

Evil 148

Chapter 148 - 148: Righteousness.

"Tell us, Count, how are you going to do that?" Zaskia looked at Rasmus with a serious expression.

"The damage has been done and the peace is fragile. You can't completely win the favor of the people of South Neva, it's impossible," Rasmus said as he tapped his fingers on the table. "Religion might help to convince and warn the people, but our enemy plays by the same rules, making it hard to accuse Kiel of blasphemy," he added and looked at Zaskia.

"Gather allies and help those who are powerless might sound like the only way to gain their favor and prevent them from joining Kiel. But how many rulers are willing to do so? How many rulers who believe in unity? How many rulers that desire power and wealth?" He asked and looked at the rest.

Everyone was aware of all those things that Rasmus pointed out. They knew that and they struggled to deal with that because it sounded impossible to prevent war from happening. Even without Kiel, peace was fragile and war might happen in the future.

"It sounds impossible, isn't it? But it's not," he revealed with his brows raised.

They were intrigued by how confident Rasmus said those words.

"Words mean nothing without proof, and so we will show them the truth. Show them the demons that have possessed the bodies of humans. Torture them publicly, make them talk, and reveal who's the one behind it," Rasmus said with a serious expression. "And that's when the Holy Nation comes in and warns the people."

"They need to know the truth, everyone needs to know," he repeated and stared into Thalior's eyes. "Find those criminals and show the people how they react to divine power. We have seen what demons could do to human bodies, and we will let them see it with their eyes."

Everyone sat there in silence, digesting the words he said thoroughly. It was a bit extreme, but they dismissed such thoughts because public execution was a common thing, nothing was wrong with that. It could be used to instill fear, but it could also open the eyes of the masses to see the danger that lurked in the shadows.

"So we must capture those bandits that are possessed by demons. Display, interrogate, and torture them publicly," Altair shrugged his lips, finding the plan wasn't a bad idea. "But demons can leave the bodies as they please. How are we supposed to take them safely back here?" He asked and looked at Valentino and Harold.

"There are a few ways. We can put marks, and stigma, on their bodies. Those things will prevent demons from leaving the bodies. Some amulets have been used to deal with demons back then. There are a few other methods that we cannot reveal," Valentino answered and he was confident with his answer.

"But a martyr will blindly devote themselves to what they believe in. Even if we revealed the truth, those who had gone astray would keep their eyes and ears closed," he said with a worried expression.

"That goes for rulers who are blinded by power and wealth. It's a normal thing for humans because it's in our nature," Rasmus responded and dismissed Valentino's concern. "As long as we are seen as the ones who try to keep the evil at bay and prevent the chaos, our actions will always be seen as righteousness," he added.

Uriel stared at Rasmus and listened to his words carefully. She didn't know if he was being righteous or if he was trying to justify his plans as righteousness. The line was barely there and it was hard to tell if he was the former or the latter.

"You're worried about my plans, aren't you, Lady Goldmane?" Rasmus showed a faint smile at her. "Since I promised you to deal with this situation righteously, then let me hear your thoughts."

Everyone looked at Uriel and it felt like she was the one who was being judged for questioning such plans. She was supposed to be the one who judged him, but the tables had been turned. She looked at Rasmus and thought he was deceiving her, but the way he looked at her, he didn't show any sign of manipulation.

"Yes, it's not what I have expected, and your plan isn't righteous in its real meaning. Yours is more justified, rather than morally right," Uriel answered and didn't care if everyone was judging her.

"I see," Rasmus nodded and folded his arms on the table. "It appears Lady Goldmane is struggling to understand. Isn't justified the same as being the right thing to do? And everything that is right, it's undeniably morally not wrong?" He asked.

Uriel stared at Rasmus and couldn't believe she was being cornered and questioned about her principles and ideals. However, she didn't feel any hostility from his words and felt as if he was explaining things to a child, making it even harder to resist.

"Please, Lady Goldmane, don't hold yourself back and tell me what you want me to do. You don't have to agree with me and I'm not asking you to agree with me, I'm just trying to make you see how I see the world," Rasmus said as he sat straight and smiled faintly at her.

"The reason I stand here at this moment is because of the trust and faith of the people in South Neva. The blood and sacrifice of the fallen soldiers, fathers, brothers, and sons, they all did it for this peace that we can enjoy and live in," Uriel stood up and stared at Rasmus with a serious expression. "If this peace turned into a world where morality is determined by justification and not principle and ideal, then they all died for nothing, and I will be the one who protects it until the end."

Rasmus looked at the stained glass and slowly formed a smirk as his face lit up by the sunlight. Everyone looked at his smirk, but it wasn't a mocking smirk but rather an admiration and impressed one.

"There's a saying that even accepting defeat is called bravery," Rasmus turned his head and looked at Uriel. "My view of the world, my principle, and ideal might be against yours, and people tend to make enemies of those who are different from them, but they forget that they were just opponents, not enemies," he said as he stood up and smiled at Uriel.

"Those who make enemies of others just because of that, they don't have value as a person because they don't value respect for others. With that being said, I'll try to live up to your ideal," he added and nodded at Uriel.

Uriel was stunned and didn't know what to say or do after Rasmus decided to follow her ideal. She barely showed any admiration toward other people, but at that moment, the way Rasmus said those things, made her admire his humility and intelligence.

It wasn't just her, everyone at the table found Rasmus's words touching, including Aris. They never heard of someone who could change drastically and at the same time, his words sounded so genuine rather than a trick of manipulation.

Rasmus realized why Uriel seemed to be closer to Thalior than to Altair. Thalior who also had the same principles and ideals as Uriel made them understand each other on a deeper level. On the other hand, Altair seemed to have a similar view as him.

"And how are we going to do that now, Count Blackheart?" Altair asked with his arms crossed.

"First, we still need to capture those criminals who have been possessed by demons. We are going to raid those hideouts and capture as many as we can," Rasmus answered as he sat down and looked at them. "Rather than using public execution, we will use trials and let people see it with their own eyes."

"That's not going to make them talk," Altair responded with his brows arched.

"They might if we force them to drink holy water. Since demons can't handle it, that means everyone will witness how simple holy water can make those demons squirm in pain," Rasmus answered. "Is that acceptable for you, Lady Goldmane?" He looked at Uriel.

Uriel nodded and found that it was enough to convince the people.

"Next, we will gather allies, the powerful rulers and figures that we can trust in South Neva. Kiel can't make a move knowing he's facing giants, and it will prevent him from making a big move immediately," Rasmus said as he looked at Thalior. "The next move will be supporting the people, gaining their loyalty and favor, helping them believe the peace isn't fragile, and showing them that the welfare of the people is our top priority."

"After we manage to do all that, it's time to investigate and hunt nobles or figures who are secretly supporting Kiel and reveal the documents or evidence of their connection. Lastly, we will use the Holy Nation to teach the masses about evil forces that have been lurking in the shadows, instilling chaos and destruction," he continued with a serious expression.

"That's the steps we are going to make. Does anyone have a problem with those plans?" He asked and looked at everyone at the table.

Everyone shook their heads and they couldn't believe Rasmus could create such plans in a matter of seconds. The fact he could turn his brain like a switch was quite terrifying and amazing.

"Good, it appears we can start discussing the plans," Rasmus nodded and pulled out his notebook.