

Midnight 1271

Chapter 1271

"...Did Lane and Quincy have some sort of beef? Man, he went all out."

"Forget about her! I don't want to remember," Jeffrey said casually as he took her hand, "Are you, you know, feeling any discomfort?" Karen shook her head, "Nah, I'm good. Really good!"

Kenneth, who had been quiet, suddenly spoke up, asking Jeffrey, "Do you think Lane's got, like, some psychological issues?" "Definitely! What sane person does something like that?"

"I think Lane's deal with Quincy isn't because he hates Quincy, but rather... he's projecting his hate for Everett onto Quincy." Kenneth, being a guy who had also chased Dorothy for years, could somewhat... understand where Lane was coming from. It's not that he agreed with him, but...

If it weren't for having Karen, plus those four years he supported Dorothy, Everett probably wouldn't have let him stay in Eldorria City so peacefully.

Looking at what happened to Lane, he could imagine his own fate!

If he were to be disgracefully kicked out, as a man, he'd definitely harbor some resentment and grudges.

Even now, didn't he have some grudges against Everett?

He did.

But Kenneth could control it.

"That makes sense! Probably that's it," Jeffrey nodded.

After all, there wasn't a better explanation.

"You guys should head back, Karen still needs to rest up, let her take it easy," Kenneth waved them off, "I'm heading back too." "Alright."

Jeffrey watched Kenneth's retreating figure, raising an eyebrow slightly.

"What's with Kenneth today? He seems... different."

Karen blinked, "Huh? Different how?"

"Can't put my finger on it, just different!" Jeffrey sighed, "Let's head back."

"Okay."

Karen followed him to the car, and just as they were about to get in, she noticed something.

"Your clothes..."

"Everett's. Got some blood on mine, Dorothy didn't want you to worry, so she had me change."

Karen pouted, "Like I'd worry about you!"

Jeffrey squinted and smiled, not offended.

"Babe, I know you're just being tough, it's alright!"

"Hmph."

Karen got into the passenger seat, then seemingly casually asked, "Can I have your phone for a sec?"

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Jeffrey handed it over without a second thought, asking casually, "What's up, checking up on me?"

"Mhm, got a problem with that?"

"Not at all, Your Highness, please proceed!"

He started the car while Karen fiddled with the phone.

She stumbled upon a tracking app, then coughed lightly, asking, "What's this?"

"That's Lane's current rough location."

"Huh?" Karen was taken aback, "How do you know?"

"Lane made a couple of transfers to Quincy, the records mentioned a 'Cathy', probably his accomplice. Figured his phone must be under that person's name, and sure enough, traced it and found

Karen patted his head, "You're pretty smart, huh!"

"As much as I'd love to take credit, it was Everett's idea."

"I knew it!"

Karen said as she noted down the location and phone number.

"Now that we know where Lane is, why not catch him? He must think he's hidden so well!" Indeed, the location was pretty secluded out in the sticks.

"Everett didn't say to catch him, so we wait for now," Jeffrey shrugged, "He can't run forever!"

Chapter 1272

"Ugh," Karen sighed, her voice laced with a blend of frustration and resignation. "Look, if things are too hectic over at Everett's, you really don't have to worry about me. I can just head back to my folks' place for a while, or they can come stay at the mansion to help out. And if things really hit the fan, Kenneth could lend a hand too."

She was acutely aware that her current condition-being pregnant-didn't exactly place her in the frontline when it came to rescuing Dorothy and securing the much-needed antidote. All she could do was fret from the sidelines, the only action within her power being to send Jeffrey on the mission.

Hearing his wife's words, Jeffrey couldn't help but probe with a hint of uncertainty in his voice.

"You're not... mad, are you?"

Women are known for their indirectness, after all.

Navigating this conversation required all the tact he could muster.

But Karen's glare cut through his hesitation. "Do you even hear yourself? My relationship with Dorothy is just as strong as yours with Everett! She's been poisoned, for crying out loud, and needs

that antidote. How can you think I have the time to be petty right now? If you manage to get that antidote, I swear I won't hold a grudge against you ever again."

Jeffrey's eyes widened in disbelief. "Really?"

"Absolutely! Just focus on what needs to be done; don't worry about me."

Pregnancy did indeed make her crave companionship more, especially since her pregnancies tended to be fraught with complications. But none of that mattered when her best friend's life was on the line. "Honey, you're the best!"

"It's for Dorothy!"

"Right, right, anything you say, dear." Jeffrey chuckled, then something else popped into his mind. "Oh, by the way, I had Paige admitted to a mental institution."

Karen blinked in surprise. "A mental institution? Is she... mentally ill?"

"No."

"Then why...?"

With a mischievous wink, Jeffrey replied, "Because there's nothing quite like a sane person trapped in a mental institution. Letting her die easily would be too kind. I want Paige to spend the rest of her life

there." t

Karen couldn't shake off the chill that crept up her spine upon hearing this.

Initially, she had some sympathy for Paige. After all, her relationship with Jeffrey was marked by genuine feelings, at least from her side, but Jeffrey's irresponsibility had turned it sour. Karen wasn't the type to blindly hate someone without considering the full picture.

But Paige crossed a line by targeting her children. It was her children she tried to harm, not Karen directly.. Why take revenge on the weaker party instead of confronting Jeffrey himself?

Bullying the vulnerable was something Karen could never stand for.

"Isn't that a bit... harsh?"

"Leave this to me. I won't let Paige harm you ever again. If I can't even protect my family, what kind of man does that make me?" Jeffrey's voice was firm, his resolve clear.

The very thought of losing a child because of Paige had haunted both Karen and Jeffrey. The latter knew all too well the depths of his own potential for vengeance.

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Upon receiving Karen's message, Kenneth immediately pinpointed the location on his map. His lips pressed into a thin line, his eyes reflecting an indecipherable storm of emotions. Following Karen's logic, the antidote's acquisition inevitably pointed towards a confrontation with Lane.

Chapter 1273

"Kenneth, did you pop by the hospital today? Something wrong?" Sienna's face lit up with concern as she greeted her son returning home. Lately, she's been extra cautious about Kenneth's state of

mind, always greeting him with a smile, careful not to let any hint of her own worries show. After all, if everyone around him started to lose hope, how could he be expected to stay positive?

"Just tagging along with Karen," Kenneth brushed off, knowing full well that the news of his hospital visit was probably relayed by their driver.

It felt like his mom had eyes and ears all around him!

"Karen? What's the matter with her?" Sienna hesitated before asking.

Ever since the drama with Dorothy, Sienna had grown a bit cold towards Karen, which was inevitable.

But they hadn't exactly had a falling out, just not as close as before.

"She's a bit under the weather, but it's nothing serious." Kenneth kept it brief. He had more pressing matters on his mind and didn't want to get sidetracked. "That's good to hear, but you know, your health comes first. If there's anything else, just give me a call. I can come over and keep you company."

"Mom!" Kenneth couldn't hide his exasperation, "Karen is my sister, let's not start holding grudges for no reason."

Sienna knew she couldn't push further and simply waved him off, "Alright, alright, I'll drop it. Go get some rest."

With a heavy sigh, Kenneth headed straight to his room.

He had asked a buddy to reroute a GPS signal to his phone so he could keep tabs on Lane's whereabouts. Just as he finished setting it up, his phone buzzed. It was Eleanor.

She called now and then, but Kenneth wasn't too keen on picking up, managing only brief, polite exchanges.

"Been keeping up with your physiotherapy?" she asked.

"Yeah, recovery's going well. No worries," Kenneth replied, almost blurting out that she needn't call him about this anymore but stopped short, not wanting to sound harsh.

Eleanor hesitated before speaking up again, "Can... Can I come visit?"

She had wanted to ask before but couldn't muster the courage.

After Kenneth had made his feelings clear back in the hospital, any further attempts from her would seem desperate.

"I'm a bit tied up these days. Let's catch up once I'm free."

His obvious avoidance hit Eleanor hard.

"Is it really that you're busy, or... you just don't want to see me?"

"It's really just a busy time."

"Kenneth, your injury was partly my fault. I want to make things right Eleanor's voice was soft, resigned. "Now that you and Dorothy can't be together, why not consider me?"

Kenneth frowned, at a loss for words.

One rejection was enough; repeating it felt cruel.

But his silence spoke volumes.

Swn?

"Going forward, I won't fuss over your past with Dorothy. It won't bother me that she's all you can think about. You can keep loving her."

"That's not fair to you," Kenneth found himself unable to address Eleanor as Dorothy anymore.

"It's my choice. I don't need fairness.

If... if there's ever a chance for you

two in the future, I can step aside,

leave the spot open for Dorothy."

Chapter 1274

"Sorry, I might as well be scraping the bottom of the barrel with that line."

Others might not get it, but Kenneth knew all too well.

If he ever had the chance, he'd say the same to Dorothy without batting an eye.

Sadly, he didn't even have the right to say those words out loud.

"Eleanor, please don't let me hold you back anymore."

"Is that your way of rejecting me?" Eleanor insisted on digging deeper.

All she got in return was Kenneth's silence.

She took a deep breath, then chuckled, "I find myself quite amusing. You've been pushing me away, yet here I am, asking to hear your rejection."

"Eleanor, you're a great girl."

"Save the nice guy act." She paused for a few seconds, "I've transferred \$30,000 into your account. Consider it a small compensation for the accident you got into because of me. I know your family isn't hurting for money, but this is purely to ease my own guilt! From now on, I won't bother you anymore."

"I don't want your money!"

Kenneth's protest was cut short as Eleanor hung up.

He checked his messages and sure enough, there was a \$30,000 deposit...

He called the bank, trying to send the money back, but customer service informed him the account had already been closed!

Kenneth tried reaching out to Eleanor again, only to find her phone was off.

His messages went unanswered.

"Why do you feel guilty... It should be me..."

In his attempt to get Dorothy to drop her reservations and reach out, he had involved Eleanor.

Now, after everything, he still couldn't forget Dorothy, and he felt indebted.

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Everett's mood was temporarily downcast.

But with things not yet at a dead end, he was far from giving up and wallowing in self-pity.

After a night of deep thought, he messaged Jeffrey at 5 AM.

"Keep an eye on Lane, but make sure he doesn't catch on that we're onto him! Let Lane believe his plan is working, and that I'm just waiting to drop dead." Lane was laying low, trying to wait out the storm.

In his mind, with Quincy out of the picture, Everett was as good as dead! It'd be so much easier to deal with Dorothy once Everett was gone, to negotiate on his terms.

Like removing a rival from the equation.

After sending the message, worried about Jeffrey's brashness possibly causing a slip-up, Everett also asked Kevin to keep watch. If anything went off-plan, he was to intervene promptly.

Jeffrey didn't reply, but Kevin was quick to respond.

"Don't worry, Mr. Lopez."

With everything laid out, Everett finally returned to the master bedroom.

As soon as he entered, he saw Dorothy was awake, looking at him! "You're up early too..."

Dorothy sighed, "How could I sleep when you were up all night?"

Everett walked over and wrapped her in his arms, "I couldn't have slept anyway, not until I figured out a plan. Unless you knocked me out, my worry wouldn't let me rest.

"So, did you come up with anything?" Dorothy looked up at him.

"Sort of." Everett gently stroked her hair, "Looks like we'll have to ask Ms. Sanchez to put on another performance!"

She immediately smiled, without a hint of worry, "Sure! What's the play this time?"

"Playing the love lost."

Chapter 1275

Dorothy furrowed her brow, seemingly hesitant.

Everett, thinking she was wary of the plan's ominous undertones, quickly clarified, "It's not like we're actually killing anyone. It's all an act! Lane wants to lay low for now. After my 'death', he'll reach out to you. If we want to lure the antidote out of hiding, we have no choice

but to force Lane's hand."

"This act... it's a tough one to pull off."

"Yes, I'm well aware." Everett knew all too well!

Deceiving Quincy was simple enough - a bit of jealousy here, a dash of resentment there - but feigning the loss of a loved one... that was a true test of acting skills. "What do you know?" Dorothy snuggled closer to him. "Asking me to play this part, it's asking a lot."

"But once we nail this performance, we'll get our hands on the antidote in no time!" Everett had meticulously thought everything through before making this decision. "The antidote's situation with Quincy is different from Lane's. Quincy wouldn't prepare the antidote in advance; she'd whip it up as needed. But Lane? He's clueless about that stuff. The antidote with him is a whole, complete bottle! Once he thinks I'm dead and lets his guard down, I'll find out where he's hiding the antidote, and our performance can come to an end." Not like with Quincy, where they had to keep up the act till the very end.

"I get it." Dorothy patted his hand, her face still serious. "What I mean is, this act isn't easy..."

"And?"

She smiled. "You'll have to pay me extra."

After dealing with Quincy, Lane had someone scout the area again.

The police had cordoned off the scene, reportedly still investigating. Everett and Jeffrey had been implicated as well, given the traces of their presence at the scene.

Listening to his subordinate's report, he couldn't help but feel smug.

"Everett, oh Everett, your day has finally come!"

This was all intentional.

The moment Everett and Jeffrey showed up, they were bound to leave evidence behind.

Just the police interrogation alone would waste who knows how much time! Without Quincy's antidote, Everett wouldn't last a month, and with the poison taking effect, would he even have the energy to down?

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Grabbing a beer from the table, Lane chugged it down in one go.

Beside him were the medications prescribed by the doctor for Lane, each little bottle meticulously labeled with dosage instructions.

Yes, Lane was indeed suffering from a psychological disorder.

Ever since leaving Eldorria City, the sleepless nights combined with external pressures had even led to hallucinations!

Everett was the root cause of all this, and now-

Revenge was within reach.

After finishing his beer, Lane put on his hat and mask and left the modest cabin.

He brought no electronic devices, wearing clothes that were newly purchased and soaked in water for days to ensure they were tracker-free.

Lane moved on foot, inching closer to the original crime scene, curious about the current situation.

After making a round and heading back, Lane suddenly sensed someone following him!

For someone already on high alert, this was a red flag!

Lane's hand even clenched a knife hidden in his pocket- "Are you Lane?"

Before he could respond, the person behind him spoke first.

Lane's instinct was to attack; he spun around, pressing the knife against the stranger's throat!

"Who are you?!"

"You don't need to know who I am. Just know that I despise Everett as much as you do, and that's enough."

Chapter 1276

Despise Everett?

Lane wasn't born yesterday!

"Out with it! Who sent you?!"

"I came on my own."

No sooner had he spoken than Lane, gripping the knife, tightened his hold, and a thin line of blood appeared on the man's neck.

Blood slid down the blade.

Fortunately, the wound wasn't deep, because Lane couldn't afford a murder scene here! He needed to stay under the radar, to avoid stirring the pot.

"Still playing tough? Do you believe I could end you right here?"

The man just smirked, showing no fear, "Go ahead! I came alone, fully prepared to face death! As long as you promise me one thing that Everett doesn't get to live-I don't care if I die!"

Seeing his genuine fearlessness, Lane started to believe him, at least a little.

But to win his complete trust just like that? Lane was no fool.

The man gave a scornful laugh and then rolled up his pant leg to reveal a ghastly scar, "Is this reason enough for me to hate Everett?"

"Why do you hate Everett so much?"

Lane was taken aback.

"Did Everett do this to you?"

"All thanks to him! My life could've been great-parents alive, a successful career, but now... I'm left a cripple for the rest of my life!" "What happened?"

"What else could it be over but a woman-Dorothy! My sister was close to Dorothy and thought she'd be a good match for me. I admit I was interested, but... once I knew she wasn't into me, I backed off. But Everett, he wouldn't let it go. He was out for blood!" Hearing this, Lane felt a surge of empathy.

Lane saw the wound, but Everett must have had a reason, right?

"Exactly, that's the kind of man he is!

Everett, the scum, took over my company, a hostile takeover! Left with nothing, absolutely nothing!"

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The man glanced at him, calmly saying, "Now that my life is ruined I've got nothing left to lose. If I can take Everett down with me, it be worth it."

"Then why didn't you just kill him?"

"You think I haven't tried? I just failed," he said, his tone filled with resentment.

Lane knew that feeling all too well-it was how he felt about Everett.

Relaxing his grip on the knife, Lane even offered him a tissue, "Here, clean yourself up." "No need."

"Coming all this way to find me, besides wanting Everett dead, what else are you after?"

"Nothing else. His honesty was such that he could look Lane straight in the eyes, "I didn't want to show my face initially. The only reason did is so that if Everett ever gets on your trail, you could use me as a shield."

"What do you think? In my condition, what could I possibly want from you?" he chuckled, "We're both men with nothing left to lose."

Lane squinted, "You're that altruistic?"

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"It's fine. If you think I'm a burden or of no use, I'll leave."

With that, the man turned to go.

Lane immediately stopped him, "Don't you dare walk away! But don't think for a second that I trust you easily."

"So?"

"Just come with me."

Lane figured, if the cops ever got on his tail, this man could serve as a decent hostage. "What's your name?" "Kenneth."

Chapter 1277

Quincy's murder set the city on edge, especially since Everett and Jeffrey's traces were found at the crime scene, landing them multiple trips to the police station for questioning. After all, this wasn't just any case; it was a sensational murder that had everyone talking. Everett played dumb about Lane's whereabouts, only admitting his knowledge about a certain drug involved in the case.

After cooperating with the investigation, Everett fainted right in the police station, ending up being whisked away in an ambulance. The news that the CEO of the Lopez Corporation had passed out from shock at the grisly scene spread like wildfire across Eldorria City. Of course, Lane got wind of it too.

Lying back on his bed, he glanced at Kenneth nearby and chuckled. "Look at how stupid the media is! You think Everett was scared by Quincy's body? No, he's terrified because he knows his days are numbered without that antidote."

Kenneth, who had been watching the news, turned back with a slight frown. "Do you think... Everett could come up with the antidote on his own?"

"Relax," Lane assured him confidently. "Quincy said no one else could replicate the antidote but her. I believe it."

It wasn't so much about taking Quincy at her word as it was about the facts. If Everett, with all his resources and determination, couldn't produce the antidote, it meant there was no way forward.

"I came back to make sure he pays with his life! It'd be a waste of my efforts if he doesn't die," Lane said, keeping an eye on Kenneth's reaction. Despite bringing him to his hideout, Lane had little interaction with Kenneth and couldn't verify his stories, so he had to keep his guard up for now.

Kenneth paused for a moment, then pursed his lips. "That's good, then."

After all, Lane considered him harmless—a cripple with nothing on him that posed a threat. Maybe he could even serve as a shield in the future.

"My only worry is Everett's wealth and influence. Money can move mountains."

"Unless he can use it to bring Quincy back from the dead, I doubt it'll do him any good," Lane retorted confidently, smirking at the thought of Everett in the hospital. "Hey, Kenneth, can you cook?"

Kenneth looked at him. "Yeah."

"Then whip us up something to eat. Make whatever American dish you're good at."

Hiding out had taken its toll on Lane, who had lost several pounds. Despite stocking up on essentials, his upbringing had left him clueless in the kitchen, surviving on nothing but bread and sausages.

"If Everett doesn't kick the bucket soon, starvation might beat him to it," Lane muttered.

"What do we have for ingredients?" Kenneth asked, not shying away from the task despite his limping gait.

"Just check the fridge," Lane replied, unsure of what Kenneth might need.

Kenneth hobbled to the fridge and opened it to find it packed with ready meals and an assortment of quick-fix foods—clearly, Lane was betting on Everett's demise within the month, given the meager stock.

Chapter 1278

Although I'm not privy to Quincy's final words to Lane, one thing I'm sure of is that Lane got his hands on the antidote before Quincy breathed her last. This realization allowed Kenneth to breathe a sigh of relief...

The knowledge that there was still an antidote out there was comforting.

As long as it existed, there was hope for Dorothy.

"How's your cooking?" Kenneth was momentarily taken aback when Lane caught up to him from behind.

"It's mediocre, not too shabby but nothing to write home about," he replied casually as he picked something up.

But when he reached the kitchen counter, he noticed something amiss.

"You forgot the spices."

How could one cook without spices, even if they had all the ingredients?

Lane had also just remembered.

He glanced at Kenneth, then at the items on the counter, seemingly hesitating.

Eventually, his hunger won over his logic.

"Write down whatever you need, and I'll go get it."

There was no way Lane was letting Kenneth step outside! What if he revealed their location, or tried to contact someone?

He still couldn't fully trust Kenneth.

"Fine by me." Kenneth seemed completely unbothered, almost relieved that Lane was the one going shopping, sparing him the hassle of going out himself.

"Need anything else, just tell me." Since Lane hadn't anticipated having Kenneth over, his preparations were only meant for one.

Now that there was an additional mouth to feed, he had to shop for more.

Might as well make the trip worthwhile.

"I'm good, brought my own change of clothes."

"So, just food and spices?"

"Your call, I'm not fussy."

Kenneth seemed to have come to Lane's place with the sole purpose of ensuring Everett's demise.

Nothing else seemed to matter to him.

This left Lane, who was usually quite talkative, feeling uneasy. He had hoped for some company to chat with, but here was Kenneth, more concerned about Everett's fate than even he was!

Any other topic seemed to bore him.

What an odd fellow...

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Eldorria City General Hospital.

The emergency department was now completely sealed off, guarded inside and out by Everett's men to prevent any leaks.

Entry and exit were strictly monitored.

In the VIP ward, where one would expect to see medical equipment, there was now a solid wood desk!

Dorothy, lying on the hospital bed with her legs crossed, watched the man behind the desk sift through data. She pouted, "Don't you think this is a bit much?"

"Hmm." Everett looked up from a pile of documents, "If I don't do this, Lane might not get the message."

"Besides, the bigger the spectacle, the more people know, the more convinced he'll be that I'm actually dying."

Dorothy sat up, pulling a bottle of eye drops from her bag.

"I now carry this with me everywhere. In case I run into the media, I can quickly use it." She walked over to Everett and wrapped her arms around him, "Otherwise, I'm no professional actress. Crying on cue is a bit hard!"

Everett turned his head and kissed her cheek.

"Then you'll need to practice. You can't let the media catch you using eye drops at my funeral."

Dorothy shrugged, "I've thought

about it. If I can't muster the

emotion, just in case, I'll pretend to

be so overcome with grief that.

faint! Then have Karen and Jeffrey quickly take me to a rest room!"

She might lack acting skills, but she was certainly clever!

Chapter 1279

Crying over Everett until she fainted seemed like a reasonable reaction; Lane wouldn't suspect a thing.

"How about we just say you're laid up with a bad case of the flu?"

"That won't work. After your part is done, the spotlight shifts to me. Avoiding it isn't the answer." Dorothy sighed, leaning against Everett's broad shoulders, "Never thought I'd find myself walking down the path of show business." Everett gently patted her hand, "It'll all be over soon! I'll wrap up my current projects, and then it's showtime."

"Right." Dorothy nodded, "And after that, it's smooth sailing."

She looked forward to that day.

Suddenly, Everett had a thought. He stood up, his handsome face taking on a serious expression, "To keep things authentic, I haven't mentioned this to my dad. If he's a bit harsh with you, don't hold it against him." "Don't worry, I won't."

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After Lane left, Kenneth began searching his place.

It wasn't big, just a hideout.

Really, there were only a few places that could hide anything. Kenneth had already scoped them out.

But after a thorough search, he came up empty-handed.

It seemed Lane didn't keep the antidote here.

Makes sense, something that critical wouldn't be just lying around, especially with Everett potentially on his tail.

When Lane returned, Kenneth had already prepped everything for cooking.

He simply reached out to take the bag from him without a word.

Lane smirked, "So, you had a thing for Dorothy too?"

This was probably the only common ground they had.

Kenneth paused, then nodded in acknowledgment, "Yeah."

"So, I guess we're rivals then? Once Everett is out of the picture—"

"I've got a girlfriend now." Kenneth cut him off before he could finish.

Lane had finally found a topic to engage in, and he didn't want to waste it.

While Kenneth was cooking, Lane moved closer.

"You're really okay with letting Dorothy go?"

"She's not a goddess. Knowing there's no future with her, why would I be bothered?"

Lane smacked his lips, "Then why can't I let it go? I must have Dorothy. I want Everett to die with regrets!"

"Once I marry Dorothy, I'll take her to Everett's grave every day, just to gloat!" Lane's eyes narrowed as he imagined the joy of that moment, "What good are his skills and power then? Still couldn't avoid death!"

Kenneth just scoffed, his cooking uninterrupted.

"And you? You just want to see Everett dead?" "Exactly." He nodded, "But I know I'm not capable."

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"Then rest easy, he won't escape this time! It's like fate is fed up with his arrogance, sending Quincy, that fool, right to us!" Lane's excitement grew as he spoke, even clapping his hands, "Don't you think it's Everett's time to go?"

Kenneth paused for a second while cooking, then continued.

His voice remained calm and low, "Quincy came to you on her own?"

"Yeah! I was just after the antidote, but that idiot went straight to saying she'd poisoned Everett too! Without her, t'd be just like you, powerless against Everett."

Chapter 1280

"Mmm."

Kenneth nodded, his movements deft as he plated the sizzling dish onto the table.

Seeing the feast before him, Lane couldn't help but be impressed, "Man, you've got skills that could put professional chefs to shame! Had I not asked earlier, I'd have thought you were slinging hash in some diner." It's not that he was inexperienced or anything; it's just been ages since he had the pleasure of enjoying such freshly made, home-cooked meals!

"Used to the cuisine overseas, I had to fend for myself in the kitchen."

"You worked abroad?" Lane's interest piqued.

Kenneth merely nodded.

But that was all he offered, maintaining his usual stoic demeanor.

Lane studied him for a moment before speaking up, "You know, I get the feeling... you're not much for talking because you fear saying too much might lead to mistakes?"

Ever since Kenneth arrived, Lane had tried to learn more about him, whether through indirect questioning or direct inquiries. Yet, after all this time, he hadn't managed to uncover much!

Except for the fact that Kenneth's limp was the result of an incident involving Everett.

As Kenneth set the utensils before Lane and took a seat, he slightly curled his thin lips, "I've always been like this. Ever since the injury to my leg, I've become even more reserved. All I have left is resentment." "It's just a leg-"

Lane blurted this out without thinking.

And immediately, he witnessed Kenneth's expression darken.

"Just a leg?"

"You have no idea what kind of hell I went through in the hospital. You wouldn't say that so casually if you did! I nearly lost my life, faced the possibility of amputation!" Kenneth clenched his fists, almost grinding his teeth as he spoke, "My girlfriend, upon learning my condition was the result of a dispute over another woman, left me without a second thought! No one can understand how I felt in that moment."

Lane blinked, smacking his lips.

"Sounds pretty rough."

He hadn't heard the details from Kenneth before, so he somewhat felt that Kenneth's grudge against Everett over a limp seemed a bit much.

But hearing the story laid bare, Lane could somewhat empathize.

Back when his own company faced a hostile takeover and was on the verge of collapse, Everett offered help that felt more like charity, complete with a condescending smile! Lane, who had always been pampered, couldn't stand such humiliation.

But for the sake of securing funds and a chance to start over, he clung to that lifeline.

Swallowing his pride in the process.

"So, don't question my motives. I might not have the means, but I wish for Everett's demise!"

Lane smirked, picking up his fork, "On that note, I can certainly oblige! There's only one antidote left in the world. Both Everett and Dorothy have been poisoned by Quincy and I... I certainly won't be saving Everett."

Kenneth's gaze fixed on him, fortunate that Lane was too engrossed in his meal to notice.

After a brief pause, Kenneth inquired, "Have you secured the antidote well?"

Lane's alertness was apparent.

Upon hearing the question, he instantly looked up at Kenneth.

Of course, by then, Kenneth had already averted his gaze, appearing as if they were merely engaging in small talk.

After a moment's consideration,

Lane reassured Kenneth, "Don't

worry. Even if Everett turns Eldorria City upside down, he will never find

the antidote! And me, I'd rather die by his hand than give it to him!"