

Evil 40

Chapter 40 - 40: Manipulation.

After the class ended, Isador stayed in the classroom with Rasmus. He was still in a dilemma since that discussion about manipulation. He wanted to hold on to his ideology, but he knew that wouldn't align with others which would only raise conflicts in the future.

"Isador, you're really holding that ideology tightly, don't you?" Rasmus asked and could tell by Isador's complex expression that he was struggling.

"Yes, Instructor. It's what I believe, and if I don't hold on to what I believe, what's the point of moving forward when I have to lie to myself for the rest of my life?" Isador looked up at Rasmus who was standing in front of his desk.

Rasmus had a faint smile on his face as he dragged a chair to Isador's desk. He sat across Isador's desk and folded his hands on the desk, his eyes focused on Isador's face.

"Who taught you that ideology?" Rasmus asked, his voice calm and soft.

"Nobody," Isador looked down at his own fingers. "It's... it's something that I read when I was still young that all kinds of evil will only lead to destruction. Once you lie, you'll tend to lie even more in the future, creating a world based on lies and that's when the world will crumble," he explained as he played with his fingers.

"So manipulation is an act of evil?" Rasmus raised his brows.

"That's what I believe because manipulation is a part of lying," Isador answered as he nodded in agreement. "Hiding the truth for their own benefits," he added.

"Then what about this..." Rasmus rested his head on his fist, his eyes never leaving Isador's eyes. "You're in a situation where you can only save one person. One is a stranger that you don't know who they are or your mother, the Empress. The killer will give you a choice to choose one. Who do you choose?" he raised his brows.

"My mother, of course, but that's not manipulation," Isador answered as he tilted his head, staring into Rasmus's gray-blue eyes.

"No, Isador, that choice alone is manipulation. You are in control of the outcomes and you choose to save your mother because it benefits you the most," Rasmus pointed out as a smirk began to form on his lips.

"But that's... that's different. It's not the same as deceiving someone," Isador stared at Rasmus's eyes back and forth. He began to feel the turmoil within him, his gaze and words were like the last string that he was holding on to. All he asked for was validation for his answer and reasoning.

"Is it? By choosing your mother, you condemn the stranger to die. You're deciding their fate based on your own values and emotions. You have manipulated the situation to align with what serves you best, even if it's unconscious. That's the nature of manipulation, it's not always malicious, but it's always about control," Rasmus raised his brows as he leaned back and crossed his arms, cutting that last string that Isador was holding onto.

Isador looked down as his fingers began to dig into his scalp and massage his head. He began to see it clearly that this whole time he wasn't just a fool, he was also naive. He never thought how immature of him and how he was blinded by his own ideology that he couldn't see the truth.

"Do you want to hear the truth, Isador?" Rasmus raised his brows, still sitting comfortably in the chair.

Isador slowly lifted his head to look at Rasmus. His expression was of a person who had lost their purpose.

"It's not about what's right or wrong, it's about what's necessary. I think you can understand that because your ancestor, he was one of the figures in the Great Era of Neva," Rasmus pointed out as he sat straight and began to shift the conversation. "Did he do it because it was right? Or did he do it because it was necessary? He killed countless lives, burned countless towns, villages, and cities," he arched his brows and leaned forward toward Isador.

Isador was in his turmoil state and hearing that from Rasmus made him lose control over his thoughts. He immediately thought about the Suncrown's past and how his ancestor was indeed killing innocent lives, and yet the Suncrown family became the most respected family.

"There's something that the world doesn't know..." Isador blurted out without thinking.

"So that means his action is justified?" Rasmus tilted his head as he placed his arms on the Isador's desk.

"Yes, the lives that he took, it was all for the greater good," Isador nodded as he looked at the spot on his desk, his eyes were empty. "He tried to protect the world from evil..." he muttered.

"Do you believe he was evil or a hero? He killed countless lives in exchange for protecting this world. But again, how can it be so righteous even after everything he did to those innocent lives? Is the evil you mentioned earlier was that threatening back then?" Rasmus tilted his head, tapping his finger on the desk slowly, putting Isador in a state of vulnerability and relaxation at the same time.

When Isador was about to answer the question, someone knocked on the door, snapping Isador back to reality. It was Alexander and he came in because he had forgotten his book that he was supposed to return to the library.

"I apologize, for bothering you, instructor," Alexander looked at Rasmus's cold expression that was pointed at the wall. He then immediately left the classroom.

Rasmus sighed as he slowly stood up and adjusted his suit.

"You seem to have understand how the world works now, Isador," Rasmus said as he looked down at Isador, his gaze a bit cold and menacing. "I want you to redo your assignment and I want you to give it to me by tomorrow," he added as he walked toward his desk.

"Yes, Instructor," Isador nodded. "And, Instructor..." he paused as he looked at Rasmus.

"Yes?" Rasmus turned around to look at Isador.

"Thank you, for opening my eyes. I realized how spoiled and naive I was, and maybe still am. I'll try to become a better man, a man that my parents can be proud of," Isador said as he clenched his fist, his eyes filled with determination.

"I'm not a man who believes in words, Isador. I'm a man who see a person through their experience and achievements," Rasmus smirked as he walked toward the door. "If you want my recognition, the prove what you're capable of," he looked at Isador before he left the classroom.

Rasmus was a bit disappointed that he couldn't get enough information about what happened during the Great Era of Neva 400 years ago. But he knew there was indeed something that those figures were hiding, something evil that made them have to make such decisions as to wage wars against each other.

"I should visit Lenin on the weekend and ask her about this matter. She must know something about this, and I also want to know about the origin of my mother," Rasmus muttered to himself as he left the main building and went to his dorm.