

## Apocalypse 110

### Chapter 110 The Meal Before the Face Off

Kisha shut down her status window with a silent sigh, adopting the mantra "out of sight, out of mind." Taking her seat at the dining table, she left everyone to ponder her earlier question about joining her team. 'Weren't they already part of the team from the beginning?'

Confusion hung in the air, but amidst the uncertainty, they collectively brushed off the momentary puzzlement, eagerly anticipating the meal simmering in the kitchen.

The tantalizing aroma of meat filled the air, a stark contrast to the week they spent subsisting on tough bread and canned goods scavenged from outside. Their mouths watered uncontrollably at the heavenly scent, so much so that one of them couldn't suppress the loud rumble of his stomach, louder than that of a zombie's growl.

Laughter filled the room as they shared a moment of amusement at the sound of the growling stomach. While they awaited the main course, Kisha waved her hand, conjuring an array of appetizers and fruits from her inventory. These were provisions she had stocked up on the day before the apocalypse struck, now providing a welcome addition to their meal.

Now that everyone had a better understanding of Kisha's ability to store and take out items from her inventory, their eyes crinkled in happiness because they knew that they would never be hungry anymore but at the same time, they felt reverence towards Kisha like a Goddess who descended from heaven and provided them provisions amidst the drought.

They felt immense gratitude that their leader had found such a resilient woman to stand by his side. In the midst of chaos and death, they saw the apocalypse as a blessing in disguise, bringing their master the companion he had long sought.

But even though they are all happy to see all the food on the table, no one has yet made a move because they don't want to look disrespectful in front of their future young madam. 'And just like that, they already accepted Kisha as their young madam. All it took was delicious food.' If Kisha were to hear this, she would be cackling like a madman due to amusement.

Observing the hesitant silence despite the tempting spread, Kisha interpreted their reluctance as a sign of respect, a collective effort to avoid appearing impolite or gluttonous in her presence. With a warm smile, she encouraged them to indulge, recognizing the need for sustenance to face the challenges ahead. "Please, help yourselves," she urged, her tone welcoming.

"We have plenty, and today promises to be demanding. You'll need all the energy you can muster to confront our aggressors."

As Kisha's words settled in, their eyes widened as they processed her implications. Before anyone could articulate their thoughts, Duke seized the moment. "Seems like we're perfectly in tune," he remarked with a playful smirk, idly running his fingers through Kisha's hair. Seated beside her, he basked in the comfortable atmosphere they shared.

Hearing Kisha vocalize what had been on his mind brought a happy smile to Duke's face. In that moment, he felt a profound connection with her, realizing that nobody understood him quite like she did, and no one seemed to sync with him as effortlessly as she did, in every aspect of their relationship. His eyes sparkled with emotion as he gazed at Kisha, his fingers still gently toying with her hair.

"You all better eat," Duke echoed Kisha's words.

Upon hearing Kisha and Duke, everyone abandoned their remaining manners and dove into the appetizers on the table while waiting for Vulture and Tristan to finish preparing the meal.

Duke picked up a fruit knife and began peeling some pears, handing them to Kisha. His father raised an eyebrow and remarked, "You brat, once you've got a wife, you forget about your mother?"

Kisha choked on the pears she had just put in her mouth upon hearing Duke's father's words. Duke responded playfully to his father, "Why should I worry about my mother when you're already there?" He didn't even deny Kisha being his wife anymore, not referring to her as a business partner either, but openly acknowledging that Kisha was to be his wife.

Kisha felt her whole face warming up from hearing Duke and his father's banter as if she wasn't even there. Under the table, she felt a tap on her lap, and when she looked up, she saw Mrs. Winters looking at her affectionately while mouthing, "Let the fools fool around."

After deciphering Mrs. Winters's message, Kisha nearly choked on her laughter. She hadn't anticipated such candidness from the elegant woman before her, especially when it came to her husband and son sitting just beside them.

Amidst the playful banter between Duke, his father, and even the Patriarch, Kisha marveled at Duke's ease and comfort around his family. Though their expressions remained stoic, their playful exchanges revealed the depth of their closeness.

The Winters men's poker-faced demeanor added an extra layer of amusement to their banter, leaving everyone guessing whether they were teasing each other or discussing the weather.

Now, Kisha understood why Duke was so devastated before, he became even more ruthless and unfeeling after what she perceived as the death of his family. And all the clues she has gathered throughout their journey to City B only point to one conclusion.

'What happened now to the Winters including Tristan and his men, also happened in her previous lives but the only difference was, Duke has never made it and failed to save his family for some reason.'

She pondered over the fate of Sparrow and the others, wondering if they had originally been part of Tristan's party and perished there, or if they had all been present from the outset, including Duke. In either scenario, Duke stood out as the sole survivor of the Coltons' assault.

Reflecting on the past, Kisha's emotions simmered, recalling Duke's avoidance of discussing his family in her previous life. She witnessed his longing to reunite with them, tempered by a palpable sense of grief and self-blame. Remembering the Duke of old brought a pang to her heart, contrasting sharply with the livelier and more open demeanor of the Duke before her now.

Kisha's gaze lingered on Duke and his family, sensing a warmth akin to what she shared with her own adoptive family. It was a love that transcended words, expressed through genuine gestures and shared moments. Though unspoken, its presence was palpable, radiating throughout the room and enveloping everyone in its embrace.

Kisha's heart swelled with happiness for Duke and his family. It ignited a deep-seated desire within her to protect them as if they were her own, to ensure that Duke never withdrew into the shadows of his past self. She couldn't bear to dwell on the melancholy Duke of her previous life, yet she couldn't deny his profound impact on her present.

As Vulture and Tristan placed the steaming dishes on the table, the others had already polished off the appetizers. Yet, in a display of appreciation, they made sure to offer Vulture and Tristan bites of food as they worked, a small gesture of gratitude for their efforts in preparing the meal.

Everyone enjoyed a hearty breakfast, and they even packed lunchboxes filled with onigiri and sandwiches for their outdoor excursion. In the past, they wouldn't have dared to do so, fearing the food might not survive the journey intact. But now, with Kisha's ability to safely store items away, they felt confident in making extra provisions.