

Midnight 1301

Chapter 1301

Watching the madness consuming Lane, Dorothy Sanchez knew he was beyond saving.

The man had never considered turning over a new leaf.

But then again...

His brutal murder of Quincy had already showcased his descent into madness! Convincing him to turn back was a tall order.

"Take the antidote to ease the effects."

Even in such an agitated state, Lane didn't forget to urge Dorothy to take the antidote.

The more he did this, the more Dorothy felt a sense of guilt!

Without her, Lane might have had a bright future. His business was thriving, his background was impeccable, and his looks were beyond reproach.

Now...

Dorothy took the antidote and drank it in front of him.

She had thought that, given Lane's demeanor during their previous call, he would have some vile demands upon their meeting.

But he didn't.

After getting a glass of water and taking the antidote, Dorothy slowly spoke up, "You mentioned you have the final antidote." "Yes, I do."

"What's your condition?" She didn't want to beat around the bush, worried Kevin would grow anxious waiting outside, "With Everett Lopez gone... I want to live, at least for my two kids! So, just spell it out." Lane gazed at her face.

It would be a lie to say he wasn't moved!

She had almost become an obsession for Lane.

"I want you to marry me."

Dorothy slightly frowned, seemingly calm, "With the police after you, how can you marry me?"

"I have my ways to get out of this! You just need to agree." Lane's lips twitched, "Dorothy, you don't need to worry about the details. Just say yes, and I'll take you away from Elderria City."

"What about my kids?"

Lane frowned, "The Lopez family doesn't want those kids?"

With Everett gone, the Lopez family essentially lacked an heir, and Lane figured they wouldn't let Dorothy take the kids.

"I can't be separated from my children!"

Lane pursed his lips, seriously considering the matter, "Fine, I can take you and your two kids with us But on one condition, the kids must take my surname. They can't be Everett's anymore, nor can they call him dad!"

He hated Everett too much to tolerate his kids, recognizing Everett as their father, living under his roof!

"Lane, don't you see? You're cornering yourself. You don't really love me that much; you just hate Everett."

"Never mind that!" His eyes suddenly hardened, "If you want the final antidote, you must listen to me! Otherwise, I'll stop caring about you!"

"Quincy said, if I wanted you to bear my children, for the child's health, we must first cure your poisoning! So rest assured, I'll definitely give you the final antidote, but only if you truly wish to follow me."

Dorothy realized Lane had everything planned out.

He had even sought answers from Quincy for such detailed matters well in advance.

Chapter 1302

Dorothy wasn't about to butt heads with Lane now; she had said her piece, and anything more would just be beating a dead horse.

"Lane, you've been straight with me, so let me be clear with you. I'm sticking with you for the antidote because I want to live, for my two kids! But if you think you can use that antidote to blackmail me or force me into doing something, I'd rather join Everett in the beyond!" Though she had to play along unwillingly, setting ground rules with Lane felt more true to her nature.

If she agreed too readily, Lane might suspect a trap.

"So, how long will it take for you to forget Everett and willingly be with me?" Lane asked, visibly uncomfortable at even mentioning Everett's name, but aware of the place he held in Dorothy's heart.

"I don't know."

"If that bothers you, then forget it." Dorothy adopted a take-it-or-leave-it approach, her gaze dropping, her demeanor calm. "I've said what I needed to. You think holding the antidote over me gives you control. And yes, I'm under your thumb to a point, but... I have my principles, and I'd rather die than break them!"

Lane squinted at her, "What principles?"

"That you can't force me into anything until I genuinely fall for you and willingly give myself to you."

"And if you never do? I'm supposed to wait forever?!" Lane's question was tinged with frustration. Dorothy simply stood to leave.

Seeing this, Lane quickly stood and grabbed her arm, "Where do you think you're going? We're still talking!" Dorothy remained unfazed, "Your call."

Lane was taken aback, obviously struggling internally but realizing he had no leverage over this stubborn woman.

bet

How could he not know how hard she was to pursue? Everett had to employ every trick in the book to win her over, and Lane knew his path would be no easier.

Had he not already experienced defeat in his ventures at East Star Enterprises?

"I'll think it over," he finally conceded, pondering the idea of making Dorothy his in every way.

After all, if a woman physically accepted him, her heart couldn't be far behind. Plus, Lane had been alone for too long, hiding and without a companion. Any man would have needs. FindNovel

"Fine, think it over."

"Dorothy!" Lane's expression

darkened, his patience wearing thin, "Don't think you can act all high and mighty just because I have feelings for you I'm even willing to deakwith Everett's kids, and you can't bend your 'principles' for me?"

"Are you saying you only want to marry me for my body?" Dorothy shot back, turning the tables.

The atmosphere soured instantly.

Other patrons started to glance their way...

Lane quickly lowered his voice, pulling her back, "Let's not rush off. Let's sit down and talk this through. Without you, the antidote's worthless to me."

Not wanting to cause a scene or attract police attention to Lane's presence, Dorothy reluctantly took her seat again.

"I've already compromised my principles for you, but I can't accept what you're asking."

Chapter 1303

Lane's expression was downright sour.

Having leverage over someone meant he could easily manipulate or threaten them, and frankly, he couldn't care less about their fate. But when it came to Dorothy...

He couldn't actually let her come to harm!

This woman was utterly spoiled and arrogant, and unfortunately for him, he just couldn't seem to handle her.

"So, you're saying I can only touch you if you're willing?"

"That's right." Dorothy nodded.

"And if you decide you're never going to be willing="

She cut him off gently, "Then you better start thinking about what you've done to make me spend my life with you but still refuse you!"

"My only request is this. If you're willing, get in touch with me. If not... well, the antidote I've temporarily provided will last at most another month. I won't come to you again." Lane was about to say something when his phone suddenly rang!

He glanced down, and his handsome face instantly tightened with concern.

Dorothy, sharp as ever, noticed something was off. She tried to peek at the caller ID, but alas, the angle didn't favor her.

"What? A guy?... Did you catch him?... Got it."

After hanging up, Lane stood up abruptly.

Dorothy's heart leaped to her throat!

"Lane, what are you going to do?"

"Nothing much. I've got your point today. I'll think it over and contact you," he said, clearly in a rush to leave after the call.

But as Lane reached the doorway, he suddenly paused and turned to look at Dorothy.

"Kenneth Nelson, you know him, right?"

"... Yes, I know him." Dorothy knew denying it would be futile.

"Did he get close to me just to steal the antidote for you?" Lane didn't leave but instead walked back, towards Dorothy, slightly lowering his head to meet her gaze, "Did you send him?"

Dorothy felt her heart sinking.

Listening to Lane's tone on the phone, she had suspected he was talking about Kenneth, and now this question all but confirmed Kenneth had been caught trying to steal the antidote! But she had to remain calm and detached, to distance herself from Kenneth!

Otherwise, given Lane's current petty mindset, there was no telling what he might do.

"Me, send him?" Dorothy laughed it off, "What's my relationship with him that he would take such a risk for me?"

"What relationship? Kenneth likes

you, don't pretend you don't know" Lane pressed, his gaze becoming more intense, not willing to miss even the slightest change in

Dorothy's expressions.

"I know he likes me, but just because he does, doesn't mean he's willing to risk his life for me," Dorothy spread her hands, her retort throwing Lane's thoughts into disarray. He was silent for a few seconds, seemingly pondering the credibility of Dorothy's words.

"Then why would he follow me to where I hide the antidote?"

"How should know? Maybe he also wanted the antidote, to blackmail me or something! With Everett gone, you all want to take advantage of me. You want me, Kenneth wants money, nobody cares about how I feel anymore."

With that, she effectively painted Kenneth as just another money-grubber.

Dorothy knew Lane wasn't after money, so by framing Kenneth's motives as unrelated to his, it could potentially reduce the hostility between them.

Chapter 1304

"Kenneth, is it all about the money?"

"What else could he possibly want from me?" Dorothy shot back, rolling her eyes. "Not everyone's like you, falling head over heels for a twice-divorced woman with two kids in tow."

Lane's gaze darkened, and he finally spoke, "I need to handle something over there."

As soon as Lane left, Dorothy allowed her worried expression to surface.

She hoped Kenneth could get out of this mess...

She used to think he was level-headed, but facing someone like Lane seemed to throw all his caution to the wind.

...

Kenneth hadn't anticipated that the place where Lane hid the antidote would be under surveillance, with guards stationed around it!

He had just discovered the location of the antidote and was about to turn around and inform Karen, thinking of asking Jeffrey to get Everett to come and snatch it, when he was stopped in his tracks not a minute later! Given Kenneth's limp, escaping was nearly impossible.

By the time Lane arrived hurriedly, Kenneth was already tied up with ropes, unable to move!

"Mr. Lane, this man was following you trying to steal the antidote!"

"I see." Lane waved him off, "You can leave us."

Once the guard had left, Lane didn't waste any time. He went straight up to Kenneth and landed a heavy punch on his face!

Kenneth fell to the ground, blood streaming from his nose and mouth...

It was clear, Lane had put a lot of force behind that punch.

"Following me, huh? Thought you could outsmart me and steal the antidote to show off to Dorothy?"

Since Kenneth couldn't move his arms or legs, he couldn't even get up.

Opening his mouth, blood stained his teeth and lips, "I didn't want... to steal the antidote..."

Lane crouched in front of him, grabbing his jaw to force Kenneth to meet his gaze.

"Not after the antidote? Then give me a good reason why you were following me."

Kenneth tasted the metallic tang of blood in his mouth. He spat out a mouthful, but with his jaw clamped tight, he could only tilt his head back, allowing the blood from his nose to flow back into his mouth, bringing another rush of that iron taste.

"I thought. if you wouldn't let me I might as well learn one of your

Yots and use it against you, make

let me leave!"

"Really?"

"Yes."

Lane's grip tightened, his knuckles turning white with the force.

"Kenneth, you think I'm a fool? Listen to yourself. Do you think I'd believe that?"

"I have no choice. Kill me if you must, but that's the reason."

"Don't think I'm clueless! You've been after Dorothy for a long time, even if you say you have a girlfriend, your heart still hasn't moved on from Dorothy!"

As Lane said this, he kept his eyes fixed on Kenneth's.

Any sign of evasion, and today... would be his last.

"Lane, I want to leave, but you won't let me! And now you suspect me! Hah, you're truly paranoid!"

As soon as he finished speaking, another of Lane's punches connected with Kenneth's face.

A sharp pain shot through the bridge of his nose.

"You better remember who you're talking to! Taking your life would be easy for me."

"Then do it! I have nothing more to say! I've answered your questions, and if you don't believe me, there's nothing I can do."

Chapter 1305

Lane chuckled darkly, his tone dripping with scorn.

"You sure have a tough shell to crack! I should've realized what you were up to from the get-go!"

He raised his hand again, and Kenneth had already shut his eyes, bracing for another blow, or whatever form of assault was coming next. But instead, Lane just stood up and wiped the blood that had stained his hands.

"What did I tell you before I left? Behave, and you'd be free to go! You've been a real disappointment."

"Kenneth, consider yourself lucky. The cops are all over Quincy's case like white on rice, and killing you would just be another headache for me! Otherwise, whether it's one or two doesn't make a difference to me today! Dorothy's already given into my demands and is mine now. I don't want any more trouble, so... don't push me."

Lane turned to grab a pocketknife from the table and leaned down to cut the ropes binding Kenneth.

Choked by the blood in his nostrils and throat, Kenneth coughed violently, looking utterly defeated.

Catching a glimpse of Kenneth's state, Lane snorted, "Just a couple of punches, you won't die! Go back and make me dinner, and you might just keep your life!"

Kenneth propped himself up with his elbows, struggling to his feet.

Lane, seemingly disgusted, frowned, "If I catch you stepping out of line again, I'll make sure it's the end of you! Now, get lost."

With that, he walked ahead, leaving Kenneth behind.

Kenneth, his hand clamped over his nose to stem the bleeding, appeared to be wiping the blood from his face and body. Unseen, he discreetly dropped a small black box in a corner of the room, well-hidden by a nearby table. "Do you plan on staying here tonight?"

Seeing Kenneth unmoving, Lane asked with a menacing edge to his voice.

Kenneth didn't respond but covered his mouth and followed.

Silently, the two of them walked, one after the other, without uttering a single word.

Close to their destination, Lane suddenly stopped and turned to Kenneth, "You'd better give up any thought of sneaking a cure. The stuff hidden there is just a temporary antidote! The real cure, I never put it there."

"You say you want out, and I might just believe you! But take my advice, if you cross me again, I'll r dup joining Quincy

you

Kenneth lowered his gaze, merely nodding without a word.

Lane felt like talking to him was like playing a violin to a cow-useless. Besides a few explanations, Kenneth wouldn't say much else. So, despite saying he trusted Kenneth, doubt never truly left him!

Now that he had met with Dorothy, her demands-though unreasonable weren't entirely unacceptable.

Thinking of this, Lane's mood improved slightly, even a rare smile gracing his features. "Dorothy... She's indeed the woman I set my eyes on-so principled, just how I like!"

"..." At the mention of Dorothy's name, Kenneth's fingers trembled ever so slightly.

Over the years, Dorothy's name had become a brand on his heart.

Hearing it always stirred something in him, hard as he tried to hide it.

"You see, getting Dorothy wasn't easy for me! So, as long as you're not a stumbling block, we can negotiate everything else!" Lane finished, even clapping Kenneth on the shoulder, "Got it?"

Chapter 1306

"Sure," Kenneth nodded, a hint of agreement in his voice that seemed to satisfy Lane.

Today's couple of punches were just a small lesson for a bigger cause!

After all, with Everett gone, Lane always felt that no one could stand in his way.

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After leaving the diner, Dorothy made a beeline for Kevin's truck.

As soon as she got in, Kevin quickly turned around to check if Mrs. Lopez had been hurt in any way.

He'd rather take a hit himself than see Dorothy in any kind of trouble.

"I'm fine, really. You don't have to worry. Lane didn't lay a finger on me.

"That's a relief! I was about to bust in there if you stayed any longer."

Dorothy's face remained tense, showing no sign of easing up. "I might be fine, but Kenneth's gotten himself into hot water! He tried to swipe an antidote and got caught by Lane!" "What now?"

"Take me to Karen's, and let's keep this from Everett for now."

Kevin dreaded hearing Dorothy say 'don't tell Everett.' It was like he was working behind Mr. Lopez's back.

If everything went well, no problem. But if something went wrong...

He couldn't even begin to imagine what Mr. Lopez would do if anything happened to Dorothy.

"Ms. Sanchez, I think Mr. Lopez should know about this. He'd definitely want to help Kenneth, rival or not." Kevin was sure of it.

Even though Mr. Lopez was decisive in his actions, he was never heartless or impulsive.

"I know, but that's exactly why I don't want Everett to worry."

Dorothy knew Everett too well.

Despite his claims of disliking

Kenneth, if Kenneth were in trouble, Everett would still help, for the sake of the old times, when Kenneth had been there for Abigail and Langston.

Seeing Kevin hesitate, Dorothy firmly said, "Just pretend you don't know anything about this. It's like I never told you. Just get me there quickly before it's too late."

"Alright."

They hadn't been on the road long when Dorothy's phone rang.

It was Everett.

Picking up, she heard his soothing voice, "What are you up to? You didn't reply to my WhatsApp messages."

"I was caught up with the play, didn't check my phone," Dorothy tried to keep her voice as casual as possible, knowing Everett could easily spot any inconsistency. "Did Lane contact you today?"

"Yes, I asked him for an antidote."

There was a brief pause. "He gave it to you?"

"Yes."

"...So you met with him."

Dorothy's heart sank.

She hadn't anticipated slipping up here!

Everett's question wasn't really a question - he'd already figured out the truth.

Clearing her throat to ease the tension, Dorothy said, "Everett, listen! I've taken the antidote and left. Nothing happened."

His tone then shifted from soft to stern.

"Haven't I told you not to change plans on your own? Dorothy, what if Lane had done something to you, or what if he had pulled a knife on you? Did you think about how I would cope, what the kids would do?"

Chapter 1307

He was out of options, so he let Dorothy take a stab at acting.

But in the plan, Everett had no intention of letting Dorothy actually meet Lane!

That guy was pretty much off his rocker these days, capable of anything really.

If he decided to harm Dorothy, well, nothing was off the table.

"I... he didn't do anything to me..." Dorothy, knowing she was in the wrong, lowered her voice.

"What about Kevin? You need to get in a cab and head back to Bay Residence now."

"Oh, Kevin? He's around, but he has no clue what I was up to!" Dorothy quickly took Kevin out of the equation, "I can't head back to Bay Residence just yet, I got a bit of a situation with Karen. I'll swing by her place and then I'll head back, okay?" Everett paused for a few seconds, "Karen needs you for something?"

"Yeah! Girl stuff, nothing to do with Lane. If you don't believe me, you can ask Jeffrey. I'm almost at his place!" Dorothy hurriedly added a laugh, slightly coquettish, "I've already met with Lane, so scolding me now won't change anything. Don't get mad at yourself! I'll explain everything once I get back!"

"I'm almost there, gotta go."

Dorothy wanted to cut the call before Everett could prod further, so she quickly ended the conversation.

Luckily, Kevin soon pulled up in front of Jeffrey's mansion.

Just as Dorothy got out of the car, her phone rang.

It was Karen calling.

She didn't pick up, instead, she pressed the doorbell!

Karen, opening the door and seeing Dorothy, was stunned for a few seconds before speaking, "Dorothy? What are you...?"

"Kenneth is in trouble! He went snooping around Lane, trying to find where he hid the antidote, and Lane caught him red-handed."

"I was just about to talk about that!" Karen looked equally anxious.

Dorothy was momentarily confused, "How did you know?"

She had only found out because Lane had taken the call right in front of her! Could it be... he also called Karen?

"My brother! got his covert signal on my phone, Karen pulled out her phone to show Dorothy the location, "Before he lost contact, he told me if he found the antidote, he'd activate this tracking system so I could get the signal!"

Dorothy took a look.

It was a location in the outskirts of Eldorria City, surrounded by nothing, a desolate area.

"My brother said he'd only turn this on if he found the antidote. So, he must have found it." Karen grabbed Dorothy's hand, "Let's not hesitate we need to get someone to this location! Once we get the antidote, this whole mess can be put to rest!"

"Hold on." Dorothy frowned, pursing her lips, "Lane must have moved the antidote by now! Since he caught your brother, he's definitely suspicious."

"Ah? What if he does something to my brother?" Karen's heart raced again!

"You're pregnant, try to stay calm! I'll

contact Lane. If things look bad..

I've decided to first rescue Kenneth,

we

figure out the rest later!"

This decision was no laughing matter.

Rescuing Kenneth would definitely raise Lane's suspicions!

But Dorothy had no other choice! She couldn't stand by and watch Kenneth get hurt or worse because of her, even if it was just an injury.

Chapter 1308

She couldn't handle another favor from Kenneth. It was just too much.

"I should tell Jeffrey first, at least he could come up with some advice for us!"

"Let's not do that. If you tell Jeffrey, then Everett will find out," Dorothy didn't want Everett to worry.

Besides, the situation at hand wasn't something that could be easily resolved by simply sharing it with others. Dorothy gently patted Karen on the shoulder to comfort her, then stepped aside to call Lane on her cell phone. After a few rings, he picked up.

"Miss me already, huh?" Lane's voice carried that familiar, rakishly charming tone, even in moments like these.

"Come on, you call and then stay silent? What's up?"

Dorothy frowned slightly, her mind racing on how to subtly bring up the topic of Kenneth.

"Are you back at your hideout?"

"Yeah," Lane replied seriously for once, "Too many cops around to be wandering about."

"That's actually why I called. Just wanted to make sure you were okay."

Lane chuckled, his deep voice soothing yet gritty, "So, without Everett around, you actually care about me a bit! Should've gotten rid of Everett sooner!"

"Don't worry, the cops won't catch me. I've planned our future too well to just end up in jail. What would you do without me?"

"We just saw each other at the diner, and you're already back at your hideout. It can't be too far from downtown, then?" Lane paused before raising his voice, "Trying to figure out where I'm hiding?"

"...No." Dorothy knew she didn't need

to probe; Everett had probably

figured it out already. "I'm just making conversation. I'm not interested in your hideout. Just stay hidden and don't get caught. IT wanted to rat you out, you'd have

been arrested back at the diner."

He snorted, "So heartless, acknowledging you care about me wouldn't kill you, would it?"

"Fine, I care about you, happy?" Dorothy quickly moved on, "So,, what's there to eat at your place? and

YouCan't live on sandwichage?

fast food forever, right?"

"Kenneth's here. He cooks for us."

That was exactly what Dorothy needed to hear!

But she couldn't just ask outright; she had to lead the conversation to it, waiting for Lane to bite.

And he did.

"Didn't you say today you caught him tailing you?"

"Yeah, but I'm choosing to believe his reasons for now."

Hearing this, Dorothy finally relaxed.

It seemed Lane hadn't harmed Kenneth, at least not yet.

After exchanging a few more words with Lane to avoid raising his suspicions, Dorothy hurried to share the news with Karen.

After all, Karen was pregnant and couldn't afford the stress of worrying about Kenneth's safety!

"Dorothy, does that mean... Lane

didn't have the time to move the antidote?" Karen slowly pieced things together, "Because, you see Lane doesn't know my brother has this tracking device. He must have taken Kenneth back with him thinking that no one would be able to find out where the antidote is

hidden. No need to move it, then."

Chapter 1309

Dorothy pondered for a moment, then nodded as if a lightbulb had gone off in her head.

"I'll get Jeffrey to round up some folks and head over right now! If we manage to secure the antidote and rescue my brother at the same time, wouldn't that solve everything?"

"Wait! I'm worried Lane might catch wind of it beforehand." There's bound to be guards around the antidote.

"I doubt it! How about this, let's have Jeffrey sneak over first."

"No!" Dorothy quickly interjected, guilt already gnawing at her from involving Kenneth. If Jeffrey went and something happened to him, she couldn't bear the thought. "Just send me the location." Karen immediately went on high alert, clutching her phone close.

"What are you planning?"

Dorothy sighed, speaking softly, "Karen, hear me out! Lane is doing all this because of me, so he wouldn't harm me no matter what! Even if I get caught, it's not the end of the world. If I can successfully retrieve the antidote, wouldn't that be a huge win?"

"... Your point makes sense, but Lane's not thinking straight anymore. I'm really worried he might lash out in frustration!"

"Don't worry, if I get caught, I'll figure something out." Dorothy reassured her, patting her shoulder. "Just send me the location."

"No way! Jeffrey and Everett are both out of the loop. If something goes wrong, who's going to save you?"

"If Lane kills me too, what was the point of all his efforts?" Dorothy felt more confident after meeting Lane. Despite his actions, Lane didn't seem deranged. Aside from Quincy's murder, Lane was still the same person in charge of East Star Enterprises, with his lazy yet sharp demeanor. He didn't seem like someone who'd lost his mind.

"That's not a risk I'm willing to take! Forget what Everett would do; my brother would have my head!"

Realizing she couldn't directly get the location from Karen, Dorothy resorted to a bit of cunning.

"How about this, just show it to me, and I won't go myself! I'll discuss it with Everett back at Bay Residence, we shouldn't waste Kenneth's efforts. If we delay, I'm worried Lane might change locations."

Karen finally relented at that.

"Alright! But make sure you and Everett come up with a plan together. At least he'll ensure your safety first."

Dorothy nodded, deliberately avoiding eye contact with Karen.

To avoid arousing suspicion.

Once she received the location on her phone, Dorothy zoomed in. It wasn't far from the diner they had agreed to meet at today, which seemed just like Lane's style

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He must think the most dangerous places are the safest!

Hiding the antidote in a desolate area would indeed attract less attention.

"Now that I've got the location, I better head back and discuss this with Everett!" Dorothy announced, getting ready to leave.

"Do you want me to let Jeffrey know? He's with his daughter right now, and I haven't told him yet."

"No need!" Dorothy reflexively waved

her hand, then scrambled for an excuse, "Once Everett and I have a plan, if we need Jeffrey's help, Everett will call him! If he doesn't, it means we don't need him right now. He might have other plans.

"Alright, then. We'll be waiting for your update!"

Chapter 1310

Karen waved goodbye to Dorothy until she was out of sight, then turned back towards the house.

Inside, Jeffrey had just finished tucking their daughter into bed and came out to the living room, raising an eyebrow at his wife, "Was that Dorothy who dropped by?" "Yeah, but she's gone now."

Jeffrey, oblivious to the gravity of the situation, shrugged and chuckled, "That Dorothy, she's really Everett's darling, isn't she? Every time she visits us, Everett has to shoot me a text to check in."

"Well, these are unusual times. Having Everett keeping an eye out does put my mind at ease."

Karen felt somewhat helpless at the moment.

Being pregnant meant she had to sit out on a lot of things.

"Just relax at home and wait for our good news! Even if something were to happen to Everett, Dorothy will be fine. Don't worry."

"Okay."

Karen nodded, choosing not to tell Jeffrey about the location Kenneth had sent her.

Since Dorothy said she'd discuss it with Everett, Karen decided to just wait.

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Once Dorothy got into Kevin's car, she kept her eyes glued to the location on her phone.

"Ms. Sanchez, heading back to Bay Residence?" Kevin asked.

"No! Take me to this place first, I need to pick something up."

She showed Kevin a location, which was in a fairly central part of Eldorria City, causing Kevin to relax a bit.

"Sure! Looking for anything in particular?"

Seeing a bakery listed there, Dorothy casually said, "Their pastries are delicious, I'm thinking of grabbing some to take back." After a pause, she quickly added, "You don't need to tell Everett, okay? If he calls asking, just say I haven't left Karen's yet." Kevin was puzzled, "Why keep a simple pastry run from Mr. Lopez?"

"It's not about keeping secrets, it's just... in Everett's eyes, everywhere but Bay Residence seems dangerous right now! If I go straight.

I

back after shopping, there's no need to worry him further, right?

Kevin chuckled at that.

"Ms. Sanchez, Mr. Lopez is finally seeing the light at the end of the tunnel! It's nice to see you caring about him."

To Kevin, it was heartwarming to see Mr. Lopez's years of dedication and careful attention to Dorothy finally being reciprocated. It was a good sign.

He glanced at Dorothy through the rearview mirror, smiling, "Once the antidote is secured, you and Me Lopez can finally settle down for a peaceful life!"

"Yeah," Dorothy smiled thoughtfully, "I do like peaceful days."

They arrived at the bakery, but with no parking spots nearby, Kevin had to park a little distance away in a small lot.

As Dorothy reached for the car door, Kevin was already on his feet.

"Let me know what you want, I can go get it!"

"No need, I'd like to pick for myself. A few steps ahead, Dorothy noticed Kevin following and quickly said, "You don't have to come with me, I'll be right back."

"I'm already out, might as well go together! I can help carry."