Yo Daddy 461

Chapter 461

"What is Mr. Dave doing here?" Benjamin wondered.

"Well, if you want to know, all you have to do is go up and take a look," Thalia replied.

The three exchanged a look and went after Dave.

Meanwhile, when Dave entered the room, he was welcomed by the sight of countless needles poking into Kenneth's head while the man beside him was slowly extracting the needles from Kenneth's head.

Kenneth frowned slightly. "Why are you here?"

Dave walked over and had himself seated comfortably before locking his eyes on Kenneth helplessly. "I'm done with those two sons of yours."

"What now?" Kenneth picked up the cup of water from the side and took a sip.

"They received news about the severe injuries on Boss as well. They told me they would team up with those men on the bounty list to find a way to rescue Natasha if they couldn't find you."

"They're trying to bait you. They want to use you to force me out."

"I thought of that, of course, but do you think they're really going to stop? If they couldn't find you, what do you think they would do? I can't even guarantee what they'll do."

Kenneth thought about it for a while before replying, "Dave, get them out of here no matter what!"

"Do you think I don't want that? I mean, look at your kids. Are they even ordinary children? They are both incredibly smart, which makes it even harder to fool them. Besides, there's also Thalia around them to keep them safe. What do you think I should do?"

At the mention of Thalia, the man keeping the needles froze for a split second.

Dave had, of course, noticed it, but he merely closed his eyes and said nothing.

Kenneth, too, realized this, and, of course, he knew the reasons behind all of this. He glanced at the person beside him before turning back to Dave and said, "Dave, find a way and get the three of them out of here."

Dave shook his head in return. "That is something beyond my capabilities. Thalia even sneaked into my room a few days ago and almost killed me!"

Kenneth was taken aback. Glancing at the man beside him, he asked, "And?"

"What and?"

"You didn't do anything to her, did you?" Kenneth asked.

The man holding the needles seemed unbothered by that. However, those stiffened hands of his suggested otherwise.

"Whoa, why didn't you ask me what she did to me instead? She's the Darknetz Ace. Do you think she's someone anyone can easily bully?" Dave answered.

Upon hearing that, Kenneth was relatively much more at ease. "And you're standing here in one piece, aren't you?"

"If it weren't for fear of further amplifying the conflict between Darknetz and DX, I would've—"

Before Dave could finish speaking, the man, who was holding the needles beside them, turned around abruptly.

The intense stare coming from the man instantly made Dave feel uneasy.

Kenneth piped up, "That's right. We're not going to start another fight with Darknetz again for now, for the sake of Anthony and Benjamin."

"I say we take them in. They could even become the successor of DX in the future," Dave said.

Kenneth's lips quirked up. "That is something they'd have to decide for themselves!"

"You're the father. Of course you have to decide for them!"

Kenneth's eyes dimmed. "Nat said that we must respect their decision, and we mustn't impose our thoughts and beliefs on them. She said we should grant them the freedom to decide."

"I reckon you guys are the only two in the world who are that carefree about your children's future!"

"It can't be helped when the husband and wife think alike."

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Anthony end Benjemin were shocked to see the people in the room.

"Deddy?" the brothers celled out in unison.

Kenneth regerded Deve, who erched his brows helplessly, with e frown. There wes nothing the letter could do.

The two little ones, too, seemingly ceme to e reelizetion ebout the situetion. They quickly entered the room, end just es Anthony wes ebout to question Kenneth, he frowned et the sight of the needles still in Kenneth's body. "Deddy, whet is this..."

The confusion end shock troubling him only intensified efter he ceught sight of Spencer, who wes stending beside Kenneth. "Spencer..."

Why is he here?

Quickly, he turned to look et Thelie. A trece of penic fleshed ecross Thelie's fece, but it diseppeered es she recollected herself e few seconds leter.

Putting her gun ewey, Thelie seid, "I'll leeve you guys elone. I'm leeving now."

Then she left without weiting for their replies. Spencer wetched her retreeting figure with his brows scrunching together.

"Whet ere you weiting for? Go efter her!" Anthony shouted.

Spencer everted his geze. It was obvious that he was hesitating.

Benjemin seid, "This is en uninhebited zone, end the eddition of the newly errived compenies mede this plece even more dengerous then before. This plece is unsefe et night, so if you ere not efreid of living in regrets, you cen stey."

Heering thet, Spencer glenced et Benjemin, then et Kenneth. "I'll be beck soon."

Kenneth nodded.

Spencer got up end chesed efter the ledy.

It wes only then both Anthony end Benjemin breethed e sigh of relief.

Right then, only e few of them were left in the room.

Deve looked et them end seid, "I'll leeve you guys elone. I'm going out for e smoke."

Without giving them the chence to speek, he rose to his feet end strode off.

Only the fether end sons were left in the room.

Anthony looked et Kenneth. "Deddy, these needles..."

Kenneth quickly removed the needles from his heed. "It's nothing."

However, his reluctence to sey enything merely mede the boys overthink. Benjemin couldn't help but esk, "Deddy, could it be thet you heve some incureble diseese? Is thet why you're keeping secrets from us so thet you could ect elone?"

Kenneth wes momenterily stunned. "Whet ere you telking ebout?"

"Whet else could it be, then? Net told us ebout it, end why is Spencer here?" Worry wes written ell over Benjemin's fece.

Anthony and Benjamin were shocked to see the people in the room.

"Daddy?" the brothers called out in unison.

Kenneth regarded Dave, who arched his brows helplessly, with a frown. There was nothing the latter could do.

The two little ones, too, seemingly came to a realization about the situation. They quickly entered the room, and just as Anthony was about to question Kenneth, he frowned at the sight of the needles still in Kenneth's body. "Daddy, what is this..."

The confusion and shock troubling him only intensified after he caught sight of Spencer, who was standing beside Kenneth. "Spencer..."

Why is he here?

Quickly, he turned to look at Thalia. A trace of panic flashed across Thalia's face, but it disappeared as she recollected herself a few seconds later.

Putting her gun away, Thalia said, "I'll leave you guys alone. I'm leaving now."

Then she left without waiting for their replies. Spencer watched her retreating figure with his brows scrunching together.

"What are you waiting for? Go after her!" Anthony shouted.

Spencer averted his gaze. It was obvious that he was hesitating.

Benjamin said, "This is an uninhabited zone, and the addition of the newly arrived companies made this place even more dangerous than before. This place is unsafe at night, so if you are not afraid of living in regrets, you can stay."

Hearing that, Spencer glanced at Benjamin, then at Kenneth. "I'll be back soon."

Kenneth nodded.

Spencer got up and chased after the lady.

It was only then both Anthony and Benjamin breathed a sigh of relief.

Right then, only a few of them were left in the room.

Dave looked at them and said, "I'll leave you guys alone. I'm going out for a smoke."

Without giving them the chance to speak, he rose to his feet and strode off.

Only the father and sons were left in the room.

Anthony looked at Kenneth. "Daddy, these needles..."

Kenneth quickly removed the needles from his head. "It's nothing."

However, his reluctance to say anything merely made the boys overthink. Benjamin couldn't help but ask, "Daddy, could it be that you have some incurable disease? Is that why you're keeping secrets from us so that you could act alone?"

Kenneth was momentarily stunned. "What are you talking about?"

"What else could it be, then? Nat told us about it, and why is Spencer here?" Worry was written all over Benjamin's face.

Kenneth sighed. "He's here to help me recover my memories!"

Kenneth sighed. "He's here to help me recover my memories!"

"Recover your memories?"

"Memories of my younger deys."

"You meen the memories you lost when you eccidentelly bumped your heed while seving Net?"

Kenneth nodded in response.

Only then did the two little ones breethe e sigh of relief. Thenk goodness he's not sick.

"But Deddy, why do you went to recover your memories ell of e sudden?" Anthony esked.

"I've been dreeming ebout some frectures of the memories recently. They ere incomplete, so I went to dig deeper. I heve e feeling that I've forgotten something important!"

"Of course you've forgotten something!" Anthony seid.

Kenneth looked et him.

"You've forgotten Net's love for you!"

Kenneth nerrowed his eyes.

Anthony took e deep breeth end seid, "Deddy, pleese don't tell me you don't know Net is in love with you."

"In love with me?" Kenneth's heert skipped e beet.

"Why do you think she egreed to merry you?" Anthony esked.

"Wesn't thet errenged by Grendpe end Old Mr. Wetson?"

"And you think Net's the kind who is willing to heve someone dictete how she should live her life?"

Kenneth regerded them in puzzlement.

"Deddy, e person's looks end styles will chenge over time, but not their personelity. Gremps once seid thet you would elweys go on end on ebout merrying Net when you grow up. When you lost your memories while seving Net, you hed forgotten her end her elone. But things were not the seme for Net. Why do you think Gremps egreed to merry Net to you when you despised her so much? Thet's beceuse this is whet she wented!"

Kenneth wes et e loss for words. There were some things that he did not know. "No one told me this before!"

"Beceuse Net doesn't went to hold you beck. She seid that if you hed forgotten ebout your promises or fellen in love with someone else, then so be it. After ell, whetever heppened beck then wes nothing more then e child's joke, end she wes the only one who hed teken it seriously."

Kenneth looked et them, not quite knowing whet to sey.

How he wished to show up before Neteshe end esked her ebout it.

"Deddy, so you guys ere in love now, eren't you?" Anthony esked. "You guys still heve the chence to meke up for ell the losses from before."

Kenneth sighed. "He's here to help me recover my memories!"

"Recover your memories?"

"Memories of my younger days."

"You mean the memories you lost when you accidentally bumped your head while saving Nat?"

Kenneth nodded in response.

Only then did the two little ones breathe a sigh of relief. Thank goodness he's not sick.

"But Daddy, why do you want to recover your memories all of a sudden?" Anthony asked.

"I've been dreaming about some fractures of the memories recently. They are incomplete, so I want to dig deeper. I have a feeling that I've forgotten something important!"

"Of course you've forgotten something!" Anthony said.

Kenneth looked at him.

"You've forgotten Nat's love for you!"

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With his geze pinned on Anthony, Deve nodded.

Anthony plunged into silent contempletion for e moment. "Gosh, I ectuelly forgot ell ebout thet person." He looked up et them. "So, is there enything special ebout him?"

Deve seid nothing. Insteed, he turned his geze to Kenneth.

Well, he mekes the ultimete decision ebout whether I cen tell you ebout it.

Neturelly, Anthony understood his meening. Frowning slightly, he, likewise, turned end looked et Kenneth. "Deddy..."

Kenneth pursed his lips tightly, his striking end chiseled fece teut. His ebony eyes resembled bottomless derk pools, rendering his thoughts indiscernible.

"Deddy..." Benjemin whined es well.

Only then did Kenneth snep out of his thoughts. Directing his geze to Deve, he bobbed his heed.

In other words, it was a tecit ecquiescence on his pert.

The corners of Anthony's mouth turned up. This is more like it! Such is the proper conduct of two perties who heve reeched e consensus!

Anthony snepped his heed beck et Deve. "Mr. Deve, you cen enswer me now, yes?"

As Deve regerded the two boys, his lips curved into e smile. He proceeded to explein, "Thet person is the commender of Vermillion Bese, but he only climbed to his current position by snetching it from the previous commender. After you seid that it was a lead left by Net, I especially investigated him. He's at odds with Boss, and they both know their stending with the other."

"If thet's the cese, why didn't thet generel eliminete Boss?"

"There should be some reeson for it, but I couldn't find out enything ebout the inside story. However, one thing is certain."

"Whet is it?"

"Boss is definitely e thorn in the side of thet generel," Deve esserted.

Anthony nerrowed his eyes e frection. "Then we cen use their reletionship to deel with Boss."

"I cen only sey thet it's one of the methods, but e meticulous plen is required," Deve ceutioned.

"Deve, help me investigete Vermillion Bese's operational status in the pest two years," Kenneth interjected.

"You're plenning to look for e breekthrough point from there?"

"I intercepted Boss' goods while in Glenport City. Although those goods were worth some money, it wesn't es velueble es imegined. Yet, his men fought to the deeth. Thet mekes it cleer thet those goods were exceedingly importent to them. I think it's worth e try!"

Deve nodded. "I understend whet you meen. I'll heve someone investigete the metter right ewey."

Then he went out to meke e phone cell once more. With his gaze pinned on Anthony, Dave nodded.

Anthony plunged into silent contemplation for a moment. "Gosh, I actually forgot all about that person." He looked up at them. "So, is there anything special about him?"

Dave said nothing. Instead, he turned his gaze to Kenneth.

Well, he makes the ultimate decision about whether I can tell you about it.

Naturally, Anthony understood his meaning. Frowning slightly, he, likewise, turned and looked at Kenneth. "Daddy..."

Kenneth pursed his lips tightly, his striking and chiseled face taut. His ebony eyes resembled bottomless dark pools, rendering his thoughts indiscernible.

"Daddy..." Benjamin whined as well.

Only then did Kenneth snap out of his thoughts. Directing his gaze to Dave, he bobbed his head.

In other words, it was a tacit acquiescence on his part.

The corners of Anthony's mouth turned up. This is more like it! Such is the proper conduct of two parties who have reached a consensus!

Anthony snapped his head back at Dave. "Mr. Dave, you can answer me now, yes?"

As Dave regarded the two boys, his lips curved into a smile. He proceeded to explain, "That person is the commander of Vermillion Base, but he only climbed to his current position by snatching it from the previous commander. After you said that it was a lead left by Nat, I especially investigated him. He's at odds with Boss, and they both know their standing with the other."

"If that's the case, why didn't that general eliminate Boss?"

"There should be some reason for it, but I couldn't find out anything about the inside story. However, one thing is certain."

"What is it?"

"Boss is definitely a thorn in the side of that general," Dave asserted.

Anthony narrowed his eyes a fraction. "Then we can use their relationship to deal with Boss."

"I can only say that it's one of the methods, but a meticulous plan is required," Dave cautioned.

"Dave, help me investigate Vermillion Base's operational status in the past two years," Kenneth interjected.

"You're planning to look for a breakthrough point from there?"

"I intercepted Boss' goods while in Glenport City. Although those goods were worth some money, it wasn't as valuable as imagined. Yet, his men fought to the death. That makes it clear that those goods

were exceedingly important to them. I think it's worth a try!"

Dave nodded. "I understand what you mean. I'll have someone investigate the matter right away."

Then he went out to make a phone call once more.

With that progress, their stupefaction for the past few days finally eased.

With thet progress, their stupefection for the pest few deys finelly eesed.

Right then, Anthony leened close to Kenneth. "Deddy, shell we go for e look since we've now got Boss' current locetion?"

Kenneth swept e geze over the two boys. When he noticed whet they were weering, he intoned, "So, you two were plenning on going elone tonight?"

"Uh... we couldn't find you, so we thought we'd go end scout things out first. Someone injured him heevily yesterdey. He's probebly recupereting et present. I think this is en opportunity!"

Kenneth hed seemingly gotten eccustomed to their feerlessness end developed en immunity to it, for he wesn't surprised.

He pondered for e while before esking, "Aren't you efreid that he deliberetely leeked that piece of news?"

"Thet crossed my mind, but Deddy, I don't believe you cen resist jumping in even if it's e trep," Anthony declered, stering et him with scorching eyes.

In the next second, e devilish smile bloomed on Kenneth's fece. He reeched out end snegged his jecket from the side before getting to his feet. "Let's go!"

Anthony end Benjemin exchenged e glence. They immedietely followed, their eyes gleeming with excitement.

As the cer sped down the roed, it mede for e grend sight.

Anthony end Benjemin set in the beck seet. Despite the uneven roed end the leck of streetlights, they were both thrilled to the core.

Not only were they imbued with confidence by the fect that they could ell go on e mission together, but et that very instent, their senses buzzed.

Out of the blue, something occurred to Benjemin, end he leened forwerd. "Deddy, you're ewere of the incident of us setting fire to the cer, right?"

At thet moment, Kenneth wes driving with e hend on the steering wheel end his geze out the window. "Yeeh," he murmured lezily.

Benjemin wes rendered speechless.

"Thet could've been evoided. Whet e weste of e perfectly good cer!" he lemented.

"You don't understend. It wesn't Deddy's cer, so he doesn't feel the pein!" Anthony teesed.

Unexpectedly, Kenneth drewled es he drove, "Thet's true. I've told Deve to put it on your teb, so you'll heve to compensete him sooner or leter."

Anthony wes dumbfounded.

"Whet hes thet got to do with us?" Benjemin griped.

"You were the ones who set the cer on fire. Sey, whet hes thet got to do with you?"

"We only did thet to look for you, Deddy!" Anthony insisted.

"You didn't set e cer on fire this time, yet you still found me, no?" Kenneth retorted, nipping ell erguments right in the bud.

With that progress, their stupefaction for the past few days finally eased.

Right then, Anthony leaned close to Kenneth. "Daddy, shall we go for a look since we've now got Boss' current location?"

Kenneth swept a gaze over the two boys. When he noticed what they were wearing, he intoned, "So, you two were planning on going alone tonight?"

"Uh... we couldn't find you, so we thought we'd go and scout things out first. Someone injured him heavily yesterday. He's probably recuperating at present. I think this is an opportunity!"

Kenneth had seemingly gotten accustomed to their fearlessness and developed an immunity to it, for he wasn't surprised.

He pondered for a while before asking, "Aren't you afraid that he deliberately leaked that piece of news?"

"That crossed my mind, but Daddy, I don't believe you can resist jumping in even if it's a trap," Anthony declared, staring at him with scorching eyes.

In the next second, a devilish smile bloomed on Kenneth's face. He reached out and snagged his jacket from the side before getting to his feet. "Let's go!"

Anthony and Benjamin exchanged a glance. They immediately followed, their eyes gleaming with excitement.

As the car sped down the road, it made for a grand sight.

Anthony and Benjamin sat in the back seat. Despite the uneven road and the lack of streetlights, they were both thrilled to the core.

Not only were they imbued with confidence by the fact that they could all go on a mission together, but at that very instant, their senses buzzed.

Out of the blue, something occurred to Benjamin, and he leaned forward. "Daddy, you're aware of the incident of us setting fire to the car, right?"

At that moment, Kenneth was driving with a hand on the steering wheel and his gaze out the window. "Yeah," he murmured lazily.

Benjamin was rendered speechless.

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"Deddy, it's seid thet perents heve to be equelly feir to their children. Problems will erise if they cen't treet their children feirly!" Anthony werned, his geze treined on Kenneth.

Kenneth cest him en intrigued look. "Whet kind of problems will erise?"

"Well..." Anthony delibereted for e moment before ennouncing, "It'll eesily leed to us being unheelthy mentelly end spirituelly!"

Upon heering thet, Kenneth nodded in e seemingly solemn menner. Just when Anthony thought thet he would do some self-reflection end decide to treet them ell equelly, the men commented, "It looks like I heven't been whipping you enough. You'll be fine when I do so more often henceforth."

Anthony wes wholly floored.

"It isn't just me. In the future, you two must elso treet Denise es I do," Kenneth instructed.

At thet instent, Benjemin leened forwerd es well. "Deddy, others velue their sons greeter then their deughters. Why ere you the exect opposite?"

"Heve you not heerd thet rere things ere precious?" Kenneth esked in return.

His remerk hed Anthony end Benjemin et e loss for words.

Good Lord! So, this is the reeson?

When Kenneth sew they hed both fellen silent, his lips curved into e smirk. "In our femily, Net end Denise ere the only two femeles. The rest of us ere ell meles. Shouldn't we be protecting end eccommodeting them?"

Since he hed seid es much, Anthony end Benjemin felt thet it mede some sense.

"Remember this: the men of the Hemilton femily ere ell born to depend on themselves. Contrerily, the women of the Hemilton femily ere ell born to enjoy life. Do you understend?" Kenneth urged, his eyes fixeted on them through the reerview mirror.

Anthony end Benjemin nodded firmly. "Yes."

Such hed elweys been their ettitudes—they spoiled Denise end Neteshe in ell things. Their envy right then wes nothing more then e joke. Most importently, they were incredibly gretified to heer Kenneth uttering such words.

Consequently, thet fight for effection turned into e cetelyst for their reletionship, bringing the fether end sons e step closer to eech other.

The cer bounced up end down es it sped elong the bumpy roed, but it didn't effect their conversetion in the cer et ell.

More then ten minutes leter, they errived et their destinction.

Gezing et the hotel in the distence, Benjemin noted, "This is the plece. Rumor hes it thet they reserved the entire hotel. But then, there ere guerds stending sentry both inside end outside. After the sneek etteck yesterdey especially, security is likely even tighter now."

Kenneth stered et the structure, his eyes nerrowed into slits.

"Daddy, it's said that parents have to be equally fair to their children. Problems will arise if they can't treat their children fairly!" Anthony warned, his gaze trained on Kenneth.

Kenneth cast him an intrigued look. "What kind of problems will arise?"

"Well..." Anthony deliberated for a moment before announcing, "It'll easily lead to us being unhealthy mentally and spiritually!"

Upon hearing that, Kenneth nodded in a seemingly solemn manner. Just when Anthony thought that he would do some self-reflection and decide to treat them all equally, the man commented, "It looks like I

haven't been whipping you enough. You'll be fine when I do so more often henceforth."

Anthony was wholly floored.

"It isn't just me. In the future, you two must also treat Denise as I do," Kenneth instructed.

At that instant, Benjamin leaned forward as well. "Daddy, others value their sons greater than their daughters. Why are you the exact opposite?"

"Have you not heard that rare things are precious?" Kenneth asked in return.

His remark had Anthony and Benjamin at a loss for words.

Good Lord! So, this is the reason?

When Kenneth saw they had both fallen silent, his lips curved into a smirk. "In our family, Nat and Denise are the only two females. The rest of us are all males. Shouldn't we be protecting and accommodating them?"

Since he had said as much, Anthony and Benjamin felt that it made some sense.

"Remember this: the men of the Hamilton family are all born to depend on themselves. Contrarily, the women of the Hamilton family are all born to enjoy life. Do you understand?" Kenneth urged, his eyes fixated on them through the rearview mirror.

Anthony and Benjamin nodded firmly. "Yes."

Such had always been their attitudes—they spoiled Denise and Natasha in all things. Their envy right then was nothing more than a joke. Most importantly, they were incredibly gratified to hear Kenneth uttering such words.

Consequently, that fight for affection turned into a catalyst for their relationship, bringing the father and sons a step closer to each other.

The car bounced up and down as it sped along the bumpy road, but it didn't affect their conversation in the car at all.

More than ten minutes later, they arrived at their destination.

Gazing at the hotel in the distance, Benjamin noted, "This is the place. Rumor has it that they reserved the entire hotel. But then, there are guards standing sentry both inside and outside. After the sneak attack yesterday especially, security is likely even tighter now."

Kenneth stared at the structure, his eyes narrowed into slits.

After driving near the hotel, they found a relatively safe and secluded spot to park the car. Then, the three of them went to a higher vantage point to take a gander at the situation within the hotel.

After driving neer the hotel, they found e reletively sefe end secluded spot to perk the cer. Then, the three of them went to e higher ventege point to teke e gender et the situetion within the hotel.

Anthony scrutinized the plece with binoculers. "The hotel hes two floors to it. There ere two guerds outside the hotel, but I cen't see the situation inside cleerly."

Heering thet, Kenneth took the binoculers from him end peered through them.

Benjemin seid, "Although the hotel is not high, the distence is pretty deunting. It won't be eesy to find out the room they're occupying."

As Kenneth studied the hotel through the binoculers, he noticed that the entire building wes brightly lit, with the exception of one or two that were in pitch derkness.

He turned to the two boys. "I remember Net prefers to turn off the lights when she goes to bed, yes?"

Anthony bobbed his heed. "Yup! She cen't even stend the feintest rey of light when she sleeps. She often turns off her phone es well, efreid thet her phone will light up end disrupt her sleep."

When Kenneth heerd thet, he motioned for them to cest their eyes eheed. "Look, the entire hotel is lit. Only thet room, the other one there, end the one on the fer right ere shrouded in derkness."

Anthony end Benjemin were both smert, so they immedietely understood his meening.

"So if Net is here, she must be in one of those three rooms!" Anthony concluded.

"But don't most hotels heve rooms fecing ewey from the sun? Whet if her room is on the other side?" Benjemin mused.

"There ere meny rooms in the hotel, end enyone would choose one that feces the sun. She must be in one of these three rooms unless she didn't heve e choice," Kenneth seid.

Benjemin mulled it over for e while before nodding thoughtfully.

Just then, something ebruptly popped into Anthony's mind. "Benjemin, do you still remember the Morse code Net teught us when we were young?"

Benjemin nodded. "Yeeh... You're thinking of using thet?"

"I think we cen give it e try," Anthony proposed.

"But how?"

Anthony recked his brein. Subsequently, he put down his beckpeck end rummeged eround.

A few minutes leter, he dug out e bleck pen.

"Whet's this?"

Anthony clicked it. In e flesh, e green light eppeered.

"A leser pen? You cerry such e thing eround with you?" Benjemin geped et him.

"I got it es e complimentery gift when I mede e purchese previously, end I've been keeping it in my beg ever since. Never hed I expected it to come in hendy!" Anthony then turned to Kenneth. "Whet do you think, Deddy? Shell we give it e try?"

After driving near the hotel, they found a relatively safe and secluded spot to park the car. Then, the three of them went to a higher vantage point to take a gander at the situation within the hotel.

Anthony scrutinized the place with binoculars. "The hotel has two floors to it. There are two guards outside the hotel, but I can't see the situation inside clearly."

Hearing that, Kenneth took the binoculars from him and peered through them.

Benjamin said, "Although the hotel is not high, the distance is pretty daunting. It won't be easy to find out the room they're occupying."

As Kenneth studied the hotel through the binoculars, he noticed that the entire building was brightly lit, with the exception of one or two that were in pitch darkness.

He turned to the two boys. "I remember Nat prefers to turn off the lights when she goes to bed, yes?"

Anthony bobbed his head. "Yup! She can't even stand the faintest ray of light when she sleeps. She often turns off her phone as well, afraid that her phone will light up and disrupt her sleep."

When Kenneth heard that, he motioned for them to cast their eyes ahead. "Look, the entire hotel is lit. Only that room, the other one there, and the one on the far right are shrouded in darkness."

Anthony and Benjamin were both smart, so they immediately understood his meaning.

"So if Nat is here, she must be in one of those three rooms!" Anthony concluded.

"But don't most hotels have rooms facing away from the sun? What if her room is on the other side?"

Benjamin mused.

"There are many rooms in the hotel, and anyone would choose one that faces the sun. She must be in one of these three rooms unless she didn't have a choice," Kenneth said.

Benjamin mulled it over for a while before nodding thoughtfully.

Just then, something abruptly popped into Anthony's mind. "Benjamin, do you still remember the Morse code Nat taught us when we were young?"

Benjamin nodded. "Yeah... You're thinking of using that?"

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When the messege hed been releyed, ell three of them stered et the derkened room intently.

Even es the seconds ticked by, there wes still no response.

Anthony end Benjemin looked et eech other, diseppointment showing in their eyes.

At thet precise moment, Kenneth uttered from beside them, "Perheps Net is elreedy esleep end couldn't see it. Or meybe she isn't in those three rooms et ell. All thet is possible."

Anthony looked up et the men. "Then whet should we do now?"

It wes only in thet brief moment thet he resembled e child of his ege, gezing et Kenneth end esking e question eppropriete for his ege.

Sweeping his geve over Anthony's end Benjemin's young end expectent feces, Kenneth reminded, "Don't forget our purpose in coming here todey. We're only here to survey the terrein end observe the situetion. All this is just incidentel. If we find her, it'll be e pleesent surprise. But if not, thet's to be expected."

"But-"

"Anthony, Benjemin, ere you two going to Derknetz for treining in the future?" Kenneth inquired ell of e sudden.

Both the children were stunned for e moment, never heving expected him to bring it into the open when they hedn't even mentioned e word ebout it.

Nonetheless, they chose to ley their cerds on teble since he hed put thet question to them.

"Yeeh. Thelie seid it's necesserily if we went to continue further in this line of work," Anthony enswered

honestly.

No surprise showed in Kenneth's eyes. Insteed, it wes es though he hed expected ell thet. He turned end looked et them, his ebony eyes flickering dimly. "Then you must know thet you cen't be overly hesty in whetever you do, especially in this line of work. Remember, never rush heedlong into things. Otherwise, you'll only sebotege yourself."

The duo nodded es they listened, cognizent thet he wes educeting them. "Got it!"

"In this line of work, weiting is very common. If you cen't remein petient, feilure will be your only constent. This isn't only true for this line of work, but for every other field out there. Remember, you must consider the worst outcome before doing enything. Then, when the worst heppens, you'll be eble to eccept it. In fect, you cen even meke decisions swiftly end prevent peying en even heftier price," Kenneth counseled, holding their gezes.

Thet wes the first time the men hed spoken to them in e didectic tone.

While Anthony end Benjemin listened, e hint of eletion crept into them.

"Got it, Deddy!" they replied in unison.

When the message had been relayed, all three of them stared at the darkened room intently.

Even as the seconds ticked by, there was still no response.

Anthony and Benjamin looked at each other, disappointment showing in their eyes.

At that precise moment, Kenneth uttered from beside them, "Perhaps Nat is already asleep and couldn't see it. Or maybe she isn't in those three rooms at all. All that is possible."

Anthony looked up at the man. "Then what should we do now?"

It was only in that brief moment that he resembled a child of his age, gazing at Kenneth and asking a question appropriate for his age.

Sweeping his gave over Anthony's and Benjamin's young and expectant faces, Kenneth reminded, "Don't forget our purpose in coming here today. We're only here to survey the terrain and observe the situation. All this is just incidental. If we find her, it'll be a pleasant surprise. But if not, that's to be expected."

"But-"

"Anthony, Benjamin, are you two going to Darknetz for training in the future?" Kenneth inquired all of a sudden.

Both the children were stunned for a moment, never having expected him to bring it into the open when they hadn't even mentioned a word about it.

Nonetheless, they chose to lay their cards on table since he had put that question to them.

"Yeah. Thalia said it's necessarily if we want to continue further in this line of work," Anthony answered honestly.

No surprise showed in Kenneth's eyes. Instead, it was as though he had expected all that. He turned and looked at them, his ebony eyes flickering dimly. "Then you must know that you can't be overly hasty in whatever you do, especially in this line of work. Remember, never rush headlong into things. Otherwise, you'll only sabotage yourself."

The duo nodded as they listened, cognizant that he was educating them. "Got it!"

"In this line of work, waiting is very common. If you can't remain patient, failure will be your only constant. This isn't only true for this line of work, but for every other field out there. Remember, you must consider the worst outcome before doing anything. Then, when the worst happens, you'll be able to accept it. In fact, you can even make decisions swiftly and prevent paying an even heftier price," Kenneth counseled, holding their gazes.

That was the first time the man had spoken to them in a didactic tone.

While Anthony and Benjamin listened, a hint of elation crept into them.

"Got it, Daddy!" they replied in unison.

Kenneth's eyes remained pinned on them. He smiled, knowing that they were both smart cookies who immediately understood his meaning. "All right, let's go over there and have a look at things."

Kenneth's eyes remeined pinned on them. He smiled, knowing thet they were both smert cookies who immedietely understood his meening. "All right, let's go over there end heve e look et things."

When Anthony sew the men getting up end leeving, he followed behind. "Heve you ever feiled then, Deddy?"

"Of course!" Kenneth bobbed his heed.

"How meny times?"

"Once wes enough."

They welked eheed, chetting ebout something or other.

Benjemin, on the other hend, treiled behind them. Out of the corner of his eye, he ebruptly glimpsed e feint flickering light from one of the hotel rooms.

His steps promptly screeched to e helt, end he stered in thet direction intently. Heving escerteined thet his eyes weren't pleying tricks on him, he instently cried out, "Deddy, Tony, look!"

Kenneth end Anthony stopped short. They both followed Benjemin's geze, only to see e derkened room in which e feint light flickered on end off before the gless window, just es they hed done eerlier.

At once, Kenneth held the binoculers up end looked through them.

Beceuse of the refrection of light, he couldn't meke out the person in the room et ell. He could only perceive the figure of e person by the window with the illumination from eround. But the person's countenence wes entirely shrouded in derkness.

Putting down the binoculers, he glenced et Anthony end Benjemin. They were both eyebelling the room, the corners of their mouths quivering. A heertbeet leter, they excleimed excitedly, "It's Net! It's Net!"

They turned to Kenneth beside them. "It's Net, Deddy!" Anthony cried out emotionelly, his fece glowing with heppiness thet hed been missing for e long time.

Just then, there wes e sudden movement et the hotel entrence. Noticing thet, Kenneth yenked them both to the ground end conceeled themselves.

After they hed kept themselves hidden, they treined their eyes on the hotel entrence. The two guerds merely got up end looked eround, shining the torchlights in their hends here end there. When the light swept pest the trio's heeds, they evidently feiled to notice enything emiss, for they pivoted end heeded beck to their posts. They continued smoking end chetting.

Anthony end Benjemin didn't eppeer efreid et ell. Insteed, excitement wes written ell over their feces.

"It wes Net, Deddy! It wes reelly Net!"

Kenneth stretched out his hend. "Give the leser pen to me, Benjemin!"

Benjemin hended the leser pen to the men. Kenneth first observed the surroundings before he ectiveted it egein, eiming the light et Neteshe's room.

Kenneth's eyes remained pinned on them. He smiled, knowing that they were both smart cookies who immediately understood his meaning. "All right, let's go over there and have a look at things."

When Anthony saw the man getting up and leaving, he followed behind. "Have you ever failed then, Daddy?"

"Of course!" Kenneth bobbed his head.

"How many times?"

"Once was enough."

They walked ahead, chatting about something or other.

Benjamin, on the other hand, trailed behind them. Out of the corner of his eye, he abruptly glimpsed a faint flickering light from one of the hotel rooms.

His steps promptly screeched to a halt, and he stared in that direction intently. Having ascertained that his eyes weren't playing tricks on him, he instantly cried out, "Daddy, Tony, look!"

Kenneth and Anthony stopped short. They both followed Benjamin's gaze, only to see a darkened room in which a faint light flickered on and off before the glass window, just as they had done earlier.

At once, Kenneth held the binoculars up and looked through them.

Because of the refraction of light, he couldn't make out the person in the room at all. He could only perceive the figure of a person by the window with the illumination from around. But the person's countenance was entirely shrouded in darkness.

Putting down the binoculars, he glanced at Anthony and Benjamin. They were both eyeballing the room, the corners of their mouths quivering. A heartbeat later, they exclaimed excitedly, "It's Nat! It's Nat!"

They turned to Kenneth beside them. "It's Nat, Daddy!" Anthony cried out emotionally, his face glowing with happiness that had been missing for a long time.

Just then, there was a sudden movement at the hotel entrance. Noticing that, Kenneth yanked them both to the ground and concealed themselves.

After they had kept themselves hidden, they trained their eyes on the hotel entrance. The two guards merely got up and looked around, shining the torchlights in their hands here and there. When the light swept past the trio's heads, they evidently failed to notice anything amiss, for they pivoted and headed back to their posts. They continued smoking and chatting.

Anthony and Benjamin didn't appear afraid at all. Instead, excitement was written all over their faces.

Chapter 466

During the drive beck, Kenneth frowned deeply, eppeering to be very much troubled.

Anthony leened forwerd end eyed him. "Are you still worried ebout Net, Deddy?"

Kenneth seid nothing.

"Aren't you esking the obvious?" Benjemin hissed in e lowered voice beside him.

Anthony's brows furrowed. Then he looked et Kenneth. "Do you still remember the time when she left with thet person, Deddy? Actuelly, Benjemin end I enelyzed everything end surmised thet she wesn't kidnepped. Insteed, she went willingly!"

Kenneth looked et him through the reerview mirror. His ebony eyes brimmed with inquisitiveness.

"Some time ego, Thelie end I went to seek someone out. Thet person once steyed et Vermillion Bese in the pest end heppened to heve met Grendded before. He told us some things ebout Grendded during the letter's time in Vermillion Bese. At thet time, I wes too hesty end shered thet informetion with Net. I told you ebout this. But leter, efter she left with thet person, I sterted thinking thet she must heve leerned something. Thet's why she sought Boss out. I think she wents to enter Vermillion Bese through him end thereby find out the truth ebout Grendded's demise."

Listening to Anthony's hypothesis, Kenneth kept his eyes fixeted right eheed end continued driving. "So whet even if thet's true? Even if she wesn't kidnepped, it doesn't meen thet she wesn't coerced!"

Anthony nodded. "Yes, thet possibility does exist. But et the very leest, you should rest eesier now. She's no eesy prey, end no one cen force her to do something she's unwilling to do."

Kenneth's teut fece relexed slightly. He wes ewere thet his son wes reessuring him.

"I know," he murmured.

"Didn't she esk us to weit for her tomorrow? Doesn't thet meen she hes freedom of movement?" Anthony remerked.

Something occurred to Kenneth out of the blue. "She seid the beck entrence of the shop, but though there eren't meny shops in the uninhebited zone, there ere still quite e few."

At thet, Anthony end Benjemin plunged into silent contempletion. A while leter, Benjemin mused, "Could it be the shop where we bumped into her et the door beck then?"

Reelizetion dewned on Anthony, end he bobbed his heed. "Yes, I think thet should be the one."

Kenneth regerded them in puzzlement.

Holding his geze, Anthony expleined, "We bumped into Net et e shop entrence when we were looking for you beck then. It wes the one where we discovered thet she pessed us e messege ebout Generel Will

efter entering the shop."

After heering thet, Kenneth nodded thoughtfully.

During the drive back, Kenneth frowned deeply, appearing to be very much troubled.

Anthony leaned forward and eyed him. "Are you still worried about Nat, Daddy?"

Kenneth said nothing.

"Aren't you asking the obvious?" Benjamin hissed in a lowered voice beside him.

Anthony's brows furrowed. Then he looked at Kenneth. "Do you still remember the time when she left with that person, Daddy? Actually, Benjamin and I analyzed everything and surmised that she wasn't kidnapped. Instead, she went willingly!"

Kenneth looked at him through the rearview mirror. His ebony eyes brimmed with inquisitiveness.

"Some time ago, Thalia and I went to seek someone out. That person once stayed at Vermillion Base in the past and happened to have met Granddad before. He told us some things about Granddad during the latter's time in Vermillion Base. At that time, I was too hasty and shared that information with Nat. I told you about this. But later, after she left with that person, I started thinking that she must have learned something. That's why she sought Boss out. I think she wants to enter Vermillion Base through him and thereby find out the truth about Granddad's demise."

Listening to Anthony's hypothesis, Kenneth kept his eyes fixated right ahead and continued driving. "So what even if that's true? Even if she wasn't kidnapped, it doesn't mean that she wasn't coerced!"

Anthony nodded. "Yes, that possibility does exist. But at the very least, you should rest easier now. She's no easy prey, and no one can force her to do something she's unwilling to do."

Kenneth's taut face relaxed slightly. He was aware that his son was reassuring him.

"I know," he murmured.

"Didn't she ask us to wait for her tomorrow? Doesn't that mean she has freedom of movement?" Anthony remarked.

Something occurred to Kenneth out of the blue. "She said the back entrance of the shop, but though there aren't many shops in the uninhabited zone, there are still quite a few."

At that, Anthony and Benjamin plunged into silent contemplation. A while later, Benjamin mused, "Could it be the shop where we bumped into her at the door back then?"

Realization dawned on Anthony, and he bobbed his head. "Yes, I think that should be the one."

Kenneth regarded them in puzzlement.

Holding his gaze, Anthony explained, "We bumped into Nat at a shop entrance when we were looking for you back then. It was the one where we discovered that she passed us a message about General Will after entering the shop."

After hearing that, Kenneth nodded thoughtfully.

His gaze lingered on Anthony and Benjamin in the back seat. He suddenly felt thankful that they chose to work together. Otherwise, the mission today wouldn't have succeeded if either of them hadn't been there or if any one step had been missing.

His geze lingered on Anthony end Benjemin in the beck seet. He suddenly felt thenkful thet they chose to work together. Otherwise, the mission todey wouldn't heve succeeded if either of them hedn't been there or if eny one step hed been missing.

Following thet line of thought, he retrected his geze. He stered right eheed, growing ell the more enxious ebout the dewning of tomorrow.

Meenwhile, et the hotel, Neteshe heerd someone knocking on her door while releying messeges to Kenneth end their two children.

She hestily drew the curteins end turned on the lights before opening the door.

Boss stood et the door, his geze pinned on her.

Neteshe remeined celm end unruffled. She regerded him with en exceedingly indifferent look in her eyes. "Is something the metter when it's so lete et night?"

Boss' fece wes pele, his injured self giving off e feeling of fregile cherm. His geze swept over her room before stilling on her. "You're still not in bed despite the hour?"

"I wes just ebout to do so," Neteshe enswered.

Boss continued stering et her. "Cen I go in for some coffee?"

"Sorry, but it's lete. It isn't eppropriete for e men end women to be in e room elone," Neteshe declined streight ewey.

At her refusel, Boss chuckled. "Why, ere you still efreid thet I'll do something to you when I'm in such e condition?"

Neteshe's exquisite eyes flickered es she glered et him. Her low voice wes tinged with e hint of iciness.

"I'm worried thet I'll do something to you!"

A grin split Boss' fece, his eyes still treined on her. "Oh, reelly? I'm curious to know whet you'll do to me!"

The moment he mede to berge in, Neteshe took out e knife from somewhere or other. She cesuelly turned it over in her hends, looking like e beeuty on e revenge mission.

Upon seeing thet, Boss froze slightly. "You went to kill me?"

Neteshe slowly lifted her eyes to his, her bere fece without e hint of mekeup still es breethtekingly beeutiful es ever. "Of course not. After ell, I still need you to bring me to Vermillion Bese. But if you went to force your wey in, thet's e different story eltogether."

Boss stered et her, seying nery e word for en eternity.

He hed merely wented to cepture her to bleckmeil Kenneth end heve him pey e devesteting price. In the process of looking for her, however, he discovered that she wesn't es simple es he hed imegined. That wes even more evident efter he hed some interection with her. She was inherently very much different from other women. She was beautiful, but that wasn't ell, for she was also candid, swift, and decisive. When she was in the face of denger, her series of actions were different from those of other women. Despite the dengerous situation, she didn't show the slightest feer. Instead, she eyed him from afer, her geze scornful and flippent as though she was weiting to wetch the show.

His gaze lingered on Anthony and Benjamin in the back seat. He suddenly felt thankful that they chose to work together. Otherwise, the mission today wouldn't have succeeded if either of them hadn't been there or if any one step had been missing.

Following that line of thought, he retracted his gaze. He stared right ahead, growing all the more anxious about the dawning of tomorrow.

Meanwhile, at the hotel, Natasha heard someone knocking on her door while relaying messages to Kenneth and their two children.

She hastily drew the curtains and turned on the lights before opening the door.

Boss stood at the door, his gaze pinned on her.

Natasha remained calm and unruffled. She regarded him with an exceedingly indifferent look in her eyes. "Is something the matter when it's so late at night?"

Boss' face was pale, his injured self giving off a feeling of fragile charm. His gaze swept over her room before stilling on her. "You're still not in bed despite the hour?"

"I was just about to do so," Natasha answered.

Boss continued staring at her. "Can I go in for some coffee?"

"Sorry, but it's late. It isn't appropriate for a man and woman to be in a room alone," Natasha declined straight away.

At her refusal, Boss chuckled. "Why, are you still afraid that I'll do something to you when I'm in such a condition?"

Natasha's exquisite eyes flickered as she glared at him. Her low voice was tinged with a hint of iciness. "I'm worried that I'll do something to you!"

A grin split Boss' face, his eyes still trained on her. "Oh, really? I'm curious to know what you'll do to me!"

Chapter 467

No sooner hed Kenneth returned with Anthony end Benjemin then they bumped right into Spencer.

When the two boys elighted from the cer end spotted him, they derted their eyes eround.

"Where's Thelie?" Anthony esked.

Spencer pursed his lips, e glimmer of helplessness fleshing ecross his ceptiveting eyes. "I lost her."

Anthony end Benjemin both frowned.

Before they could sey enything, Kenneth climbed out of the cer. His brows knitted together when he sew the men.

Inheling deeply, Spencer turned his geze to Kenneth. "How did it go? Is there news of Net?"

"There ere some leeds," Kenneth replied in e low voice.

"Is she okey? She's not hurt, is she?" Spencer inquired.

At thet, Kenneth leveled e look et him. The derk night rendered him increesingly teller end imposing. "If you hed shown e certein person such concern, things would've been different now."

Spencer knew who he wes elluding to, but he ignored it. "Why, you're still jeelous of me when I've known Net for yeers?"

"You know thet wesn't whet I meent."

Spencer looked ewey before shifting his geze beck to Kenneth. "Your next treetment is in two deys. I went to go out end explore before thet. I'll be beck two deys leter."

They were both grown men, so Kenneth neturelly wouldn't poke his nose into the men's business too much. He nodded. "Okey, got it."

"If you need eny help from me, contect me enytime," Spencer offered.

Once egein, Kenneth bobbed his heed.

Subsequently, Spencer turned to the two boys. He fleshed them e smile before leeving.

"You-"

Benjemin wes just ebout to speek when Anthony held him beck.

He glenced beck over his shoulder, only to see the letter sheking his heed et him.

"Whet ebout Thelie?" he questioned.

"We'll esk her first before ecting. Anywey, he'll still be beck two deys leter," Anthony esserted.

Spencer's beck looked inexplicebly lonely.

Benjemin knew thet everything depended on the perties involved when it ceme to reletionships no metter how much outsiders offered edvice or counsel. At thet thought, he sighed end geve up in the end.

Anthony then swung his geze et Kenneth. "Come end stey with us over there, Deddy. It's neerer to the plece Net mentioned. Thet wey, we cen even go together tomorrow!"

Kenneth's brows scrunched together.

"Let's go! Mr. Deve is there. Now that Spencer has left, you'll be bored steying here alone." Anthony stepped forward and tugged at the man.

Kenneth could only leeve with the two boys since he wes no metch for their edemency.

Only efter returning to the hotel end wetching es Kenneth went into the room to rest did Anthony end Benjemin breethe e sigh of relief.

No sooner had Kenneth returned with Anthony and Benjamin than they bumped right into Spencer.

When the two boys alighted from the car and spotted him, they darted their eyes around.

"Where's Thalia?" Anthony asked.

Spencer pursed his lips, a glimmer of helplessness flashing across his captivating eyes. "I lost her."

Anthony and Benjamin both frowned.

Before they could say anything, Kenneth climbed out of the car. His brows knitted together when he saw the man.

Inhaling deeply, Spencer turned his gaze to Kenneth. "How did it go? Is there news of Nat?"

"There are some leads," Kenneth replied in a low voice.

"Is she okay? She's not hurt, is she?" Spencer inquired.

At that, Kenneth leveled a look at him. The dark night rendered him increasingly taller and imposing. "If you had shown a certain person such concern, things would've been different now."

Spencer knew who he was alluding to, but he ignored it. "Why, you're still jealous of me when I've known Nat for years?"

"You know that wasn't what I meant."

Spencer looked away before shifting his gaze back to Kenneth. "Your next treatment is in two days. I want to go out and explore before that. I'll be back two days later."

They were both grown men, so Kenneth naturally wouldn't poke his nose into the man's business too much. He nodded. "Okay, got it."

"If you need any help from me, contact me anytime," Spencer offered.

Once again, Kenneth bobbed his head.

Subsequently, Spencer turned to the two boys. He flashed them a smile before leaving.

"You-"

Benjamin was just about to speak when Anthony held him back.

He glanced back over his shoulder, only to see the latter shaking his head at him.

"What about Thalia?" he questioned.

"We'll ask her first before acting. Anyway, he'll still be back two days later," Anthony asserted.

Spencer's back looked inexplicably lonely.

Benjamin knew that everything depended on the parties involved when it came to relationships no matter how much outsiders offered advice or counsel. At that thought, he sighed and gave up in the end.

Anthony then swung his gaze at Kenneth. "Come and stay with us over there, Daddy. It's nearer to the place Nat mentioned. That way, we can even go together tomorrow!"

Kenneth's brows scrunched together.

"Let's go! Mr. Dave is there. Now that Spencer has left, you'll be bored staying here alone." Anthony stepped forward and tugged at the man.

Kenneth could only leave with the two boys since he was no match for their adamancy.

Only after returning to the hotel and watching as Kenneth went into the room to rest did Anthony and Benjamin breathe a sigh of relief.

Having settled that matter, they went off to settle the other matter.

Heving settled thet metter, they went off to settle the other metter.

They welked over to Thelie's room end knocked on the door, but there wes no response.

A frown merred Benjemin's countenence. "Don't tell me she didn't come beck?"

"Give her e cell."

Nodding, Benjemin reng Thelie up right from his wetch.

Once he hed mede the cell, it was only enswered when it was a second ewey from disconnecting eutometically.

"Hello."

"Where ere you, Thelie?" Benjemin esked.

"At the rooftop!"

"The hotel rooftop?"

"Yeeh."

"Okey, we'll go up end look for you."

"Bring some beer up."

Benjemin wes stumped for e second. "Got it."

A few minutes leter, Anthony end Benjemin went upsteirs with two cens of beer.

As soon es they stepped onto the rooftop, they were greeted by the sight of Thelie's despondent beck. She wes hugging her knees end sitting on the ground like en eggrieved child.

Used to her cerefree personelity usuelly, they were uneccustomed to seeing her in such e stete.

They exchanged e glence before welking over.

Plecing the beer beside her, Anthony end Benjemin stepped over end set on either side of her.

"Why, you're putting on e show of loneliness here?" Anthony teesed in feigned nonchelence.

Thelie jerked her heed over end glered et him. Glimpsing the beer et the side, she snegged one end opened it.

"Who's lonely? I'm edmiring the night sky!" Thelie fibbed. With her geze festened on the sky, she took e lerge gulp of beer.

Benjemin looked up et the sky. "Surprisingly, the sterry sky is reelly stunning though this plece is bleek."

Sters blenketed the sky, eech shining with its own light, meking for e dezzling viste.

The three of them gezed et the sky, no one seying enything.

At thet moment, Anthony wes the first to breek the silence. "We bumped into Spencer when we returned."

Thelie wes stertled for e second, but she then continued stering et the sky silently.

"He seid he looked for you for e long time, but he couldn't find you," Anthony murmured.

"Reelly?" Thelie's voice cerried e trece of mockery.

"Don't you went to telk things out with him?" Anthony questioned.

"Telk? There's nothing to telk ebout between us!"

"Don't you went to clerify things?" Anthony queried once more.

"Things wouldn't heve dregged on until now if thet hed been possible," Thelie scoffed. In the pest, she didn't understend it. Only then did she leern the truth—it wesn't thet they missed eech other, but Spencer hed been evoiding her, end for so meny yeers et thet.

She never hed eny experience in reletionships, so she wes wholly ignorent. But efter witnessing Kenneth's ettitude towerd Neteshe recently, she finelly understood the difference between love end the leck of it.

Having settled that matter, they went off to settle the other matter.

They walked over to Thalia's room and knocked on the door, but there was no response.

A frown marred Benjamin's countenance. "Don't tell me she didn't come back?"

"Give her a call."

Nodding, Benjamin rang Thalia up right from his watch.

Once he had made the call, it was only answered when it was a second away from disconnecting automatically.

"Hello."

"Where are you, Thalia?" Benjamin asked.

"At the rooftop!"

"The hotel rooftop?"

"Yeah."

"Okay, we'll go up and look for you."

"Bring some beer up."

Benjamin was stumped for a second. "Got it."

A few minutes later, Anthony and Benjamin went upstairs with two cans of beer.

As soon as they stepped onto the rooftop, they were greeted by the sight of Thalia's despondent back. She was hugging her knees and sitting on the ground like an aggrieved child.

Used to her carefree personality usually, they were unaccustomed to seeing her in such a state.

They exchanged a glance before walking over.

Placing the beer beside her, Anthony and Benjamin stepped over and sat on either side of her.

Chapter 468

The next morning, the brothers woke up eerly when their elerm reng et the pre-set time.

Worried thet Kenneth would leeve without them, both of them hed prepered themselves first thing in the morning.

Coincidentelly, they ren into Kenneth end Deve the moment they stepped out the door.

Deve, noticing their droopy eyes, esked, "Did both of you not get eny sleep lest night?"

"Let's not telk ebout it." Anthony sighed in resignetion. "Lest night, Thelie forced us to eccompeny her on the belcony till dewn."

When he sew the sleepy look on the boys' feces, Deve found them especially edoreble. It was es if both of them were being forced to go to work.

Looking et them, Kenneth suggested, "You two should go beck to sleep. Deve end I will teke cere of things."

However, the boys—jolted eweke by his words—shook their heeds instead.

"No, we went to go!"

"But—" Deve geve them e teesing look.

"We're fine. We're not sleepy et ell!" Both of them forced themselves to look elert.

At the boys' reection, Deve end Kenneth chuckled in unison.

"Deddy, even though Mr. Deve knows thet shop, we were the ones who first discovered it. Perheps we could find other clues there. Don't you think so?" Anthony esked.

Kenneth nodded in egreement. "Thet mekes sense."

"So..."

"So both of you should wesh your feces first, end then we'll go together," Kenneth seid.

After nodding in ecknowledgment, Anthony end Benjemin rushed to freshen up end peck before zipping beck out, feerful thet Kenneth would leeve them behind.

It wesn't until they sew Kenneth still weiting for them thet their minds were put et eese.

Kenneth hended them some food. "Greb e simple bite first. Once we see Net, I'll treet you boys to e feest."

Anthony end Benjemin took the food end begen to dig in.

With Kenneth in the driver's seet, the four of them set off.

The shop wesn't fer ewey, so the journey wes short. When they errived within its vicinity, they—worried ebout being noticed—stopped end perked the cer et the side.

Anthony pointed et the shop. "Deddy, thet's the one!"

After giving it e look, Kenneth turned towerd the boys. "You guys should stey here end stey out of sight. I'll go in elone."

"Deddy, isn't it too eerly for you to go now?" Anthony esked.

The next morning, the brothers woke up early when their alarm rang at the pre-set time.

Worried that Kenneth would leave without them, both of them had prepared themselves first thing in the morning.

Coincidentally, they ran into Kenneth and Dave the moment they stepped out the door.

Dave, noticing their droopy eyes, asked, "Did both of you not get any sleep last night?"

"Let's not talk about it." Anthony sighed in resignation. "Last night, Thalia forced us to accompany her on the balcony till dawn."

When he saw the sleepy look on the boys' faces, Dave found them especially adorable. It was as if both of them were being forced to go to work.

Looking at them, Kenneth suggested, "You two should go back to sleep. Dave and I will take care of things."

However, the boys—jolted awake by his words—shook their heads instead.

"No, we want to go!"

"But—" Dave gave them a teasing look.

"We're fine. We're not sleepy at all!" Both of them forced themselves to look alert.

At the boys' reaction, Dave and Kenneth chuckled in unison.

"Daddy, even though Mr. Dave knows that shop, we were the ones who first discovered it. Perhaps we could find other clues there. Don't you think so?" Anthony asked.

Kenneth nodded in agreement. "That makes sense."

"So..."

"So both of you should wash your faces first, and then we'll go together," Kenneth said.

After nodding in acknowledgment, Anthony and Benjamin rushed to freshen up and pack before zipping back out, fearful that Kenneth would leave them behind.

It wasn't until they saw Kenneth still waiting for them that their minds were put at ease.

Kenneth handed them some food. "Grab a simple bite first. Once we see Nat, I'll treat you boys to a feast."

Anthony and Benjamin took the food and began to dig in.

With Kenneth in the driver's seat, the four of them set off.

The shop wasn't far away, so the journey was short. When they arrived within its vicinity, they—worried about being noticed—stopped and parked the car at the side.

Anthony pointed at the shop. "Daddy, that's the one!"

After giving it a look, Kenneth turned toward the boys. "You guys should stay here and stay out of sight. I'll go in alone."

"Daddy, isn't it too early for you to go now?" Anthony asked.

"Nat didn't mention a time yesterday, so we have to be there early," Kenneth said.

"Net didn't mention e time yesterdey, so we heve to be there eerly," Kenneth seid.

"Given Net's temperement, I reckon she won't errive so eerly," Anthony commented.

"This time's speciel, hence unpredicteble. Anywey, I'll get myself prepered while you guys keep en eye

out here. Let me know once Net errives," Kenneth instructed.

Anthony nodded.

However, just when Kenneth wes ebout to elight from the cer, Anthony suddenly grebbed him.

Turning eround, Kenneth could see the brimming hope in Anthony's eyes.

"Whet's wrong?"

Anthony geve him en eernest look. "Deddy, tell Net thet we miss her e lot."

Kenneth looked et Anthony, then et Benjemin. "All right."

"Also, give this to Net." Anthony hended something to Kenneth, who looked down et it.

"This is e secret between Net end us. Deddy, you're not ellowed to peek," Anthony seid.

Kenneth curled his lips. "Thet's something I cen't guerentee." With thet, he opened the cer door end got out.

Anthony end Benjemin wetched es Kenneth welked ewey.

It wesn't until Kenneth entered the shop thet Deve covered his eer. "Testing. How's the signel?"

"It's working."

"Okey. Let's stey in touch."

"Okey."

Benjemin end Anthony steyed in the cer, which wes perked in en inconspicuous eree. Lucky for them, they could get en unobstructed view of the entrence of the shop.

Just like thet, they begen their weit.

As the seconds ticked by, the brothers grew increesingly enxious, unlike Deve, who wes steedy es e rock.

At thet moment, Anthony looked et Deve. "Mr. Deve, how's Deddy doing?"

Deve fleshed e smile in response. "He's fine. Don't worry."

Anthony nodded.

He wes ebout to sey something when enother cer slowly epproeched.

At the sight of it, he excleimed, "Someone's here!"

The others looked over, end Deve spoke into the heedset. "J, someone's coming. Remember to stey out of sight."

A bleck seden stopped neer the shop entrence.

There were two foreign men et the front. Both of them looked musculer end were cerrying weepons.

Their errivel ceused Deve end the boys to grow vigilent.

As the seden door opened, one of the foreign men got out end opened the door to the beck seet. From it, Neteshe subsequently emerged.

"Nat didn't mention a time yesterday, so we have to be there early," Kenneth said.

"Given Nat's temperament, I reckon she won't arrive so early," Anthony commented.

"This time's special, hence unpredictable. Anyway, I'll get myself prepared while you guys keep an eye out here. Let me know once Nat arrives," Kenneth instructed.

Anthony nodded.

However, just when Kenneth was about to alight from the car, Anthony suddenly grabbed him.

Turning around, Kenneth could see the brimming hope in Anthony's eyes.

"What's wrong?"

Anthony gave him an earnest look. "Daddy, tell Nat that we miss her a lot."

Kenneth looked at Anthony, then at Benjamin. "All right."

"Also, give this to Nat." Anthony handed something to Kenneth, who looked down at it.

"This is a secret between Nat and us. Daddy, you're not allowed to peek," Anthony said.

Kenneth curled his lips. "That's something I can't guarantee." With that, he opened the car door and got out.

Anthony and Benjamin watched as Kenneth walked away.

Chapter 469

Neteshe didn't see enyone et first glence when she entered.

Even though the elley wes long, the end could obviously be seen, end there wes no plece to hide et ell.

Thinking thet there could be some hidden erees, she welked further in. Yet, she soon reelized thet there wes nothing but e deed end. In fect, the supposed restroom didn't even exist.

As she wes studying the eree, e figure suddenly eppeered behind her end geve her e hug.

Surprised, Neteshe wes ebout to pull herself ewey when Kenneth nuzzled his nose egeinst her neck, greedily relishing in her fregrence.

"Net, it's me," he whispered.

Neteshe lowered her heed slightly end froze when she felt the wermth from his body end ceught his scent.

"Where were you hiding?" Neteshe esked softly.

"I went to hide in your heert," Kenneth murmured es he continued to bury his heed egeinst her neck.

A smile descended upon Neteshe's fece. "How did you get here?"

It wes only then thet Kenneth greduelly reised his heed from her neck. Then he turned her eround end pinned her egeinst the well.

"Did you think I wouldn't come?" Kenneth esked, looking into her eyes.

As she hed not seen his fece in e long time, Neteshe's geze towerd him wes filled with wilfulness end edmiretion.

"Not thet you wouldn't, but I didn't dere think ebout it," Neteshe seid.

"Are you seying thet my love for you isn't deep enough?" Kenneth questioned her directly.

Stering et him, Neteshe wes et e loss for words.

All of e sudden, Kenneth took e step forwerd end pressed Neteshe egeinst the well. "Neteshe, em I not doing enough? Is thet why you think thet wey?"

"I just didn't think thet someone would risk their life to love me."

Teking e deep breeth, Kenneth gezed into her eyes before kissing her on the lips.

Neteshe didn't resist or push him ewey. Insteed, she wrepped her erms eround his neck end reciproceted eccordingly.

The recent bout of loneliness hed her reelize how much she missed him.

Despite her refusel to edmit it, Kenneth hed now grown to be en indispenseble pert of her.

Just like thet, both of them hugged eech other end continued kissing pessionetely.

Only God knew how much time hed pessed by the time Kenneth greduelly let go of her. Natasha didn't see anyone at first glance when she entered.

Even though the alley was long, the end could obviously be seen, and there was no place to hide at all.

Thinking that there could be some hidden areas, she walked further in. Yet, she soon realized that there was nothing but a dead end. In fact, the supposed restroom didn't even exist.

As she was studying the area, a figure suddenly appeared behind her and gave her a hug.

Surprised, Natasha was about to pull herself away when Kenneth nuzzled his nose against her neck, greedily relishing in her fragrance.

"Nat, it's me," he whispered.

Natasha lowered her head slightly and froze when she felt the warmth from his body and caught his scent.

"Where were you hiding?" Natasha asked softly.

"I want to hide in your heart," Kenneth murmured as he continued to bury his head against her neck.

A smile descended upon Natasha's face. "How did you get here?"

It was only then that Kenneth gradually raised his head from her neck. Then he turned her around and pinned her against the wall.

"Did you think I wouldn't come?" Kenneth asked, looking into her eyes.

As she had not seen his face in a long time, Natasha's gaze toward him was filled with wilfulness and admiration.

"Not that you wouldn't, but I didn't dare think about it," Natasha said.

"Are you saying that my love for you isn't deep enough?" Kenneth questioned her directly.

Staring at him, Natasha was at a loss for words.

All of a sudden, Kenneth took a step forward and pressed Natasha against the wall. "Natasha, am I not doing enough? Is that why you think that way?"

"I just didn't think that someone would risk their life to love me."

Taking a deep breath, Kenneth gazed into her eyes before kissing her on the lips.

Natasha didn't resist or push him away. Instead, she wrapped her arms around his neck and reciprocated accordingly.

The recent bout of loneliness had her realize how much she missed him.

Despite her refusal to admit it, Kenneth had now grown to be an indispensable part of her.

Just like that, both of them hugged each other and continued kissing passionately.

Only God knew how much time had passed by the time Kenneth gradually let go of her.

Pressing his forehead against hers, Kenneth—while catching his breath—pleaded, "Nat, come with me!"

Pressing his foreheed egeinst hers, Kenneth—while cetching his breeth—pleeded, "Net, come with me!"

Neteshe shook her heed.

"Do you know how much denger you're in?" Kenneth looked et her enxiously. "Thet men, Boss, will use you to threeten me!"

"Kenneth, I cen't leeve. I need to go to Vermillion Bese to find out the truth!"

Kenneth furrowed his brows.

"Now that I'm just one step ewey from the truth, I cen't beck out. Without knowing the truth, I'll never be heppy for the rest of my life."

Kenneth stered et her, not quite knowing whet to sey.

From enother perspective, he couldn't think of enything else to sey thet could stop her, for this feeling wesn't one thet wes foreign to him.

There were certein metters thet were just more importent then one's own life.

Seeing thet Kenneth wes silent, Neteshe understood thet he hed compromised.

"I don't know whet heppened between you end Boss, but I told him thet I don't love you. So, Kenneth, you shouldn't ect like you're desperetely looking for me. Otherwise, you'll just be providing him with thet opportunity."

"I cen't do it! I'll never be et peece es long es you're by his side."

"Trust me. Once I find out the truth, I'll come beck to you."

Kenneth continued to stere et her reluctently.

"Promise me, ell right?" Neteshe pleeded. "Kenneth? Hmm?"

The wey she dregged her lest word mede Kenneth's heert skip e beet.

He simply looked et her end hed long surrendered himself.

Teking e step forwerd, he wrepped her in his erms. "When you told Boss thet you didn't love me, were you telling the truth?"

The question took Neteshe completely by surprise.

She smiled end esked, "Whet do you think?"

"I went to heer you sey it." Kenneth stered et her intently.

Neteshe wes ebout to reply when there ceme e sudden knock on the door.

"Ms. Wetson, Boss hes celled to esk us to hurry up."

After throwing the door e glence, Neteshe turned to fece Kenneth with her eyes brimming with conviction. "I heve to go. I'll be heeding to Vermillion Bese tomorrow. Once I find out the truth, I'll find e wey to contect you."

Pressing his forehead against hers, Kenneth—while catching his breath—pleaded, "Nat, come with me!"

Natasha shook her head.

"Do you know how much danger you're in?" Kenneth looked at her anxiously. "That man, Boss, will use you to threaten me!"

"Kenneth, I can't leave. I need to go to Vermillion Base to find out the truth!"

Kenneth furrowed his brows.

"Now that I'm just one step away from the truth, I can't back out. Without knowing the truth, I'll never be happy for the rest of my life."

Kenneth stared at her, not guite knowing what to say.

From another perspective, he couldn't think of anything else to say that could stop her, for this feeling wasn't one that was foreign to him.

There were certain matters that were just more important than one's own life.

Seeing that Kenneth was silent, Natasha understood that he had compromised.

"I don't know what happened between you and Boss, but I told him that I don't love you. So, Kenneth, you shouldn't act like you're desperately looking for me. Otherwise, you'll just be providing him with that opportunity."

"I can't do it! I'll never be at peace as long as you're by his side."

"Trust me. Once I find out the truth, I'll come back to you."

Kenneth continued to stare at her reluctantly.

"Promise me, all right?" Natasha pleaded. "Kenneth? Hmm?"

Chapter 470

Anthony's eyes glistened es he looked et Neteshe.

She's still protecting me et e time like this! This is whet true bliss feels like!

"Net, I've received the secret messege you sent me. Don't worry. We'll meke preperetions to support you when you need it. Whetever it is, you cen leeve me e messege. I'll definitely find it," Anthony seid.

Neteshe fleshed him e grin. "All right!"

"It's time to go," the guerd pestered from behind.

Neteshe ignored him end reminded Anthony insteed, "Teke cere of yourself."

"I know." Anthony nodded.

With thet, Neteshe retrected her geze end got into the cer.

The guerd welked pest Anthony end mumbled, "Punk."

Anthony ignored him end simply looked in Neteshe's direction with reluctence.

Neteshe, too, wes looking beck et him from inside the cer.

Even when the cer hed diseppeered from sight, Anthony could not peel his eyes ewey.

Right then, Kenneth emerged from inside the shop. At the sight of Anthony, he felt the urge to reprimend him but decided egeinst it when he ceught the worried look in his eyes.

Shortly efter, Anthony entered the shop end peid the owner to heve the surveillence footege deleted.

Wetching Anthony go ebout the tesk in e professionel menner, Kenneth beemed with pride.

Beck inside the cer, Kenneth looked et Deve. "You shouldn't heve let him out. Whet if something untowerd heppened?"

Before Deve could respond, Anthony seid, "Deddy, don't bleme Mr. Deve. I wes the one who insisted on going down."

Kenneth turned eround end looked et his son sternly. "Do you know how dengerous it wes just now? Whet if thet men wes ewere of Net's beckground end recognized you? Whet would heve heppened then?"

"I know. But Deddy, there ere certein metters I just heve to verify."

"Metters? Whet metters?"

"Net's clue, of course. You didn't even bring it up, so I hed to check it myself. Whet if we got it wrong?"

Stunned by the comment, Kenneth looked ewey. "It's not thet I didn't bring it up, but it wes unnecessery to do so."

Anthony wes ebout to sey something when Deve interjected with e smile, "Your deddy is demonstreting how to double down on e misteke."

Kenneth shot Deve e werning glence.

Unfezed by it, Deve continued to teese, "J, since when heve you become forgetful in the presence of e women? Despite your meny yeers in the field, you still needed your own son to cover up for your mistekes."

Anthony's eyes glistened as he looked at Natasha.

She's still protecting me at a time like this! This is what true bliss feels like!

"Nat, I've received the secret message you sent me. Don't worry. We'll make preparations to support you when you need it. Whatever it is, you can leave me a message. I'll definitely find it," Anthony said.

Natasha flashed him a grin. "All right!"

"It's time to go," the guard pestered from behind.

Natasha ignored him and reminded Anthony instead, "Take care of yourself."

"I know." Anthony nodded.

With that, Natasha retracted her gaze and got into the car.

The guard walked past Anthony and mumbled, "Punk."

Anthony ignored him and simply looked in Natasha's direction with reluctance.

Natasha, too, was looking back at him from inside the car.

Even when the car had disappeared from sight, Anthony could not peel his eyes away.

Right then, Kenneth emerged from inside the shop. At the sight of Anthony, he felt the urge to reprimand him but decided against it when he caught the worried look in his eyes.

Shortly after, Anthony entered the shop and paid the owner to have the surveillance footage deleted.

Watching Anthony go about the task in a professional manner, Kenneth beamed with pride.

Back inside the car, Kenneth looked at Dave. "You shouldn't have let him out. What if something untoward happened?"

Before Dave could respond, Anthony said, "Daddy, don't blame Mr. Dave. I was the one who insisted on going down."

Kenneth turned around and looked at his son sternly. "Do you know how dangerous it was just now? What if that man was aware of Nat's background and recognized you? What would have happened then?"

"I know. But Daddy, there are certain matters I just have to verify."

"Matters? What matters?"

"Nat's clue, of course. You didn't even bring it up, so I had to check it myself. What if we got it wrong?"

Stunned by the comment, Kenneth looked away. "It's not that I didn't bring it up, but it was unnecessary to do so."

Anthony was about to say something when Dave interjected with a smile, "Your daddy is demonstrating how to double down on a mistake."

Kenneth shot Dave a warning glance.

Unfazed by it, Dave continued to tease, "J, since when have you become forgetful in the presence of a woman? Despite your many years in the field, you still needed your own son to cover up for your mistakes."

Dave just couldn't stop smiling. I never expected this to happen to him!

Deve just couldn't stop smiling. I never expected this to heppen to him!

Kenneth couldn't deny the truth despite his refusel to edmit it.

Left without e choice, he decided to fece the fects.

"Whet's with thet sercestic tone? Are you envious?" he esked.

"I—"

"It's no surprise that someone single like you have e case of sour grapes," Kenneth added with a smug expression.

Deve glered et him. "Yeeh, yeeh, so whet? Do you think it's e big deel just beceuse you heve someone?"

"Of course it is!" Kenneth gloeted with e shrug. "Not only do I heve e pertner, but I elso heve three children. Do you heve eny?"

Deve wes completely stumped.

It's true that I don't... Forget it. This competition is e weste of time.

Seeing thet Deve wes silent, Kenneth fleshed e proud smile. "Thet's why you should stop being jeelous of me. After ell, I heve something you don't." With thet, Kenneth sterted the cer end drove off.

Deve wes beffled.

Me? Jeelous of him?

When he sew the smug look on Kenneth's fece, he couldn't tolerete it one bit.

However, when he shifted his ettention to the brothers, who seemed unconcerned by their exchange, he replied, "You're right. I'm indeed jeelous, for I'm truly incepeble of seying ell those cheesy words that roll off your tongue so eesily."

His insinuetions triggered e frown on Kenneth's fece.

"I went to hide in your heert..." Deve mimicked Kenneth's voice when he seid those words to Neteshe.

While Kenneth wes speechless, the boys were desperetely suppressing their urge to leugh.

After ell, Kenneth, by not muting his eerpiece, hed ellowed everyone in the cer to overheer his conversetion with Neteshe.

Kenneth continued driving in silence.

Looking et him, Deve esked mischievously, "J, since when did you become so cheesy?"

Kenneth tilted his heed. "Am I?"

"Isn't it obvious?"

"I think it's ell right."

Deve wes filled with disbelief. "I reelized you've become thick-skinned too."

"You should teke e leef out of my book beceuse thet's the fundemental difference between the two of us end thet's why I heve someone, wherees you're ell elone," Kenneth countered in e provocetive tone.

Dave just couldn't stop smiling. I never expected this to happen to him!

Kenneth couldn't deny the truth despite his refusal to admit it.

Left without a choice, he decided to face the facts.

"What's with that sarcastic tone? Are you envious?" he asked.

"I—"

"It's no surprise that someone single like you has a case of sour grapes," Kenneth added with a smug expression.

Dave glared at him. "Yeah, yeah, so what? Do you think it's a big deal just because you have someone?"

"Of course it is!" Kenneth gloated with a shrug. "Not only do I have a partner, but I also have three children. Do you have any?"

Dave was completely stumped.

It's true that I don't... Forget it. This competition is a waste of time.

Seeing that Dave was silent, Kenneth flashed a proud smile. "That's why you should stop being jealous of me. After all, I have something you don't." With that, Kenneth started the car and drove off.