

## **The Tower 250**

### Chapter 250: Side Story 3

Knock! Knock! Knock!

"Is anyone home? I have a package for you!" one of the gang members shouted, pretending to be a delivery man.

The voice grew louder and more urgent. Kim Kang-Chun noticed their presence and glanced at the window for an escape route. However, being on the fifth floor, he realized Ji Eun-Ju couldn't go down that way.

"Ahem, ahem." Kim Kang-Chun cleared his throat as if waking up from sleep and approached the door.

"Who is it at this hour?" Kim Kang-Chun asked without opening the door.

"Oh, it's just a package. Are you the owner of this place? Do you live here by any chance?" said the man from the other side of the door.

Kim Kang-Chun looked through the peephole on the door to see who was standing outside. He saw that the man was wearing a cap; it had been pulled low to hide his face.

"Sorry? Did you say you have a package for me? But I didn't order anything," Kim Kang-Chun replied.

"Is Ms. Ji Eun-Ju there with you? I have a delivery for her," said the man.

"No one by that name lives here. You must have come to the wrong place," Kim Kang-Chun replied.

"Well, this is the delivery address, though. Do you want to take a look at it?" the man asked.

"Just leave it in front of the door," Kim Kang-Chun replied.

"Sorry, I can't do that. I need confirmation from the recipient," said the man.

Kim Kang-Chun clenched his teeth in annoyance.

"Just a moment, please," said Kim Kang-Chun.

Wiping away the cold sweat dripping from his forehead and quickly fixing his appearance to appear as if he had just woken up, Kim Kang-Chun went to the front door.

Click. Squeak.

Kim Kang-Chun turned the doorknob, unlocking the door. The delivery guy wore a cap and a vest with a suspicious black outfit underneath. Though it was hard to see in the darkness, he noticed a red mark resembling a blood stain. The delivery guy looked at Kim Kang-Chun up and down and peered inside.

Thump. Thump. Thump.

Kim Kang-Chun's heart pounded like crazy, but he tried his best to remain composed and displayed his irritation.

"This isn't the right address, is it?" Kim Kang-Chun said with an irritated voice.

"Oh? I see," the man replied.

The man's voice lacked surprise, and Kim Kang-Chun noticed a bulge inside the delivery person's jacket, making him gulp. He wondered what could be hidden there—a knife or a gun. However, he quickly realized it was unrealistic for the man to have a gun.

"Excuse me, Sir," said the man dressed as a delivery man.

"Yes?" Kim Kang-Chun replied.

Worried that the delivery person might have caught on, Kim Kang-Chun decided to tackle and disarm the man if he reached inside his vest.

"Do you know someone named Ji Eun-Ju?" the man asked.

"Ji Eun-Ju? No. Anyway, this package isn't for me, so please leave," said Kim Kang-Chun, acting annoyed.

Kim Kang-Chun stepped back into the house and closed and locked the door. He saw the delivery man's menacing gaze through the narrowing gap as he closed the door.

Clang.

Thump. Thump. Thump.

He felt like his heart was about to burst.

"Ugh! Damn it! My sleep got interrupted! Ugh!" Kim Kang-Chun muttered loudly but naturally as he entered the room, as he thought the man could still be standing in front of the door, trying to eavesdrop.

"What should we do, Oppa—" Ji Eun-Ju asked.

"Shh." Kim Kang-Chun gestured for her to be quiet.

Kim Kang-Chun told Ji Eun-Ju to close the door and pack her things quietly in her room. He then carefully approached the front door again, peering through the peephole, but found no one outside. To be safe, he remained by the door for five minutes, straining to listen for any sounds. Perhaps the intruders were questioning in neighboring suites.

As if on cue, Kim Kang-Chun heard banging and shouting from the adjacent apartment, but there was no response.

‘Hmm... I wonder what he’s going to do...’

Suddenly, a loud crashing noise reverberated through the place.

Baang—!

The sound of the lock being broken echoed, leaving Kim Kang-Chun shocked.

‘What the hell! Did he just break the door?’

Kim Kang-Chun prayed that there were no people in the neighboring suite. He anxiously waited for any cries of alarm, but thankfully, none came. The next door was vacant.

‘Damn it! We would have been in much greater trouble if we pretended not to be here...’

The footsteps of the intruders soon faded away. Kim Kang-Chun cautiously opened the door, checking the corridor for any signs of people. Finding it empty, he closed the door, quickly dressed, and returned to Ji Eun-Ju.

"Oppa..." Ji Eun-Ju said, looking terrified.

"Eun-Ju, listen carefully. There are people after you, and they're causing chaos here to find you," Kim Kang-Chun said.

"But why are they targeting me?" Ji Eun-Ju asked, failing to comprehend their motive.

"Get a grip. Now is not the time to cry. I'll help you, Eun-Ju. Stay calm and follow my lead, but remember to remain silent," Kim Kang-Chun said.

"Okay," Ji Eun-Ju replied.

The apartment complex had long corridors with stairs on both ends and an elevator. Since the intruders had gone up the left stairs earlier, Kim Kang-Chun deduced that they would likely move toward the right stairs. With this in mind, he believed they could quickly descend the left stairs, get into the car, and flee.

'Please, let them not be guarding the entrance...'

If the intruders had anticipated all the scenarios and blocked the entrance, it would be a dead-end, and Kim Kang-Chun and Ji Eun-Ju could not escape.

"Let's go," Kim Kang-Chun said.

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Sizzle— Thump.

The North Korean agent threw down his cigarette and stepped on it to put it out. As he headed toward the apartment complex's entrance, he encountered the gang members on their way down to the entrance.

"She's not here. Maybe it's the wrong building?" one of the gang members said.

"Oh, is that so?" the North Korean agent replied.

Sensing something amiss, the North Korean agent glanced around and noticed the mailbox.

'Hmm...'

He spotted some uncollected mail and checked one piece while going through it. He smiled and placed another cigarette between his lips.

"Did you check suite 512?" the North Korean agent asked the gang members.

"Yes, we did. But it seemed like a man lived there alone," one of the gang members replied.

"Ugh, you idiots. Can't you see this?" The North Korean agent blew out a cloud of smoke and tossed the mail to them.

The mail was addressed to Ji Eun-Ju, with her name clearly written on it.

"Oh!" The gang members seemed surprised.

"That's why I can't trust you damn bastards. Block all the entrances," ordered the North Korean agent, deciding to go up and check.

"Yes, Sir!" the gang members replied.

Ding—!

He boarded an elevator, pressed the button with a five on it, and waited. The elevator door soon opened on the fifth floor. He calmly walked down the corridor and stood before apartment suite 512. After meticulously examining the door, his focus shifted to the doorknob, which he lightly touched.

"Ha... these damn bastards," the North Korean agent muttered, noticing a hint of moisture on the doorknob.

He could tell it was sweat, a clear sign of nervousness. The doorknob was still damp, indicating that not much time had passed since someone was here.

'But how did they know who we were?'

He immediately deduced that someone had dealt with the gang members by pretending that Eun-Ju didn't live in the apartment. And since he didn't meet either of them on his way up, they had likely gone down using the exits on the other side. The North Korean agent tossed his cigarette over the railing and looked down to see what was there.

"Huh?" The North Korean agent caught the sight of two people who had just jumped from the second-floor railing.

There was a man and a woman. Furthermore, the woman's face perfectly matched the one he had seen at the school.

"Hey, you bastards! They're over there!" shouted the North Korean agent, calling out to the rest of the gang members.

Kim Kang-Chun and Ji Eun-Ju looked up, quickly rushing into the car as he shouted. The gang members guarding the entrance noticed and gave chase, but it was too late. The North Korean man swiftly took the elevator down.

"Hurry up, chase them!" the North Korean agent shouted.

The black van's door closed swiftly, and they began pursuing the gray sedan carrying Kim Kang-Chun and Ji Eun-Ju. Looking for the van, Baek Kang-Woo noticed the gray sedan and clicked his tongue.

"Are they seriously driving without headlights at this hour? What if they get into an accident driving like this? Tsk," Baek Kang-Woo muttered and clicked his tongue.

"It's fine... But where did these guys disappear to?" Cha Yu-Min asked, referring to the gang members.

"Yeah! What's taking you so long? Find them quickly! You said you were a detective!" Shin Ha-Neul shouted at Baek Kang-Woo.

"Will you please shut up, you little brat! I saved you from their attack," said Baek Kang-Woo.

"Exactly! So you should capture those damn bastards quickly! You're the detective!" Shin Ha-Neul shouted.

"Alright! I'm going to!" Baek Kang-Woo shouted back.

Baek Kang-Woo angrily stepped on the accelerator. Suddenly, another vehicle approached from the corner, both headlights blazing.

"Huh?" Baek Kang-Woo seemed surprised to see that car.

"Hey! It's that car! Turn around! Hurry!" Cha Yu-Min shouted after noticing that car.

Cha Yu-Min urgently tapped Baek Kang-Woo's shoulder as the van swiftly passed them and vanished. Baek Kang-Woo quickly maneuvered the steering wheel, but the narrow street forced him to make multiple turns before they could finally follow the van.

"Damn it! Where did they go again!" Baek Kang-Woo shouted, irritated.

"I think they went after that sedan we saw earlier," Cha Yu-Min replied.

"Oh, you think so?" Baek Kang-Woo asked.

"Yeah, it seemed like they would turn left toward the village. So, let's go over there, too," Cha Yu-Min replied.

"Good idea. You have sharp eyes, as always," Baek Kang-Woo replied.



"Isn't that your job, Detective?" Shin Ha-Neul mocked Baek Kang-Woo.

"You, just keep quiet!" Baek Kang-Woo shouted.

"Fine," Shin Ha-Neul muttered.

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"Eun-Ju, listen carefully. I will drop you off near Jia's store and get away alone. I'll be the bait, so you hide at Jia's store and escape with Jia, alright?" Kim Kang-Chun said to Ji Eun-Ju.

"What? No! How can I run away alone while leaving you behind?" Ji Eun-Ju started tearing up.

"Whether we're together or not, it won't make a difference. Just trust me and do as I say," Kim Kang-Chun replied.

"But still..." Ji Eun-Ju muttered.

"Ji Eun-Ju, please listen and follow my instructions. What difference will it make if you stay here out of guilt? Huh? Please, just trust me. Okay?!" Kim Kang-Chun shouted.

"Alright..." Ji Eun-Ju replied.

After wiping her tears, Ji Eun-Ju grabbed the pendant around her neck, closing her eyes. Kim Kang-Chun soon entered the village, used the rearview mirror to confirm that the gang's car was not in sight, and entered an alley. He then dropped off Ji Eun-Ju.

"Do you remember what I told you? Go into Jia's store and hide until everything settles down. Only then should you come out, understood?" Kim Kang-Chun told Ji Eun-Ju one last time.

"Okay, I get it... But promise me you won't get caught," Ji Eun-Ju said to Kim Kang-Chun.

"Of course, don't worry about me," Kim Kang-Chun replied.

Ji Eun-Ju nodded, left the car, and ran toward Yu Jia's store. After seeing her safely inside, Kim Kang-Chun started driving and left the alley.

'Damn, did they follow us all the way here already?'

As Kim Kang-Chun exited the alley, he spotted the gang's van. Therefore, he had no choice but to press the accelerator even harder, ignoring all the traffic signals.

"Hey, there he is! Look over there! It's 4907!" shouted one of the gang members driving the van, spotting Kim Kang.

"Chase him! Step on it! Quickly!" shouted the other gang member riding shotgun.

Finally, the North Korean agent sitting in the back spoke up.

"Stop for a moment and open the door for me," said the North Korean agent.

"Sorry? What are you talking about?" One of the gang members seemed confused.

"Hurry!" shouted the North Korean agent.

"Okay, Sir!" The gang member braked hard to stop the car for him.

Screech!

The agent exited the car and closed the door.

"Get going quickly! Chase him!" The North Korean agent shouted.

The agent took out a cigarette and lit it. The van quickly disappeared from his view. He stared at the alley where the sedan had just driven by and entered it.

"Hmmm... Something's strange. Why this alley?" the North Korean agent muttered, looking confused.

The North Korean man pondered why they would enter this alley, considering the van's path and their familiarity with the area. Besides, this side of the street was a dead end. It did not make sense that they would mistakenly enter this alley. Furthermore, since they were locals here, it seemed unlikely that they had made a mistake.

"It seems like they wanted to get my attention, haha," the North Korean agent mumbled, chuckling softly.

He put out his cigarette and looked around.

"Hmm..." The North Korean agent was lost in his thoughts for a moment.

In front of him stood a closed flower shop. The lights were off, but the shutters remained open, and a few flower petals littered the floor.

Sizzle— Click.

The North Korean man lit his cigarette again, a habit that helped him think more clearly.

"It's still warm," the man muttered and smirked.

A warm breeze left through a crack in the door, indicating that the heater had been recently used. Moreover, it was well past two in the morning, making it highly unlikely that a worker would be present at this hour.

Swoosh—!

The North Korean man casually ran his finger along the doorknob. Other than a bit of dust, he found nothing else. He looked up and around the store, but this place seemed well-maintained. The owner's diligence was evident.

He threw his cigarette on the ground and stepped on it to put it out. Then, he retrieved a small hammer from his pocket.

Woosh—!

Baaam—!

The North Korean man swung the hammer and shattered the glass front door. Stepping onto the glass pieces, he entered the store.

Click.

As he pressed the switch, the lights illuminated the interior, revealing an empty hallway.

Thump. Thump.

He knew that if someone were hiding, they would likely be under the counter. He approached the counter, toying with the hammer in his hand.

"Ji Eun-Ju... Are you there?"