

12 The Art of Being A Prince

1312, the 10th month, 26th day:

This was a day of sex, boy sex. Uncle Iason spent his private time with the Princess and the younger children. In the morning Iason and I, along with our guardians, took Nikias, Joulous and Justus riding. Kleitos had trained three ponies for them, this was the first time they would be riding with us big brothers. This was probably the first time they were allowed outside the castle without their nurses or ladies in waiting hovering over them. I remember how it was at eight, with two older sisters never letting you do anything. I can't imagine what it would be like to have a bevy of women controlling your every move. Boys need to run free, play hard and physically. That is what boys are about.

We rode along the athletic fields where the Palace Boys and Argoanuts were playing sports and fencing. Most of our sports are done in the traditional Greek way, naked. The sight of all this boy flesh was almost too much for me and I am sure Iason and our four guardians. The three younger ones just wanted to shed their kilts and tunics to join in, but we would not let them. Instead we slowly moved along the edge of the playing fields greeting the boys who ran up to us.

When we had rode for some distance, close to half a stadia, we stopped and let our horses rest and our charges run wild in the grass along the lake. Iason showed us a sandy place and soon all of us were naked and swimming. Nikias swam quite well but Joulous and Justus poorly; Iason and I assisted them and gave some instruction much as Abernath has done for me at a younger age than 8. It was while drying in the sun on the sand that we learned just how much and how little the twins knew of the world.

In short order they were taking out erections deep into their mouths and showing Nikias just how it is done. At first I wanted to send them away. Since sex with boys this young is just not done here, even if you are still a boy yourself. I guess if you are a boy under 12 it is Ok but once 12 and like us mature enough to fuck and ejaculate, well it is just not done. Joulous and Justus were not about to let that stop them, and it didn't. These two are masters at this art and I think Iason and I learned a few tricks from them that morning.

What was even more amazing was how quickly Nikias caught on and how much he seemed to enjoy the catching. The twins alone were masterful, taking our boy sized penises in to the root and using their throats to milk them like the tit of a goat. Nikias did not take us completely in but about half. He would kiss, nibble and lick just like the twins. We took it they had instructed him, probably through demonstration. Iason emptied his load quicker than myself and no sooner had Justus accomplished that than Nikias had his mouth on the now soft penis encouraging him back to full power. Justus then moved over to assist Joulous with me and between the two I ejaculated a small fountain, which they quickly consumed. I was most excited by their mouths, one on each side working from the base to the head and back kissing and nibbling in unison.

They became boys posed and immediately took care of the four guardians. While Iason and I further instructed Nikias. The twins were soon begging us older boys to enter their anuses but we refused, explaining several times why we could not do this until they were at least 12. Now it was apparent why two so young were among the invaders. They had been trained as pleasure boys from the age of about 3. Joulous and Justus were treated to a little pleasure from the four guardians they used their mouths and fingers to bring them twice to orgasm. While Iason and I made sure Nikias was rewarded for his efforts. He was delighted since his new brothers' fingers were too small to get into his pleasure place. Fortunately Iason's and mine are just long enough.

When we returned Kleitos met us in the stables with a small gang of assistants to groom the ponies and horses. He has the most marvelous way with animals I have ever seen.

When we reached our apartments it was already filled with naked boys. The remainder of the afternoon was one orgy that migrated from our bedchamber to the baths and gymnasium. By the time

I am writing this I am praying that few messages would be delivered at least for the next day as my butt is so tender for much movement and my anus does not seem to close.

1312 the 10th month, 26th day:

The Argoanuts are now a fully functioning unit with leadership, programs, members and dress uniforms. Over the past week I have noticed Iason often was troubled by something but he refused to talk about it. I knew it was nothing I had done or said; I just let him think things over. While he and I were sitting on the benches with the other pages he finally confided in me. "Arden, I think we need to raise a memorial to all the boys we could not save. Who will mourn them, who will remember them if not us? I want to make a project for the Argoanuts to raise just such a thing."

Why don't we ask that young sculpture to cast a bronze for us. We can put it in our gymnasium dining hall.

"Do you think the master will allow an apprentice to take a commission from us?"

If Prince Arden offers to be the model how can he refuse.

(TN: The next few pages are too damaged to get much of the thread but I learned and in some places added from my own knowledge: The master is named Lorenz Maitani he was an Italian. A name I recognized. He is famous for his sculpture and as an architect. By this time he is quite an old man who mostly supervises. How he came to Parga is not recorded. The student Arden wrote, is Goro, just a boy perhaps 15 himself but of a talent that amazed all who saw it. Apparently he is only allowed to work in clay. So Lorenzo's supervision of the bronze casting will be required and the finishing will be done by others. Goro did not stay in Parga that is clear from his biography.)

1312, the 10th month, 28th day:

Goro came to our evening meal/meeting today and presented his ideas for the memorial. He proposed a life sized boy, naked of course, standing and looking outward with his arms outstretched, his palms turned upward. He also proposed we place the statue in the little plaza, just back from the harbor. That it be looking out to sea. His idea was to place it on a stone pedestal. He had a large drawing to show what it would look like.

Each house took a short time to discuss the proposal. The house Eparchoses (Captains) reported after taking a quick vote. All 4 houses voted to approve. From the look on most faces I take it our methods of demokratia is a bit foreign to them, still. I can understand that, few places in the world work this way. Most families don't and being servants no master would. Our brotherhood is semi military and militaries are not. In fact, most citizens and all children are accustomed to having others tell us what to do, when and how. No religion I know of are much open to questions and never to votes on its dogma or procedures. This place is a kingdom and kings are not known to seek approval of anyone, except other kings.

In our society, as the scholars point out regularly, the citizens need to take an active part in governance. Why then do we do this. That question is simple enough but the answer is highly complex and has many parts. Mostly it has two major purposes: to give the members a true feeling of belonging and bind their support. When a group is in agreement with something the collective power is far greater than just their number. As I write this I realize just how much I have learned since being adopted. I am also gaining an understanding of why Iason and I are being taught the lessons we are.

Goro thanked everyone for their vote of confidence in his ability. He then pointed out, he himself was still a boy and this whole project has great power, it is boy's doing things for and in memory of boys. The adults here have only two roles, assist or serve boys and pay the bill. "We now have only one last

task, we need a name for our statue and a model. I know everyone of you is a willing volunteer. It is the choosing that causes me difficulty. For the name I propose Ganymede of Parga." (TN: The name of a mountain chain in the present Greek province of Epirus and the name of this city state.)

The boys were vociferous in agreeing with that name. "As to the model, I think you should nominate a local boy. Like the ideal of Ganymede he should show great beauty in appearance, spirit, loyalty and character. Since he will represent both the ideal of boyhood and all boys, you the Argoanuts must choose. The advisor general asked each squad to settle on a candidate and the demisquad leaders to meet with the Dathapatishs and settle on one and the Dathapatishs to meet with the Eparchoses and the Eparchoses to meet together, each settling on one candidate. While all this was going on Goro wandered among them to answer questions.

I could see he was being kept quite busy. After a bit I saw him talking to a very small boy, at the farthest end of the East House table. I knew that boy, he was the one that rode with me from the battle. I knew him to be shy and reticent to speak. It took work for me to even get his name, which is Odovacar, he calls himself Odo. I believe it is an old Germanic name. I could see Odo's face was bright red and he wanted to hide in Goro's tunic.

Goro made his way to the front and spoke to the four Eparchoses briefly, they all agreed it appeared and he returned to his seat. The East house Eparchoses raised his hands and got everyone's attention. "The model has been chosen. Goro told us a model usually has a chance to say no to the job unless the work was commissioned on his or her behalf. This is not but we also feel that since the choice is the will of the assembly that boy can not say no. It was a hard choice. Two houses for Prince Iason and two for Prince Arden. The four took the advice of our youngest member Odovacar, to brake the deadlock. Our choice is Prince Arden." Odo was bright red but so excited he didn't think to try and hid his face. I wondered what he said to the Eparchoses. My face was now flushed bright red too and I was feeling suddenly very shy.

Iason rose with a huge smile on his face. "I think we have made a wise choice here tonight. Had I been chosen you would have gotten only the second or third best. My betrothed is many things, at almost all of them he is the best and I am only a poor second. He is not the most humble or shy person, Odo is best at that, Arden is only number two and for me so far back in the pack as not to be noticed. Arden is the most beautiful boy in the Kingdom, he is the smartest, the fastest in a foot race at any distance, the most cleaver, the most affectionate and loving, the hardest working and most dedicated to office of any prince in the land.

For me I am just his number two. It is a nice face," he pointed to himself, "but not Arden. It is a nice body." he pointed to himself again, "not as nice as my lover's. I am first in line for the crown but did not earn that, it is an accident of birth order. Arden is second, he earned it and his selection was no accident. I know we both have your respect and affection. I hope I have earned my part but I know he has earned his. If the truth be told, and I do enjoy telling it, there is no better choice in the world than Prince Arden-Crown Prince Consort, our brother, to represent us, he is the living Ganymede of Parga. See how red he gets." With that he kissed me on the lips as I reached under his kilt for a feel of him for all to see. This action brought the boys to their feet and they all began singing one of our marching songs. As we were about to go I sent Pyrrus to bring Odo to our bedchamber.

Once we got in our rooms Odo's shyness seemed to settle down. Now that the four guardians know how shy this young boy can be they were right into making him feel comfortable. Ikaros managed to fuss over him and I'm not sure he viewed him as brother or sister. Knowing enough Greek to express himself probably gave him a little comfort as well. He told us he was from Florence and had been raised in a brothel. Last year his mother sent him to travel with the General that surrendered his sword to me. "It was good with him or go to work as a prostitute".

"He had a young orderly named Vitale so he never fucked me, just him, but the orderly did and often. They were both good to me and I was always treated well, not as slave. I know that when the General realized you would protect the boys, me included, that is why he gave you his sword and not to King

Iason. They taught me to read and write a little and you know, how to be an orderly, but Vitale did all the real work. I was mostly to keep the General company in bed.” Odo climbed up and sat on my lap pressing his head against my shoulder. “I was so scared and so lonely that day I couldn’t even talk. You were so brave and when you made that knight place me on your horse I was just thrilled. I know I am shy but I wanted to thank you, but I couldn’t speak. When you wrapped your cloak around me and held me tight it was like I had always been your little brother. Prince Arden you won’t let them send me ways back to Florence with the General will you?”

“Never Odo, not unless you ask to go.”

“No, never, I want to stay with you and Prince Iason. Can I sleep here with you, please.”

Iason and I told him he could. We asked him lots of questions and talked a while longer. When I asked him if he wanted to go and see the General he surprised me by saying yes, as long as I was with him and Damao, Heron, Pyrros and Volos. He said the General always treated him well and he would like to ask him to look up his mother to tell her he was safe and being very well cared for. I was about to suggest he write a letter to his mother while I transcribe these notes but the boy was asleep before I could. Just as I sat at my table and Iason made him ready for bed, Volos came close and said, “Prince Arden,” he only does that when it is serious or business, “you must let that boy live here with you, see how he sleeps just knowing you and Iason are in the room with him. Unless I am completely mistaken Damao and Heron will be asking to adopt him soon. “

“And you?”

“Pyrros and I are still to much enamored with each other to have a family. It will come.”

1312, the 10th month 30th day:

General Zokitos reported that the snows are now so deep on the border that travel is almost impossible. Our people have withdrawn below the snow line and only a small contingent remained in that camp. Prince Tertius reported the coastal army's report no other activity then the road building operations. In addition, the Argoanuts have begun construction on their monument in the city plaza.

Later this afternoon Iason and I were enjoying a lustful time with Odo when our fathers interrupted us. They did hold until we had, all three of us, satisfied our desires. Odo is a master at this. I admit I thought Iason and I were about as skilled as any but we have found our better in Odo. He knelt on a short bench presenting his buttocks to me and his mouth to Iason. His skin is so smooth and supple I just can't seem to stop touching it. Somehow he managed to control his muscles to keep my penis in almost constant contact with his pleasure place and the tip of Iason's penis deep in this oral recesses. I know we were all making sounds of pleasure since it was so pleasurable.

When Father spoke, “that was quite a performance,” I just about fainted, Iason turned bright red and Odo hid behind us. Uncle Iason called Odo out to come and sit on his lap. Odo went quickly and with a bright smile climbed into the king's lap. Our fathers began gently interrogating Odo and then us. It became clear they were not pleased that we were having sex with a 10 year old when the rule was 12. Odo looked panic stricken and began protesting it was all his fault and to punish him not the princes.

Iason began pleading, “daddy you shouldn't punish him, it is us, we are older.” Immediately Odo protested, “No, no, it is I, this was my idea, I begged them.”

Karyakos interjected, “what is the talk of punishment? Have any of you done something we are not aware of that requires punishment?” We all assured him we had not. Karyakos went on to explain they did not like the idea of boy under 12 having sex with boys over 12 and never with men. The reason for their dislike and the rule was simple. Boys under 12 are not thought to be mature enough to form true love relationship with a man and not powerful enough to deal with older boys. That is why

they asked all the questions to be sure that Odo had not been forced or seduced into sex with us. Uncle Iason added, "It is a father's responsibility to protect his children as much as it is to nurture them. Karyakos and I would be delinquent not to investigate. Since you are all in agreement that this was willing behavior with only noble intentions we are satisfied. That is your fathers talking.

Your King and Prince Consort have other concerns. We must be sure that the rules of this place are being evenly and fairly applied. Princes or not, you two are bound to them as is everyone else." He looked right at Odo. "When the princes in this kingdom engage in mischief we often must look the other way. Sometimes we must act as parents to correct a child's misbehavior. We never punish their associates only the princes. Even if some inappropriate behavior was your idea little one, those two, not you, would carry the blame. Being a prince has a price. You must yield some space to them since they are new to the job." Odo is a quick one and he understood completely what the King was saying. He smiled widely.

"No offense, no punishment. Now we must figure some reason why Odo should be treated differently than the others, including your little brothers. Odo your tutors tell us that you mastered Greek in a few weeks and that you speak several Italian variants, Spanish and French is that correct?"

"Oh yes. I learn languages as easily as some people walk."

"It is settled then, Odo must live with us to insure his talent for languages is properly fostered." Iason said.

"I can do more than that. I am quite a good poet too." Karyakos looked at him just a bit skeptically. Perhaps thinking this was just a child's bravado. It was not. Iason and I know he had a way with words. He had been composing a letter to his mother and while our Italian skills are not great it was obviously well beyond his years.

"Ode to The Ganymede of Parga

I stand here arms out stretched toward the sun setting.
I stand here to remember all of the unnamed that gave their lives in service.
I am the Ganymede of Parga the everlasting symbol of boyhood.
I am loyal to a fault, I love completely, I can be nothing but true.
I have no name but boy.
Few remember me though I have served faithfully since the beginning of time.

I stand here arms out stretched toward the sun setting.
Look at me I am the soul of every boy.
Look at me I am every boy who ever served.
Look at me my name is forgotten or never known.
Look at me and remember.
Look at me I live again, a mortal made immortal because you remember. "

(TN: Translating poetry is not as easy as it may sound. I am not sure I have done it justice. Odo's meter was trochaic but I was forced to blank verse. My apologies Odovacar.)

I think we were all dumb struck (TN: gobsmacked is another good word choice but he wrote made speechless). I know I was and I am not often at a loss for words. He made this up on the spot while sitting on his new father's lap, in a language new to him. I could see the look in his eyes as we all praised his skills and his ode. What I saw was a twinkle that rivaled Iason's. He would seduce his new fathers as he has his new brothers. I am sure of it.

1312, the 11th month, 1st day:

Today after our morning lessons we rode out to visit the south road building camp. The purpose was

to let Odo visit with the General and Vitale. We rode with Prince Tertius, Adonis and another couple of his squires, our guardians and a group of soldiers. Odo rode one of the young princes' ponies, Alexandros and Kleitos also came along. I must say we made a handsome looking gaggle. Our tunics in bright colors and horses all decked out with dress tack. We were allowed to wear our swords.

As we approached the camp and work gangs the soldiers on guard pulled to attention. Prince Tertius asked of the General's location and we rode off further to locate him. He was standing outside a small tent with several of his officers and several of our ingegneres. I could tell that because they were dressed in our uniforms and had the ingegneres' insignia on their tunics. When he saw Odo was riding with us his face beamed. I could see he cared much for the boy.

The boy jumped to the ground and ran into the General's arms leaving Kleitos to secure his pony. We all hung back giving Odo and the General a few private minutes. After making our greetings the General set Odo back on the ground. Then he dropped to his knees and began thanking Iason and me. "Your Fathers and uncle have kept me informed." He kissed our hands over and over. "You have given all these boys something I never could have, self respect and a meaningful opportunity. If the others are half Odo you will not be disappointed."

Iason put it best, "It is us who thanks you General for bringing Odo to us, we promise to love him as much as you obviously do."

We talked for a while until Odo asked for Vitale. I could see the General was shaken by the thought of his orderly. "I had to send him away, Odo."

"Why, why would you send him away you loved him, I know you did and he loved you, he told me a thousand times." A tear was beginning to form in Odo's eye.

Prince Tertius spoke up, "The General felt he had no choice Odo, but to make him go. If he didn't force him to go Vitale could not stay here in Parga."

"You know," the general exclaimed?

"Yes, of course, it is a game. The priest offers sanctuary in his church and after you leave he comes to us and announces he has these young men, who exercised the ancient right of sanctuary, which he could not refuse. Now the King must either refuse to let them leave the church or accept them into our society.

The young priest thinks we do not know of these men. Let them think that General. What none of them realize is the right of sanctuary is far older than the Christian church and in this land is extended to all religious shrines and temples, as it has since our beginning, not just since Constantine the First, who had no sway here anyway. He is probably the only one with enough room to hold all of them." Tertius leaned back and stretched. "I am keeping a close eye on the situation and if they run short of food or have other needs we will see some anonymous donations are made. The priest thinks he is so clever in helping them to 'escape'."

The General smiled very broadly. "Prince Tertius I have never, in my long history, been so greatly and often pleasantly surprised as since landing on the shores of Parga. I know I will miss it very much. I also realize you can not allow substantial numbers of us to remain here. Do you know yet what will become of them."

"No, I do know, my brothers will be fair and generous with opportunity. I suspect they will need to see what skills and talents are present before making a plan."

"I do not know them all personally but the ones I do know are good men. Vitale specifically is very talented and I will miss him, both as a military aid and companion. I will retire from this business when

I return, I can not offer him a secure future. I can no longer trust my government, it is lead by fools and greedy dolts and that Envoy is one of the better ones. Enough of this, tell me Odovacar what has happened to you since that fateful day of our surrender.”

Odo told him all that had happened even quoting the first part of his ode. The General was most impressed and said so. He told the General that all this was in his letter but reminded him his mother probably could not read. Shortly after we took our leave and returned to the castle and more problems of state.

On the way home Odo kept talking about his friend Vitale. He was all but insisting we stop at the church to check and see if he was well. Prince Tertius was not keen on this since he did not want to let the priest and the Envoy know we knew. Kleitos and Alexandros suggested they take Odo into the church while the remainder of us continue to the Castle. They could use the excuse, that Odo need to make his confession, being baptized in the faith. Upon returning to the castle they confided in me the following: Once in the confessional Odo asked the priest for information, having just talked to the General. He was told Vitale and the others were all quite ill and the priest feared for them, but the Envoy was pressuring him not to announce the sanctuary to the crown.

He took Odo to see his friend. When they returned to Alexandros and Kleitos, Odo told them they were very ill and would die if something was not done. Alexandros insisted the priest go with them to the Castle and confide the problem to the King. They had been privy to the Generals' and Prince Tertius' comments but did not tell that to the priest. He was reluctant but the situation demanded he act on behalf of the men; after all, once sanctuary was granted by the church he became responsible for them not the Envoy.

We were not long back when a page came to our door summoning us to a meeting. When we arrived the King, Consort, Prince Tertius, Odo, Alexandros, Kleitos were already in the room with the priest. As soon as we arrived the priest explained his situation knowing if he didn't Alexandros would. Uncle Iason just smiled. “Father you and I have known each other since we were boys running up and down the back stair way, playing with wooden swords. We can be completely honest with each other as our ultimate goals are the same. The Envoy is using you and the church for his political game. If those men die while in your care he will say it is because I refused care. If they live and remain here until after he leaves he will say I am holding them hostage. That aside, you of all people should know that the Christine Church is a late comer to the sanctuary business, it began in Egypt and has always been honored in any temple of any faith in Greece and in this state. Those men need to be sent immediately to the Temple of Apollo to receive treatment in the sulfur pools. They can ask for sanctuary and it will be granted at that temple.

Your problem is getting them transported without braking the sanctuary rules. I have a solution for you but you must trust me, we have no time to waste. I happen to have a cart train leaving for Koalhurst in the morning. They could leave from your church tonight.

Iason, put your Page's tunic and hat of office on. Go to the cart master and tell him he is to place a large Christian Cross on each of his carts and to report to the church immediately. He will receive instructions from the priest and he is to carry them out with all dispatch.” Iason went.

“Now Father, you must bless each cart and make it a temporary place of worship. Send a letter to the priests at the temple requesting their assistance in healing these men and granting them sanctuary. Attach the letter I will give you which will request the same. In the morning you should tell the Envoy what has happened but not about our meeting. Say only you were able to see them transported and sanctuary transferred. Then insist he go with you to Apollo's temple to check on the men, bring enough food for them to last several weeks and of course a generous gift to the temple. This from his purse not the churches. When you get to the temple have the crosses removed from the carts, declare them no longer places of worship and send them on their way to Koalhurst.”

“What if he refuses the food or the gift?”

“Then he is a greater fool than I thought him. You know me well enough Father. Just send a message to me. Now come old friend, let us get you that letter.” The priest and Father and Uncle walked out arms around each others shoulders giggling like boys at having created some mischief. I could hear Karyakos say, “It is a good thing you chose the role of priest not warrior, as I recall you lost most of those mock battles.”

Later on reflection I began to see not only how our fathers seem to know everything at goes on here but how strong the connections between all citizens. I also assumed that the priests at Apollo’s temple were boyhood friends of both the priest and our fathers. This state truly must be one large family.

We hurried off for our evening meal and Argoanut meeting. At the meeting Odo’s ode was presented but not by him. He is still just a bit to shy to read it before the whole group. One of the older boys in his house read it for him. That boy is about 15 and I think will make a fine actor or player. Odo’s touter thought is was very well done and made only a few suggestions. He also suggested Odo work with some of the musicians and develop it into a song. We appear to have many fine players, singers and actors as well as poets, painters and sculptures in the Argoanuts.

Reflecting further on the subject of family, I understand now why Iason and I are being guided as we are. Our mentors do not tell us what to do or how to do it in detail but seem to provide examples of why it should be done. Then some of the scholars and other older staff tell us our mentors were still playing games at 12 and we are much advanced of them.

None of us know what the future brings for sure. The scholars tell us, the Pagan ideas of fait, stars, numbers or the Jews, Christian and Islamic concept of “God’s Will” is not right. They claim no divinity directs the affairs of men. They maintain only men could possibly make such a mess of things. (TN: Arden did not actually write “a mess of things”, literally translated he wrote ...turn on your head...demolish good order.) People use this as excuse for inaction, a simple minded explanation for that they are to lazy to reason about, or to explain their own foolishness, greed and lust for power or self-importance.

They logically demonstrate that if gods did involve themselves with the affairs of men, it would be at the very least well ordered; what we experience is inconsistent and not the hallmark of divinity, more that of demigods. (TN: Demigods is used here in a highly pejorative way. It is one of those terms that could be used in several tones of voice from highly pejorative to ironic or satirical and I suspect humorous or chiding.)