the sedentary lifestyle of a medieval noble only exacerbated.

His next words startled her as it was a question that was out of her expectations for her big brother.

"Dear sister, do you mind fetching the servants and instructing them to get the bath ready. I feel as if cleansing the grime from my body would be good for my health."

The physician snorted at Berengar's claims. Though baths were not uncommon for nobles, they certainly weren't as frequent of an occurrence as the modern world. Despite the physician's reaction, Berengar insisted on his request to his sister.

Henrietta smiled as she responded to Berengar, "of course, dear brother, I will go and instruct them this second"

with that said, she had once more left the large stone room that belonged to Berengar and went to do as he had requested. The physician seeing that he was no longer needed, excused himself

"I shall go and inform your father the Baron that you have recovered..."

Berengar nodded once more as he wore an indifferent expression

"You do that."

with that having been said, Ewald left Berengar to his lonesome. Berengar sighed deeply, looking down and sniffing his clothes that reeked of sweat and filth. After grimacing from the stench, he sighed deeply

"When I inherit the title, there will be some serious changes around here..."

He had made up his mind that his first order of business when he came to power would be instituting laws across the Barony about basic hygiene, maybe even construct some public bathhouses like the Romans used to have. Whatever was necessary to bring a degree of cleanliness to the people of his territory.

After getting out of bed and stretching his limbs for a while, he heard a knock on the door, which came from one of the family's servants.

"Milord, the bath is ready."

He quickly opened the door with an over-excited smile on his face, which startled the servant.

"Lead the way."

The servant recovered from their shock and nodded as she did as the Baron's son requested. After a short walk down the hall, Berengar reached the bathroom, where he quickly barred the doors and stripped his clothes.

He carefully examined his frail body with a sense of dissatisfaction, though not quite emaciated; there was no doubt that his bones were weak and his muscles undeveloped. He would certainly need to change his dietary habits to one rich in protein and calcium.

Until he could succeed his father and implement the changes that were already brewing in his head, he must first focus on building his body up and maintaining his health.

Washing away the sweat and filth that had accumulated on his body throughout his fever was a good first step. As such, he dipped his toe into the wooden bathtub to gauge its temperature before plunging his body in completely.

After getting into the tub, Berengar stared at his reflection in the pool of water. He had short golden blonde hair and glistening eyes the color of the sapphire gemstone. His facial features were regal and handsome. His skin was a milky white, something that accentuated his regal demeanor. If he had not been such a sack of skin and bones, he would have come across as very princely. Though he may have reincarnated into a weak body, he did not care too much, considering he was very handsome. The body could be refined like steel, but the appearance was set in stone.

After spending nearly thirty minutes in the bath washing away both the filth on his body and the mental stress that had accumulated due to the transmigration, he finally stepped out of the tub. He found a set of 15th-century nobleman's attire prepared for him. It was properly cleaned, which was the most redeeming quality of the clothing.

After donning the attire, he shifted his attention to his short golden hair. Though he was no hairdresser, at the very least, he could use some of the greasy residue left on the tub to slick his hair back. He would seriously need to invent pomade to get his hair the way he liked it. After styling his hair, he left the bathroom and saw that a servant was waiting for him.

"Milord, the Baron and Baroness are awaiting you in the dining hall..."

Berengar nodded with a stoic expression

"Lead the way."

the servant bowed concerning his request

"Yes, milord"

After traversing the castle for quite some time, Berengar arrived at the Dining Hall where he saw his family was sitting, patiently awaiting his arrival. He quickly took his seat and noticed the meal on the table with various food to choose from. Despite being a lower noble house, the family was still wealthy enough to afford a plethora of food daily.

After saying grace, Berengar quickly allotted steamed fish, baked chicken, a variety of nuts, and leafy greens, as well as a large glass of milk to his meal. He did not even make eye contact with his family as he filled his plate to the brim. He was famished and felt the desire to dig in right away.

His family gazed upon him with various expressions that he overlooked right away; it was not until he lifted his gaze from his plate that he saw their looks of concern. Berengar had already cut a piece of fish and was about to stuff it into his mouth when he saw their gazes. Feeling the awkwardness of the situation, he could not help but inquire.

"What is it?"

Sieghard was a tall and robust man with regal facial features, he had short blonde hair, a matching beard, and sky blue eyes. He was also Berengar's father and the Baron of Kufstein. He gazed at his son with astonishment; until now, the young man who was his heir had been a vegetarian. Yet half of his plate was filled with fish and poultry. When asked by his son why he was surprised, he felt the answer was obvious, and as such, he made a gesture towards Berengar's plate.

Berengar had a perplexed expression spread across his face; after all, he had not fully adjusted to the memories of this body yet.

"Am I not allowed to eat this?"

His mother, Gisela, a blonde-haired, busty beauty, looked at him with her glistening sapphire eyes in an equally perplexed manner.

"You're eating meat?"

suddenly Berengar understood the meaning behind their confused expressions as he remembered that he was a vegetarian. He was starting to understand why this body he had inherited was in such poor shape.

Berengar smiled at his beautiful mother and nodded

"I've decided to make some changes in my lifestyle. Starting today, I will eat meat and get some much-needed exercise. I can't go on living life as a vegetarian wastrel!"

A large smile spread across Sieghard's lips as he heard his son's proclamation; for too long, the boy had used his health as an excuse to be idle; it was good that he was finally growing up. He then took his fork and placed a large slab of beef on Berengar's plate.

"Then eat up; you will need a full stomach."

Berengar smiled and began to feast upon the well-prepared meal. Though sooner or later, he would have to discuss basic hygiene with the kitchen staff. For now, he would devour this meal with no complaints.

His younger brother Lambert shared the same physical characteristics as the rest of his family. However, there was a discernable hint of malice in his ocean blue eyes as his gaze set upon Berengar. Though Berengar was unaware of what he had done to upset the youth, he took note of such a gaze and vowed to be cautious around his brother in the future.

After finishing his meal, Berengar left the dining room in a hurry; he wanted to begin his exercise regimen as quickly as possible. If he worked, diligently he could change this frail body of his into that of a soldier's within a year or less. Something he intended to get out of the way as quickly as possible.

As Berengar went for a run along the castle walls, he was completely unaware of the malicious gaze set upon him from inside one of the tower spires. The gaze belonged to none other than Lambert, who bit his lip as he quietly muttered under his breath.

"How are you still alive?"