

Yo Daddy 801

Chapter 801 An Impressive Talent

Mike's hopes for a reward from Kenneth did not materialize, as the latter appeared to have changed topics entirely.

Dave did not seem inclined to comment on Mike's actions either and replied to Kenneth seriously, "So we'll follow the plan?"

"Yes." Kenneth nodded in affirmation.

"I'll get some men on it right away," replied Dave.

Kenneth added, "Great. If you need help with anything, just say the word."

Their conversation prompted Natasha to offer, "I can help too."

Dave turned around and shot her a smile. "Don't worry. I won't stand on ceremony around all of you if I need anything." He stood up and continued, "Well, I'll get busy then. See you soon."

Kenneth nodded in acknowledgment, and Dave left.

Throughout this exchange, Mike dutifully stood to the side. Isn't it time to discuss the car now that the serious business is over?

He eagerly rushed forward and gazed expectantly at Kenneth.

Alas, Kenneth continued to ignore him and turned to Natasha instead. "Shall we go home, Nat?"

Natasha replied to his question with one of her own. "But what if Dave needs help?"

After some thought, Kenneth replied to Natasha, "Let me send you home first. I'll come back afterward."

"That sounds troublesome. Why don't you bring me sightseeing nearby?"

He nodded a moment later. "Sure. Let's go."

She stood up just as Kenneth reached out to hold her hand.

Poor Mike continued to be ignored during the lovers' interaction. He planned to step aside and let Kenneth pass, but his body acted of its own accord, blocking Kenneth's path instead.

Kenneth cocked his brow and stared at Mike, questioning, "There's nothing else for you here. Why are you still hanging around?"

"I..." Mike trailed off hesitantly. I can't just come right out and ask for a car, right?

He stewed in his thoughts and eventually eked out, "Didn't you ask me to come here, Kenneth? You still haven't told me why you summoned me here."

His words caused Kenneth to frown momentarily before saying, "Ah, there's nothing else. You've done all of us a great service; everything else can be overlooked."

Mike cleared his throat at the mention of his "great service." He replied, "Don't mention it, Kenneth. You've always been so kind to me. We needn't call it a great service or anything. And forget about Dave's suggestion to give me a car. I'm happy and honored to lend you a helping hand!"

A sly look flashed through Kenneth's gaze as he studied Mike. "Sure, I got it." Kenneth clapped him on the shoulder and added, "Get to work, then. I'm bringing Nat sightseeing." Then, he left without giving Mike a chance to reply.

Mike was stumped.

T-That's it?

He knitted his brows and stared after Kenneth's back. "Kenneth, why don't I bring the two of you sightseeing?"

Sadly, Kenneth did not even turn around to gratify him with a response.

When Mike was all alone in the office, he frowned in confusion.

That's weird! I couldn't be any more obvious with my hints. Plus, Kenneth has always been a generous man. What's up with his earlier behavior? Or wait! Maybe I shouldn't have beat around the bush?

Mike smacked his mouth in rebuke.

Urgh, to h*ll with social niceties!

Meanwhile, Alexia looked on as Kenneth led Natasha out of the office. She did not make an extra effort to avoid them, but she would not step forward to greet them either.

She had promised she would not ruin their relationship, so all she could do was observe them from the sidelines.

When the couple eventually walked past her, Kenneth kept his gaze forward, pretending not to see her.

Natasha was the opposite. Upon spotting Alexia, Natasha stared intently at her, showing no hint of fear.

She only retracted her gaze when they were far away from Alexia.

It was then that Natasha commented, "I'm impressed at how easily you've offended two people today!"

"Huh?" Kenneth turned to her, giving her an odd look.

"I'm talking about Mike!" Natasha continued, "He was about to burst from his anticipation. Couldn't you tell?"

Kenneth nodded in understanding. "Course I could!"

"Then what's up with the clueless act?"

"Isn't the surprise always better after disappointment?" retorted Kenneth.

Natasha could not help but laugh at his reasoning. She should have known he was not serious about forgoing Mike's reward; after all, Mike was one of his most valued subordinates.

"What about the other one?" Natasha pressed on.

Innocently, Kenneth asked, "Another one? Who's that?"

His naive act caused Natasha's eyes to narrow. "Let's not play games, Kenneth. You know exactly who I mean."

He arched a brow as amusement danced through his gaze. "I'm not playing games; I'm clearly avoiding the topic."

"Why?"

"Because there's no need to discuss it!"

Chapter 802 Test The Goods

Alexia remained frozen in her spot, quietly watching Kenneth and Natasha's kiss become more heated.

The couple showed no signs of stopping or moving into a more private area.

When Alexia could no longer bear seeing their smooch fest, she trudged away in disappointment.

Kenneth released Natasha shortly after Alexia's departure.

Natasha was no fool. She knew he would never engage in such a public display of affection. Glancing behind them, she recognized Alexia's retreating figure.

Her suspicions confirmed, Natasha returned her gaze to Kenneth and asked flippantly, "I didn't realize I had been roped into acting, Mr. Hamilton."

"Just a coincidence," returned Kenneth.

"Was it?"

"I'm happy to do an encore if you don't believe me." As he spoke, Kenneth moved closer into her space.

Natasha quickly raised her hands and blocked his advance. She smiled and replied, "Don't think I'll waive my appearance fee if you do it again."

"I can't offer you an appearance fee. What about something else?"

"That depends. What are you offering?"

Kenneth pushed forward and shot her a heated stare. "Me. What do you think?"

Natasha crossed her arms across her chest and made a show out of studying him. She commented indifferently, "You've got a decent face, but I'm not sure if what's under the clothes is equally impressive?"

"Feel free to test the goods."

"Oh, really?"

Kenneth nodded and replied seriously, "I guarantee you won't be disappointed. Plus, this body is made for any position!"

Their conversation was quickly spiraling into lewd territory. Natasha glanced at him and huffed, "Pervert!"

Kenneth merely smiled and ushered Natasha forward. They strolled for some time before Kenneth said, "Actually, there isn't much to see around here, Nat. Even if you walk further, everything looks like this."

"Then what should we do?"

Kenneth suggested, "Dave is probably still busy with internal matters. Why don't we head home first?"

Natasha agreed easily. "Sure. That works."

"Let's go." Kenneth held her hand and turned around.

His brisk motions spurred Natasha to ask, "Hey, what's the rush?"

"To test the goods."

His reply rendered Natasha speechless.

He's too much...

Still, thrill danced in Natasha's gaze as she studied his profile.

About three hours later, a helicopter landed on a grassy patch some distance away.

The triplets hopped out of the helicopter and appraised their unfamiliar surroundings.

Anthony looked up at Thalia and asked, "Have we arrived?"

"Yes!" Thalia replied in the affirmative.

"Where is this?" Anthony's gaze turned to a house not far away, which did not seem like a hotel.

Thalia explained, "This is my friend's house. We can stay here for the next few days."

Anthony replied, "Okay. I'm impressed you managed to borrow a whole house."

"Hmph, I didn't build all those connections for nothing!"

Anthony's lips twitched in amusement.

Just then, Denise stepped forward and held Thalia's hand, praising, "You're so cool, Thalia."

Thalia instantly became putty in the young girl's hands. She tickled Denise's chin and cooed, "What a sweet girl you are."

It was getting dark by the time everyone disembarked from the helicopter. Anthony checked the time and declared, "It's getting late. I'm sure everyone is hungry. Why don't we grab dinner and discuss our plans afterward?"

Thalia nodded in agreement and said, "Let's put our luggage in the house. This area is pretty bustling. In fact, the most lavish casino in the area is right at our doorstep!"

Miguel's eyes instantly lit up.

"A casino?"

"Yup," confirmed Thalia.

"I-I've never seen a casino before," Miguel uttered in wonder.

"Time to change that, then."

Anthony coughed, interrupting Miguel and Thalia's conversation. He announced stiffly, "Don't forget that we're here for some serious business, not for a holiday." Then, he strode toward the house.

Nat's still waiting for me at home. I'm not in the mood to play.

Thalia raised a brow at his behavior but remained silent.

Meanwhile, Miguel hurried after the boy and pleaded, "Please don't be angry, Master. I'm not here to play at all."

"I'm not angry." Anthony looked at Miguel and explained seriously, "I only came here because of incredibly important business, Miguel. I apologize if I'm not in the mood for fun, but I promise I won't have any objections about your personal activities once everything is done."

Miguel replied, "I understand. Don't worry, Master. I'm not some irresponsible slacker. I will always have the big picture in mind!"

Anthony's lips threatened to curve into a smile.

A short while later, everyone trod into Thalia's friend's house. They left right after dropping off their luggage.

Thalia's description of the city was spot-on.

It was bustling with activity despite the late hour. It probably was not an exaggeration to claim the city never slept.

"It's so pretty!" exclaimed Denise.

A starving Benjamin whined, "What's there to eat here? I'm hungry."

"There's a famous restaurant up ahead. Why don't we check it out?" suggested Thalia.

Chapter 803 Drawing Competition

Denise stared at Thalia and explained, "It's just a guess based on what you said earlier and also the fact that you've been looking around non-stop since we sat down, almost as if you're looking for something."

Thalia forgot others were observing her while she was doing the same.

She pinched Denise's chin playfully and said, "Not bad, huh? Your observation and deduction skills are perfect."

Denise smiled, basking in her praise.

"So, will he really be here later?" Anthony asked.

Thalia nodded and poured herself some tea. "I've done my research on him before we came here. Our target likes the dishes at this restaurant and comes here every week. Whether he shows up today or not would depend on our luck."

During Thalia's explanation, Anthony's assessing gaze swept across the restaurant.

Miguel listened carefully to them. He did not know why, but at least he knew they were here to track someone down. With that in mind, he asked, "Do you have a photo of him? We can look for him together."

"I asked my friend for a photo of him, but I haven't received it yet." Thalia whipped out her phone and checked it for new messages. "Nope, still nothing."

"Have you seen this person before?" Miguel continued.

She nodded. "I have."

Exasperated, Miguel suggested, "Then you can draw his face!"

"Erm..."

Benjamin did not pick up on Thalia's hesitation and chimed in, "Oh yes! Why don't you draw his face? We can all keep a lookout for him, then."

After some thought, Thalia nodded and replied, "I'll give it a try?"

And so, she found herself asking a waiter for a pen and paper under everyone's expectant gaze.

They scrutinized her drawing from the very first stroke.

Feeling pressured by their staring, Thalia proposed, "Just give me a sec, all right? Order some tea or something. I'll be done in a jiff!"

Thankfully, they all looked away and obediently sipped on their tea.

Thalia began drawing in earnest, her brows scrunching and relaxing as she worked through the sketch.

She was still drawing when all the dishes had been served.

Anthony, on the other hand, continued observing their surroundings. He had never seen their target before, but his gut instinct told him that he would be able to recognize the person at first sight.

"Please go ahead and eat. Don't wait for me. I'm almost done," Thalia offered.

Everyone was too hungry to stand on ceremony and dug in.

Finally, a few minutes later, Thalia set her pen aside, looking almost relieved. "Done."

Everyone looked up from their food and at her.

Thalia flipped the paper around and showed them the drawing. Miguel, who had just taken a gulp of tea, spat it out when he saw her drawing.

Thalia was not amused.

The children were not any better. Anthony appeared to freeze in astonishment while Benjamin frowned.

Denise struggled to describe the painting.

Their silence caused Thalia's brows to knit in displeasure. "Hey, what's with that reaction?"

"What did you draw?" Miguel tried his best to repress his laughter.

Thalia replied, "It's a portrait. Can't you tell?" As she spoke, she leaned forward and commented on the drawing, "There. That's the face and the eyebrows. And here are the eyes, the nose, and the mouth. Isn't it obvious?"

"Well, now that you mention it, I guess I can see the features. But your drawing... how should I put it? A kindergartener can probably draw better than that." Alas, Miguel failed to hide his laughter.

He earned a murderous glare from Thalia, who demanded, "Ever heard of social courtesy?"

Miguel instantly made a zipping motion across his lips.

"Well, what do the rest of you think?" Thalia turned her attention to the triplets.

Anthony pretended to cough and picked up his teacup, abstaining from commenting.

"It's not bad," Benjamin said kindly.

Thalia puffed up in pride. "I always knew you had the best taste, Benjamin."

The young boy ruined it a second later by adding, "It's definitely better than a kindergartener's doodle!"

Miguel piped up, "Really? Have you seen kindergarteners' drawings these days? They're quite good."

Thalia's smile froze as she gritted out, "Shut up!"

Benjamin and Miguel zipped their lips.

"What about you, Denise?" The youngest of the triplets was Thalia's last hope.

Denise stared at the drawing for what seemed like an eternity before saying seriously, "I think it's quite well-drawn!"

Once again, Miguel jumped in and asked disbelievingly, "Are you sure?"

Benjamin tamped down his amusement and added, "Don't be so surprised. My sister can't draw half as well as this!"

The comment took Miguel aback, though he soon burst into laughter. "I see!"

Thalia shot Denise a disgruntled glare. The young girl's lashes quivered as she cajoled Thalia, "I really mean it. I do think you drew the portrait very well. And it's better than what I can draw."

"Just being better than you is hardly worth a celebration," Thalia mumbled.

It was a most inopportune time, but Anthony chose that exact moment to burst into laughter.

Soon enough, everyone except Thalia dissolved into giggles.

Chapter 804 Not For Kids

Everyone turned to Thalia upon Miguel's words, seeking her verification.

She put her fork down, took the portrait from him, and pretended to scrutinize it, frowning. "It looks okay. I'd say it's slightly better than mine."

The others rolled their eyes at her response.

Only slightly better?

Noticing their disapproving looks, Thalia retorted, "What? Am I wrong? Mine is abstract art. Abstract, you know?"

Anthony looked at her skeptically. "Yeah, yeah. We know. You're the best artist out there. But how would you rate this portrait?"

Thalia felt pleased even though Anthony had replied to her in a perfunctory manner. She pondered momentarily before raising her brow and saying, "Seven out of ten?"

Anthony raised a brow. "There could be some margin of error to your estimate."

Thalia pursed her lips and scrutinized the portrait.

Suddenly, her eyes lit up and she reached out. "Give me the pen."

Miguel handed it to her, feeling skeptical.

Thalia picked up the pen and began to draw on the portrait while the others watched on nervously. When she was finished, Thalia picked up the drawing and gazed at it with satisfaction. "Much better. It's now an eight or nine," she announced.

The others followed her gaze and saw that she had added a crooked line on the man's forehead in the portrait.

"Is that... a scar?" Denise asked, puzzled.

Thalia nodded. "Yes, a crescent-shaped scar. There's always a slight difference between a portrait and the real person, but this will make him stand out."

The others nodded in agreement.

Thalia raised a brow when she saw that everyone had fallen silent. "What's the matter? Is something wrong?"

They shook their heads in unison. "No, everything looks good."

Thalia nodded in satisfaction. "All right then. I think I've made myself very clear. If you see him, it's most likely him."

The others nodded in agreement.

"All right, let's eat," Thalia said.

Everyone then picked up their utensils and dug in.

Anthony would scan his surroundings from time to time, trying to spot any signs of the man from the portrait.

Thalia was about to start eating when her phone rang. She quickly answered when she saw that the caller ID indicated it was Natasha.

"Hello."

"How are things? Have you reached?" Natasha's voice came through the speakerphone.

Denise's eyes brightened when she heard Natasha's voice. "Is it Nat?"

Thalia nodded.

Denise leaned in closer to the phone. "Nat."

Natasha's tone softened at the sound of her daughter's voice. "Yes, it's me."

"Nat, we've arrived, and we're all good here, so don't worry."

"I'm glad to hear that. Be good and listen to your brothers, okay?"

"Okay!"

After their brief exchange, Denise returned to her meal while Thalia held the phone up to her ear. "Don't worry. We'll return as soon as we're done here. I'll make sure your kids return in one piece as well."

"You know me. I just called to ask how things are going. I'm not worried."

"Your kids will be very sad to hear that."

"They're used to it by now."

Thalia laughed. "I don't know if I should consider them lucky to be your kids or not."

"Of course they are. It's hard to find open-minded parents like me these days."

"How narcissistic of you."

After their little banter, Natasha spoke up. "Just let me know if you need any help."

“Oh? Do I need to pay for your help?” Thalia teased.

“If it's work-related, then yes, definitely!”

“What if it's for personal matters?”

“I can get it from Spencer then.”

“... Natasha, do you only care for money?”

“It's better to make things clear and fair when it comes to money between friends to avoid conflicts,” Natasha replied.

Thalia's heart skipped a beat when Natasha called her “friend,” and her expression softened at that. Getting to know Natasha had changed Thalia's perspective of her.

Natasha was someone with exceptional talent who had achieved great success at a young age. She had channeled all her energy into reaching the pinnacle of her field while others were busy making friends. As a result, she had few close family members and friends. Hence, when Thalia heard Natasha call her “friend,” Thalia truly believed that she meant it.

Thalia's lips curled up into a smile. “Okay, friend. I won't hold back with you then.”

“Don't hold back, especially when it comes to money.”

Thalia chuckled and asked, “Do you want to talk to Anthony and Benjamin?”

“No need. I trust that they are in good hands.”

“Okay. We'll eat first. I'll message you if there's anything else,” said Thalia.

“Sounds good. I've prepared some fine wine to celebrate your return,” Natasha replied.

“Wait for me. Don't open the bottle just yet.”

“I'll try my best,” Natasha replied before they hung up.

Anthony turned to Thalia and asked, “What did Nat say?”

Chapter 805 Avoid Stirring Up Trouble

After Thalia left, the few of them continued eating.

Miguel inched closer to Anthony and asked, “Master, who exactly are we looking for?”

"Someone," Anthony answered.

Miguel asked further, "Who is it?"

"The person you drew!"

"Did that person offend you?" Miguel probed further.

Anthony gazed at him and responded nonchalantly, "Nope."

"So..."

"Do you really want to know the answer? Or are you asking for someone?" Anthony questioned him.

Upon hearing that, Miguel immediately raised his hand and denied it. "Master, even though I report to Dave, you're still my master. I'll not do anything that will betray you."

"So you won't tell Mr. Dave about it?" Anthony needed his assurance.

"Absolutely not!"

"What if he pressed you for an update?"

"Over my dead body!"

Anthony burst into laughter.

"Master, Dave was just pulling your leg. He has never instructed me to keep an eye on you," Miguel explained.

Anthony took a sidelong glance at the surroundings but kept mum.

"I'm just worried about the consequences of me accidentally releasing him. It would be disastrous if the person were your enemy. That's why I need to know what I'm allowed to do in certain critical situations," Miguel added.

What he said made sense.

The fact that Anthony was willing to take him along showed that he had nothing to hide. He then turned his attention to Miguel and said, "I want to form a team, and I want that person to be on it. That's why I came here to look for him."

Miguel nodded after falling into deep thought upon hearing that. "Got it."

"So when he appears, don't hurt him," Anthony reminded.

Miguel bobbed his head in response. "All right."

Just when Anthony was about to take another bite of his food, Miguel voiced another question, "What kind of team are you planning to form, Master?"

"I'd like to keep that a secret for now," Anthony uttered.

Hearing that response, Miguel nodded. "All right then. You're my master, and nothing's gonna change that, no matter what sort of team you're forming."

Anthony remained silent and continued munching on his food.

In the meantime, Denise kept glancing outside in hopes of spotting Thalia.

She could not help but knit her brows as the woman had not returned even after it had been a while.

"What's wrong?" asked Benjamin, sensing that she was worried.

"Thalia has been out for some time now but hasn't returned. Do you think something could have happened to her?" Denise asked.

"Of course not. Thalia has traveled far and wide. Who could possibly harm her?" Benjamin replied reassuringly. Despite his words, he still pulled out his phone to give her a call.

Yet, after the phone rang several times, Benjamin's brows creased with worry.

"What's the matter?" Anthony asked.

"No one's answering the call," Benjamin said.

Everyone could not help but frown.

"Should I go and take a look?" Miguel asked.

Anthony replied, "That won't be necessary. Thalia can take good care of herself. If you leave, it'll just be the three of us left at the table, and if something happens, it could be problematic."

Miguel nodded in acknowledgment.

"Keep calling Thalia," Anthony suggested.

Once again, Benjamin picked up his phone. Right as he was about to make another call, Thalia walked in.

"Thalia's back!" Denise noticed her from a distance.

Everyone looked in Thalia's direction.

As soon as she walked in, they noticed something different about her, but they could not quite pinpoint what it was.

"Thalia, did you fight with someone?" Denise asked.

"How did you know?" Thalia asked back.

Denise responded by helping smooth an errant lock of Thalia's hair. Thalia pressed her lips together and answered with a hum. "Yes, I did."

"What happened?"

"You guys don't need to stay here anymore. The person won't be coming today," Thalia said.

"How come?"

"The person came when I was making a call at the entrance earlier," Thalia said.

Everyone's eyes widened when they heard that.

"And?" Anthony continued asking.

"Before I could say anything, someone called his name. A group of men then surrounded him and beat him up. I couldn't just stand there and watch, so I stepped in. While I was fighting off the attackers, he took the opportunity and ran away!" Thalia sighed.

They did not know what else to say upon hearing that.

Denise then asked, "Are you hurt?"

"Please, do you think those hooligans can hurt me?" Thalia said.

Denise flashed a grin. "You're right. Because you're invincible."

Thalia responded with a smirk before turning around to look at the boys. "Let's finish the food as soon as possible. We don't want those people to come after us."

“Didn't you say they were just hooligans? Do you think we can't handle them?” Miguel questioned her.

Chapter 806 Do Not Turn Out As Planned

As Thalia drove, Anthony gazed out the car window while sitting in the backseat.

Thalia glanced at him through the rearview mirror. “What are you thinking about?”

Retracting his gaze, Anthony replied softly, “Nothing much. I'm merely thinking that it looks like not everything will go as I wish.”

Thalia narrowed her eyes a fraction. “Why are you so melancholic out of the blue?”

“It was just a passing thought,” Anthony fibbed casually.

The corners of Thalia's lips turned up. Keeping only a single hand on the steering wheel, she remarked in a murmur, “Most things in life don't turn out as planned. In my opinion, you already have a blissful life. At the very least, you still have control over your life choices. You've got a wealthy father, a capable mother, and a ton of family members keeping you company by your side. You're already living a life others can only envy.”

“Is that so?” Anthony muttered.

“Is that not so?” Thalia countered.

Anthony shuttered his eyes. I'm willing to exchange all that for Nat's safety and health. Can I?

Nonetheless, he kept that to himself without voicing it aloud.

“Maybe,” he mumbled.

Thalia studied him for a moment before shaking her head helplessly. “Oh well, people always take their blessings for granted.”

Anthony did not refute that, merely directing his gaze out the car window once more.

While driving, Thalia scrutinized him. She could not shake off the feeling that his emotions were not quite right, but she did not press further either.

After all, there was still something she did not know how to tell him about right then.

Feigning a cough, she started, “Anthony, there's something—”

Just as she broached the matter, Anthony's phone suddenly rang at that precise moment.

He took out his phone. Upon seeing that it was a call from Kenneth, he answered it.

"Hello, Daddy."

"How are things going? And have you arrived?" Kenneth asked on the other end of the phone.

"Yeah, we've arrived."

"That's great. Take good care of yourself. No matter what you do, your health takes precedence," Kenneth reminded.

"I know."

"Also, do your best in everything you want to attempt regardless of whether it's smooth sailing or otherwise. Even if the results are dissatisfactory, don't be too crestfallen. Just treat it as a kind of training."

"Okay. Got it, Daddy," Anthony concurred.

"That aside, just call back if there's anything you can't handle or need help with. Dave and I have no problems going over anytime," Kenneth added.

Although the man's way of showing concern was exceedingly straightforward, it was undeniable that a sliver of reassurance crept into Anthony. At once, he was no longer as dejected. "All right, will do," he responded.

"As for Nat... you don't have to worry, for I'll take care of her," Kenneth vowed.

That stunned Anthony briefly. In truth, that was the statement he wanted to hear most.

A smile bloomed on his face. "Okay, got it."

"All right, then. If there's nothing else, I'll be hanging up."

"Goodnight, Daddy."

"Goodnight."

The two of them merely exchanged a few words before hanging up.

There was nothing superfluous in the conversation. Everything was simple and succinct.

However, it went beyond a shadow of a doubt that Anthony felt much more relaxed after that phone

call. While there were some things he did not spell out, Kenneth had seemingly known long ago.

And as Thalia said, I've never lacked people supporting me at the back. I should indeed count my blessings.

Following that thought, Anthony took a deep breath.

Regardless of whether things are going to end in success or failure this time, I must give it my all!

As that thought popped into his mind, he put his phone away. Abruptly glimpsing the pair of eyes staring at him through the rearview mirror, something occurred to him. Holding Thalia's gaze, he asked, "Oh yes, what did you want to say earlier?"

Uh...

Thalia stared at him. After being cut short just now, she was at a momentary loss, unsure how to bring that matter up again.

Her gaze darted around. When she caught sight of the scenery outside then, she promptly declared, "We're here. Let's talk later."

Hearing that, Anthony immediately looked out.

A place resembling a night market entered his line of sight.

In a deep alley, a number of stalls adorned the place, selling all kinds of high-quality goods. There was a moderate amount of patrons, and they were all strolling around.

Seeing that, Anthony frowned. "That person's house is here?"

"I have no idea where his house is."

The crease between Anthony's brows deepened. "Why did you bring me here, then?"

Thalia pinned her eyes on him. "That person visits this marketplace every once in a while, doing business with others here for a living. As such, we must keep watch here if you want to find him."

Only after listening to that explanation did Anthony give a nod of his head. "I get it now. Let's go, then."

With that said, he took the lead and headed toward the marketplace.

As Thalia gazed at his back, a glint of something flashed across her eyes. She then chased after him. "Why are you walking so fast? Wait for me."

At the marketplace, few were serious about selling their goods at their stalls. Almost everyone appeared blasé and relaxed. It was as though they could not care less about their businesses.

Chapter 807 Thalia Is Acting Strange

At Thalia's warning, Anthony closed his eyes for a moment, seemingly in contemplation.

Conversely, the man was chagrined upon hearing that. His face went as black as thunder. "Forget it if you don't trust me." While saying that, he snapped his eyes away.

A lightbulb went off in Anthony's head. He took out a wallet from his bag before pulling some cash out. "This is for you as a deposit. If you can do as you promise, there'll naturally be more where that came from."

Initially, the man was still seething. When he saw the stack of bills Anthony whipped out, however, his eyes instantly lit up, and he snatched it out of the latter's hand without a second's delay.

Then, he lifted his eyes to Anthony and Thalia, huffing, "Seeing that you're decisive, I guess I'll take you up on the offer. Well? What is it that you want?"

"I merely want to look for a person."

"Look for someone? Who exactly?" the man pressed.

"Magus. He's often in this area as well," Anthony replied.

Following the mention of that name, the man was stunned for a while. Subsequently, his voice turned derisive. "Why are you looking for him? He's good for nothing, a lazy bum."

Anthony merely chuckled. "I naturally have my reasons to look for him. All you need to do is to notify me immediately when you spot him, and the remaining money in this wallet will be yours," he promised.

When the man heard that, he peered at Anthony's wallet, only to see a thick stack of bills.

"For real? I only need to tell you the location when I find him, and all this will be mine?" he questioned.

"Of course."

"That simple?"

"Yes, that simple."

A grin split the man's face. "Okay, remember your promise."

In response, Anthony quirked a brow.

Without further ado, the man sprang to his feet. "Just wait!"

Just as he was leaving, something occurred to him. "How do I contact you?"

That reminded Anthony of the matter, and he promptly rummaged through his bag for a pen and paper. He jotted down a series of numbers. "Just call this number."

Taking the piece of paper, the man scanned his eyes over it before flicking it lightly with his fingers. "All right. Just wait for my news." After saying that, he strode off.

Next to Anthony, Thalia pursed her lips as she glared at the man's retreating back. "What a fool! I never thought that you'd be so easily duped when you're always bragging about being smart!"

"It's just some money, so it doesn't matter. What if it works?" Anthony countered.

"You're sounding increasingly more like Kenneth. Sure enough, you're his biological son!" Thalia groused.

"I find that you're greatly prejudiced against my daddy."

"Yeah!" Thalia admitted outright.

"Why?"

"He's a sc*mbag!" Thalia declared.

"Didn't he already explain about all that? It was all a misunderstanding. How is he a sc*mbag?"

"Even if it was a misunderstanding, it doesn't change the fact that he's a sc*mbag."

"You're being biased."

"Exactly! I'm biased, all right. Did you think otherwise?" Thalia admitted openly.

Anthony went silent.

For a moment, words eluded him.

The two of them strolled along the marketplace, but they did not see any sign of the person they were looking for, even when they reached the end of the alley.

Thalia asked a few people, yet they all ignored her.

Right then, Anthony whipped out two bills from his bag without hesitation and held them out.

After the man had swept a gaze over the bills, his attitude improved slightly. Alas, just when he was about to reach out and snag them, Anthony took a step back.

“You haven't answered our question,” Anthony prompted.

The man pondered for some time before revealing, “Magus, you said? He hasn't been here for the past two days. I heard he offended someone a few days ago, so he has gone into hiding.”

“Offended someone? Do you know who he offended?”

However, the man remained silent.

At that, Anthony handed him the money. The man quickly snagged it and put it away before he divulged, “I don't know who he offended, but rumor has it that it's someone of great influence. He might even be dead now.”

Upon hearing that, Anthony and Thalia exchanged a look.

As the two of them made their way back, Anthony mused, “So, you saw him getting beaten up today because he offended someone?”

“Most likely, yeah. It looked like those men wanted him dead,” Thalia surmised.

In a trice, worry swamped Anthony. “We've got to find him as soon as possible. Otherwise, no one knows what will happen to him.”

At that exact moment, Thalia fixed her eyes on him. “Anthony.”

“Hmm?”

“Have you ever considered whether you'd still take him in if he's of dubious character?” Thalia asked.

Anthony's gaze turned gloomy. “Honestly speaking, I haven't given any thought to that.”

“This person has experienced a lot. Consequently, he would've lost many of his so-called principles. No one knows how much he has changed. If you take him in, there'll be plenty of uncertainties ahead. Therefore, you'd best reconsider it,” Thalia urged.

Staring at her, Anthony wavered briefly before nodding. “Don't worry. I'll think about it at length.”

In return, Thalia dipped her head.

The two of them only set back when they had searched the whole marketplace and found no signs of Magus.

The distance was negligible, and it only took a few minutes.

After parking the car, they both headed back on foot.

When they had almost reached the gates, a thought hit Anthony. "Where's your friend, Thalia?"

"What friend?"

"The owner of this house," Anthony replied.

Chapter 808 Must You Meet Him Today

Thalia did not deny it, though there was a slightly conflicted expression on her exquisite face.

"So, it's really Kyle?" Denise asked, looking at her telling expression.

Thalia sighed in resignation and finally replied, "What could I do? He was adamant about meeting you, but you were hell-bent on doing what you wanted, so this was the best solution I could think of."

Her answer elicited a frown on Anthony's furious face.

Thalia's decision was unacceptable to him, although he was aware that it was a carefully-deliberated one.

Feeling betrayed and infuriated, he questioned, "Did you even think about the consequences, Thalia?"

"If you're referring to Kenneth and your relationship, then I have to say that it was unexpected, but we all know this outcome was inevitable, and I merely sped it up. But if you're referring to something else, then it's even more straightforward. Kyle will be as surprised as I was to see you."

Anthony glared at her silently, but the latter was unperturbed as she looked back at him right in the eyes.

Seeing the two in a standoff, Denise and Benjamin, who were beside them, exchanged glances before Denise chimed in, "Tony, I'm sure Thalia did this with the best intention. I know you're angry, but this is not necessarily bad."

"She's right," Benjamin agreed.

Still looking at Anthony, Thalia suddenly felt the hostile expression on his face reminded her of Kenneth.

"Do you guys know doing this without Darknetz's knowledge is considered betrayal?" she asked.

Denise whipped her head and stared at Thalia, shocked.

Her reaction was enough to tell Thalia that they were caught unawares.

"I bet none of you read the regulations," Thalia guessed.

"Who reads that? It's wordy and boring," Denise muttered guiltily.

Thalia then looked at Benjamin, who also said he had not gone through the regulations because he had no time for it.

I see. None of them knew anything about it. I guess that makes more sense.

Gazing at the angry Anthony, Thalia explained, "Look, Anthony, I know you're extremely upset because you feel like I betrayed you, but if you were in my shoes, you would understand that this was the best I could do given the situation. You have to believe me when I say I swear loyalty to Darknetz and you."

Despite her words, Anthony still stood without moving an inch, staring at her with his doubtful eyes.

Since he was not persuaded, Thalia nodded and snapped, "Fine. Decide for yourself if you want to see him or not. I'll go stall him if that's what you want."

With that said, she turned and walked toward the lawn, above which the helicopter hovered in preparation for landing.

After watching her leave, Denise turned to her eldest brother. "Tony, I think what she said makes sense. After what we've been through together, I can safely say Thalia is trustworthy. We can't just think of ourselves. We should consider her too," Denise uttered.

"I just don't want anything to interfere with what I'm doing," Anthony replied, turning toward Denise.

"Will you stop if Kyle says no?" Benjamin suddenly weighed in. "If you'll still carry on regardless of his opinion, then what's the big deal about meeting him?"

"Well..." Anthony mumbled, frowning.

"The worst case scenario is you offend Kyle by insisting your way even if he disapproves, but that's a good thing, isn't it? Both of you can go your separate ways after that, which means you have fewer things to worry about," Benjamin reasoned.

"I agree with Ben," Denise also said.

Anthony was beginning to come around to their point of view.

"Tony, Thalia has done so much for us. We can't do this to her," Denise continued.

Miguel, who had been listening quietly all that while, decided to say his piece of mind at that point. "All right. I might not know exactly what you guys are talking about, but I think Thalia is a good friend. She might be a little outrageous sometimes, but I will never second guess her loyalty toward you guys."

Anthony glared at Miguel when he stuck his nose into their discussion, but Denise quickly interrupted, "See? Even an outsider can tell that much, Tony."

At that point, Anthony felt obliged to explain himself. "I do not doubt her intention. It's just that I wasn't mentally prepared."

"What about now? Do you feel more prepared now?" Denise asked, gazing at her brother with her bright eyes.

Anthony looked away toward the descending helicopter and then at Thalia. She still appeared dashing even when Anthony could only see her back.

"Fine. Whatever has happened has happened," Anthony remarked, taking a deep breath.

"Does that mean you agree to meet Kyle?" Denise asked to confirm.

"Let's go," Anthony said curtly, walking toward the lawn.

Chapter 809 I Am Anthony Watson

After some contemplation, Thalia looked at him and asked, "I suppose you haven't eaten? Let's get you something to eat. It's my treat."

Kyle narrowed his eyes, observing Thalia. "Tell me. What's going on?"

"Nothing."

"I'm not hungry. I just want to see him."

Thalia was stumped for words.

"Is there a problem with that?" Kyle added.

Thalia took a deep breath and finally revealed, "I haven't told him about your visit."

It was then that Kyle understood what was going on. "What do you think you're doing?"

"Could you wait for a bit, Boss? He's not prepared to meet you yet. I don't want him to be caught by surprise."

Kyle scoffed at the reply. "Caught by surprise? Why can't he take a surprise? It's not like he's a kid."

"He is, to be honest..." Thalia murmured.

"What did you say?"

Thalia shook her head at him. "It's nothing, Boss. Let's get a drink. I promise I'll make this trip worth it for you."

"Oh. Do you think a drink is enough then?"

"I'll do whatever you ask."

"I don't have any special request. I want to see him," Kyle insisted, still thinking he should meet this person face-to-face since he had put aside all his work for that trip.

This man has got to have something to be acting so enigmatic.

"Boss," Thalia tried persuading.

"I'll go on my own if you refuse to lead the way," Kyle refuted, walking past her. However, after a few steps, he froze where he was, squinting at the three children walking toward him.

"Boss, you should try not to scare him..." Thalia's voice trailed off when she realized Kyle had stopped.

Slowly turning back, she braced herself for the worst.

"W-What are you guys doing here?" she asked with her brows stitched in a frown when she saw the children, who remained silent at her question.

Miguel looked at the frowning woman and replied in the children's stead, "Well, we didn't want to put you in a tight spot."

Thalia narrowed her eyes, trying to discern the look on Anthony's face as the boy stared at Kyle.

To Anthony, Kyle seemed more domineering than he had imagined. Although he looked harmless at first sight, Anthony could tell he was the kind to be very decisive when he had to kill someone.

Meanwhile, Kyle glanced at Thalia with dark eyes, hoping to get answers, but she evaded his gaze.

As if he had understood her body language, Kyle looked at the group not far from him.

Having taken a few-second pause, he paced over to them as his shifting gaze drifted from the children to Miguel.

"We meet at last," Kyle said as he pulled his hand from his pocket and reached out to Miguel.

Staring at the hand extended toward him, Miguel was so stunned he was lost for words.

When he turned to eye the three children, Denise had her lips pursed and was trying not to laugh aloud when she learned that Kyle had mistaken Miguel for Anonymous. In fact, even Thalia was laughing.

"Um, I'm sorry, but I think you got the wrong guy," Miguel pointed out, shaking Kyle's hand.

"The wrong guy?" Kyle frowned.

Sensing the tension in the air, he glanced over at the children, who were roughly half his height.

"What do you mean?" he asked lowly, trailing Miguel's gaze.

"Isn't it obvious enough?"

Kyle glanced at the children again and finally noticed something different about Anthony when he cast his gaze on the boy, who had directly looked him in the eye fearlessly as if he was looking at an ordinary man, not someone from Darknetz.

Perceiving the peculiarity of the matter, Kyle narrowed his eyes and turned to Thalia as if he was looking for confirmation, but the latter coughed dryly and simply smiled at him.

"What's that supposed to mean?" Kyle questioned.

Thalia refused to provide him with the answer he was looking for. She recalled how dumbfounded she was when she first learned who Anthony was; she wanted Kyle to experience the same.

Now you know how I felt. I'm not going through this alone.

"Well, I don't know," Thalia said, shrugging with her hands spread out.

Just as Kyle was trapped in confusion, Denise smiled sweetly at him and greeted, "Hi, sir."

Chapter 810 You Know What You Are Doing

"What is it that you understand?" Anthony asked facetiously, staring him in the eye boldly.

"What do you think?" Kyle asked in return, deeply stirred despite his calm demeanor.

There was no way he would embarrass himself in front of a boy.

"How would I know what is on your mind?" Anthony replied.

Looking at the proud boy acting maturely, Kyle suddenly thought of something which could completely throw Anthony off guard.

True enough, Anthony was taken aback when Kyle suddenly crouched and pinched him on the cheek. "What are you doing? Let me go!" the boy cried out with his eyes wide like saucers, finally putting down the little adult act, yet his demand was not heeded as Kyle pinched him even harder.

"Wow, you truly have such soft cheeks!"

"You!" There was nothing the helpless boy could do but glare at Kyle.

"Me? Do you have a problem with me? What's wrong with me pinching you? This is what all adults do. Besides, you're the one who tricked me."

While he spoke, he squeezed Anthony's cheeks more forcefully as if he was enjoying himself.

"Hm! As expected of Anonymous; even your cheeks feel different from others!" Kyle exclaimed.

Everyone broke out laughing when they saw Kyle teasing the boy, for no one had ever dared poke fun at Anthony because of his fierce attitude.

At the sight, Benjamin and Denise were worried that Anthony might lash out at Kyle, but the truth was there was nothing much Anthony could do.

On the other hand, Thalia could not believe that the thought of pinching the boy's cheeks had never once crossed her mind.

Feeling everyone's burning gazes, Anthony blushed at the embarrassment and finally pushed Kyle's hands away. "Don't be rude. This is not something you do to random strangers."

"Random strangers? You're Anonymous, the all-powerful hacker," Kyle replied mockingly.

Anthony was almost lost for words, but in the nick of time, he replied wittily, "You sure are good at sucking up to people."

"Well, it's not like you don't know me. That's how I got you to join Darknetz, isn't it?" Kyle replied, completely unfazed, although he knew Anthony was trying to be sarcastic.

"That's true." Anthony nodded with his lips pursed.

"You just have to get used to it," Kyle added.

"You speak exactly the same when you're online," Anthony commented as the two looked at each other.

"I can't say the same for you."

"Are you surprised?"

"Oh, yes! I'm so surprised!" Kyle assured with a perfunctory smile.

"Any comments about that?" Anthony asked provocatively with his brows arched.

Here, Kyle stood up and glanced at Thalia, who was behind him. "Bind him up and send him back to Darknetz. We're dissecting this boy to see what he's made of."

"Just him or all three of them?" Thalia asked, taking a step forward.

Kyle looked back at the three children and pondered before pointing at Anthony and Benjamin. "Just these two. Spare the girl. She's too cute for that."

"Yes, sir," Thalia stated with a nod.

"Wait!" Denise suddenly interrupted. "Can I ask Tony and Ben a question before you all take them?"

"Sure," Kyle uttered.

With Kyle's approval, Denise turned toward her brothers and asked, "What's the PIN to your bank accounts?"

Everyone roared with laughter at the girl's question, and Kyle bent over to pat her head.

"Are you not scared at all?"

"Yes, I am. I'm scared they won't tell me their PIN even now," Denise said, gazing at her brothers.

Her reply seemed to have impressed Kyle since he complimented, "Good. You have to have a heart of stone to do great things."

But the girl quickly changed her tone and voiced gently, "No. I'm a soft-hearted person. I'm kind and pretty."

Once again, her words put a smile on everyone's face, including Anthony's.

Looking at how everyone was having fun together, he felt like Kyle's proactiveness at their first meeting had made things less awkward.

"All right. We should probably get in," Thalia weighed in as she walked over.