

Apocalypse 149

Chapter 149 The Deal

But all this was just speculation. Kisha wouldn't know what really happened unless she went on the mission with them. Regardless of whether she agreed or not, they might still pursue the mission to find the Winters. If she and Duke didn't go, Aston and his team could still be in danger.

Despite taking care of the Coltons' camps, there was still the traitor, and it wasn't certain that all the Coltons were dead.

"Given the increased danger and the fact that the zombies have become stronger, three times the reward isn't particularly appealing to us," Duke said, beating Kisha to the negotiation. True to his businessman nature, he never agreed to a deal that didn't favor him and always aimed to gain the upper hand.

Aston was dumbstruck by Duke's boldness. Duke didn't resemble a special agent; instead, he seemed more like a loan shark shamelessly increasing debt through interest rates. However, Aston truly needed their help to find what he was after.

"What's your suggestion?" Aston asked, his expression indifferent.

Duke's smile faded as he made his proposal, causing Aston to fight the urge to punch him in the face. "Ten times the amount with a lower tax rate, exclusively for our group's use," Duke said, his smug expression suggesting he was offering Aston an irresistible deal. Even Kisha was taken aback by Duke's audacity; it seemed less like a negotiation and more like extortion.

Unbeknownst to Aston, Duke's sudden boldness stemmed from jealousy, triggered by Kisha's intense focus on Aston since he had offered the mission.

Duke gritted his teeth, pondering, 'Is he really that good-looking? Better looking than me?' He eyed Aston with menace. As one of the young masters of City A, Aston exuded a similar air to Duke, albeit with a slight difference. Despite his stern appearance, Aston was undeniably handsome.

If not for his serious demeanor, he would likely have had socialites clamoring to marry him, just as they did for Duke, who sat at the pinnacle of the business circle.

Now, the so-called number one bachelor was as sour as a lemon, but he couldn't let his dissatisfaction show. Aston gritted his teeth and thought carefully. He recognized that Kisha's group was more familiar with the terrain and the zombie activities in the area, having completed their scouting mission.

The reason he wanted to employ them was also their fighting prowess; while he and his team might not require it, the people they needed to rescue definitely would.

With a heavy heart, he decisively agreed. "Alright, but I would like to emphasize that your group must do everything in your power to protect everyone. If we encounter survivors, they must be your primary concern," he added with conviction, embodying the spirit of a righteous soldier.

He must have been attempting to conceal the fact that he was searching for specific survivors, but his inquiries and actions had already exposed his intentions. He was as easy to read as an open book. While he might excel at completing assigned missions and tactical measures, he remained far inferior to the snakes lurking around him.

Due to his honesty and righteous demeanor, this might ring true for most soldiers. Similar to her grandfather, she couldn't condemn Aston for this shortcoming. Her grandfather, like him, was an honest and kind person who always saw the best in others, even after experiencing the darkness of the human heart.

Perhaps fueled by his excitement or hope, he displayed a myriad of emotions. It could also be attributed to Kisha's astuteness that she was able to discern his intentions. Regardless, she made the decision to agree and join the mission. She was eager to unravel what had occurred between Duke and Aston.

"Absolutely, we're on board with the mission, but actions speak louder than words. We'll need a downpayment to seal the deal," Kisha echoed Duke's sentiments, maintaining unity in their negotiation. Recognizing Duke's leadership role, she aimed to support his stance rather than introducing conflicting opinions.

Observing his wife echo his sentiments, Duke relinquished his jealousy and attempted to wear a triumphant grin. Aston, puzzled by Duke's abrupt shift from hostility to smugness, wondered if there was an issue with Duke's head. However, he decided not to voice his concerns, as his priority was their performance in the mission, akin to how they safeguarded the over 30 individuals they escorted.

Kisha, Duke, Sparrow, and Vulture emerged from the back room and made their way to the heart of the Central Hall, close to the group registration area. Their recently acquired supplies from the mission were neatly arranged there. Many individuals in the hall, there for various missions, cast curious glances at the stockpile being watched over by a soldier.

For most survivors present, the sight was unprecedented; they had never encountered such a bounty during their own missions.

As Kisha and her group approached to claim their supplies, envy, and covetousness crept into the hearts of onlookers. Some among them felt an urge to join Kisha's group, while others entertained the idea of scheming to seize their supplies, be it through theft or deception. Despite many not being familiar with Kisha and her companions, such thoughts lingered.

Kisha, however, remained vigilant, ready to swiftly address any attempts at foul play.

As if anticipating their acceptance of the mission, there were already extra supplies prepared besides the ones they received for completing their recent task. Soldiers openly admired Kisha's group and offered to escort them to their lodging, making it easier to unload the supplies. They even volunteered their vehicles for transportation. Aston, silently acquiescing, made no move to intervene.

However, another soldier rushed in from outside and whispered something to Aston, whose expression turned grim with anger.

Aston approached Kisha and Duke with a grim expression. "It seems I can only depend on you now. Unit One has been barred from deployment by the Minister of Defense." His implication was crystal clear.

The fact that he lacked the authority to make crucial decisions within the shelter hinted at the presence of a higher-ranking figure in the military hierarchy, likely operating from the shadows in City B. This individual might have discerned Aston's intentions and was obstructing him, possibly aligning with the Coltons' faction.

Despite this setback, Aston remained determined. The supplies he provided might not have come from the shelter's storage but rather from military resources or even his own personal funds, all in an effort to secure additional assistance. If this was indeed the case, Kisha couldn't help but feel a twinge of guilt for playing him.