

Evil 192

Chapter 192 - 192: Incompetence.

The journey to the Suvistan Empire took them four days since it wasn't that far from the Cruen Republic. Winter had come and the road was covered in thin snow which was something that Daryus and Javi had never seen before. Aris felt at home since she was from far north, and snow had always been a part of her life.

The capital city was visible in the distance, and it looked majestic because it was built on high ground. The city walls were tall, and so were the tower-like buildings inside the city. Since the Suvistan Empire was the main headquarters of the South Neva Union, the city was expanded for both the nation and the South Neva Union.

"A war is about to break in winter, what perfect timing," Aris said as she looked out the window.

Daryus didn't need to ask why she said that because history had shown how devastating, harsh, and cruel nature was in winter. He had read countless books about war during the winter, and it could be defined as merciless. The darkest part of that history was when people decided to eat the deceased fallen knights to survive in the winter during the Great Era.

"It's better if we can convince the alliance to postpone the war, but that can also mean it will strengthen the demon force's position, and I believe they will use that excuse to stick with the plan for war," Daryus pointed out as he hugged himself because of the cold.

"Not just them, but the people who are stuck in this tension won't be able to survive the cold winter. It can be the other way around, the alliance will convince the South Neva Union to make a move and support them for those people," Rasmus responded.

"That's true..." Daryus muttered under his breath and stared blankly at the cloudy sky. "What will you do? Which side are you going to convince?" He looked at Rasmus.

"Neither. I don't want to work with the South Neva Union nor do I want to convince the Alliance to postpone the war. We'll see how they will handle this situation and maybe you can decide which side you're agreeing with," Rasmus answered as he looked at the massive gate made of thick steel.

When they entered the capital city, they went straight to the South Neva Union's headquarters. Their arrival was escorted by a few knights on horses after they found out that Rasmus was in the carriage.

The headquarters and the capital city were separated by a long and wide river. The capital city was on the west side while the headquarters was on the east side. The three bridges connected the two areas, and the headquarters was a bit higher than the capital city, creating a symbolic status that the South Neva Union was above the empire itself.

The architecture of the empire and the headquarters was similar to ancient Greece where pillars were the main distinctive feature compared to the other nations. Statues of figures that united South Neva were built around the headquarters to make everyone remember them forever.

The moment they got out of the carriage, they looked at the main building where it looked similar to the Parthenon but much wider where massive pillars supported the building. It had almost a hundred steps of stairs to reach the entrance of the building.

Rasmus and the others were walking up the stairs when they saw Thalior, Altair, Carrion, and Garret waiting for them at the top of the stairs. Rasmus's expression was stoic as the snow fell on his white hair that made it invisible because the snow blended in with his hair.

Daryus was anxious because the people ahead of him were the ones who were basically united South Neva, the most important figures there. Although he was an idealist and righteous like them, he felt intimidated by their presence.

Once Rasmus set his foot on the top of the stairs, he immediately approached Garret and Carrion, ignoring Thalior and Altair. At that moment, Thalior and Altair were hurt and annoyed by the way he treated them.

"You have grown taller, huh?" Carrion smirked as he stared at Rasmus from top to bottom. "Damn, was it harsh out there in East Neva that you became like this in just a few months?" He jokingly asked.

"You have no idea what happened if incompetent people lead the nations. It's chaos out there," Rasmus smirked as he placed his hand on Carrion's shoulder. "I heard a lot of things from Erlina and Eduard about you. You have grown wiser and useful now?" He asked with his brows raised.

"My back is hurting from all the sitting, but yeah, I'm doing what I can to make a difference," Carrion smiled and nodded.

"I hope you won't become naive and too idealistic. Remember that this whole mess is because of people like that," Rasmus said as he turned his head to stare into Thalior and Altair's eyes without any sign of fear.

Thalior and Altair stared back at him and showed no expression or reaction.

The atmosphere became heavy in a matter of seconds, and it shocked Garret and Daryus. They didn't expect Rasmus would confront the two figures that united South Neva. By calling them incompetent directly, it was a bold move that they thought only Rasmus could pull that off without getting any consequences.

"Is it really that bad in East Neva?" Garret asked to disperse the tension by changing the topic.

"The emissary there plays with the same rules as those leaders in East Neva. The leaders chose violence and direct confrontation, and so the emissary did the same thing and grew stronger by taking people by force, turning them into an army of possessed bodies," Rasmus answered as he nodded and looked to the east. "They came, played with the same rule, and they won. Who would have thought? It's the same here, Kiel played in the same rule as leaders here in South Neva, subtle and yet aggressive move. If only we took the aggressive approach back then, it would prevent Kiel from growing this big, however, incompetence is always the issue," he added and once again insulted Thalior and Altair.

Garret knew that Rasmus wasn't trying to argue with Altair and Thalior or to insult them, he was always the type of person who stated facts. He liked Rasmus, however, he never thought Rasmus would do it to this extent.

Garret cleared his throat and tried to change the topic again.

"So? What's the reason you came here, Count? I believe you're not here just to meet with your friends," Garret asked as he glanced at Altair and Thalior who began to ignore Rasmus's insults.

"Are the representatives from the Alliance going to discuss the war? Winter is here, and I believe they might come to visit," Rasmus asked.

Thalior and the three of them were surprised that Rasmus could predict it. They indeed just got a letter from the Alliance that they would come, asking for an audience from the council of South Neva Union.

"We just got their letter, and they should be here in a week," Garret answered as he nodded. "How did you know that they would come here?" He asked with his brows furrowed.

"It's simple. They're afraid, but they don't want to lose face if they suddenly changed their minds that they didn't want war anymore. They would lose face to their people if they did that, so they might come here to ask for support using various logical reasonings," Rasmus answered as he crossed his arms. "As I said, some leaders are incompetent, and it's normal."

"Our answer will still be the same," Altair finally spoke. "We have given enough support to them. We use Marines to help them, and that's already plenty. We can't give more than that because we have half of South Neva to protect," he explained.

"It's hilarious that you still believe it's their problem and not yours when the survival of humanity is on the line," Rasmus stared at Altair with a cold gaze.

"We have no idea how strong they are, and we have sent countless people beyond the border but they all went missing. We tried so many things to gain information, but nothing succeeded. We are not suicidal, we will move when we know it's the right time to do so," Altair responded coldly.

"Because it's already too late to think. You're basically trying to think of a solution when the house is already on fire in front of you. Do, don't just think. Unite, and combine your effort to do both at the same time. You have the force, you have people who want the same thing, what else are you waiting for? To let the fire grow bigger and catch the whole city on fire?" Rasmus asked as he stood in front of Altair.

"Like what? What kind of solution that we can risk the survival of humanity?" Altair stared into Rasmus's eyes.

At that moment, Rasmus's silence wasn't out of hesitation or lack of answer, his silence was that he didn't want to reveal his plan for free. Thalior, Carrion, and Daryus immediately knew the moment he chose silence over answering the question.

"I was kicked out from the table by Archduke Thalior, remember? Why would I give you the solution to you to humanity that you have ruined?" Rasmus asked back as he raised his brows.

At that moment, Altair gritted his teeth to the point it made a sound in his jaw, however he was speechless and he didn't want to open his mouth while his mind was clouded by anger and frustration.

Suddenly Thalior lowered his head at Rasmus, low enough that he could fall if he bent his back even lower. Everyone was shocked and speechless when they saw Thalior, the most prominent figure in South Neva bowed his head to Rasmus.

"I would love to apologize, but right now, I can't think of any to redeem myself. Help us, Count, and I'll apologize to you properly once this is over..." Thalior said while he kept bowing his head.

Rasmus stared down at Thalior with a cold gaze.

"I will do it my way. If you can agree to that, then I'll save humanity," Rasmus said with a serious expression.

Thalior nodded without hesitation and kept bowing to Rasmus.