

Apocalypse 183

Chapter 183 Reeve's Secret

Aston and his team were still bewildered by the recent events and Kisha's statement. They felt as though they hadn't fully grasped her words.

"The Winters are safe?" Aston repeated, seeking confirmation of Kisha's words. However, Kisha was busy discussing the escape route with Sparrow, and Duke, seemingly unconcerned with anything else, was preoccupied with keeping an eye on his wife as if she might run away if he looked away even for a moment.

Vulture took the liberty to briefly explain to Aston. "We already saved the Winters during our initial mission here. And before you ask, yes, we were also responsible for what happened to the Coltons' camp, but I'm not in a position to explain the whys."

"Is it because you don't trust us yet, or are you afraid we might betray you?" Aston asked, his voice tinged with shame and mixed emotions. He hadn't anticipated being surrounded by traitors and now feared there might be more among his team.

Vulture shook his head. "No, not that. As far as I can tell, what the young madam did to you earlier seemed like a binding contract. Given her cautious nature, it was probably a safety measure to ensure no one could betray us. What would happen if you did, I don't know. It's ultimately up to her whether she wants to share more information." He shrugged, following his instincts.

If Kisha heard him whispering this to Aston, she might kick his ass for disclosing such information. Luckily, he had kept his voice low, speaking only to Aston.

Initially, Aston was brooding with anger, but as he parsed Vulture's words, a sense of realization dawned on him. "Binding contract?" His brows furrowed deeply, then shot up in incredulity. "Did we somehow sell our souls to the devil?" he gasped, turning to Vulture for answers.

The memory of the faint, translucent flame that had emanated from their bodies flashed through his mind, reinforcing his concern. Vulture responded with a nonchalant shrug, leaving Aston with more questions than answers.

Then Vulture added, "How would I know? We didn't go through anything like that." His innocent remark inadvertently rubbed salt in Aston's wounds, unknowingly mocking him.

With those simple words, Vulture implied that he and his team were inherently trustworthy, suggesting that Kisha didn't need to resort to drastic measures to ensure her safety—unlike Aston and his men, who apparently required such a contract to prevent potential betrayal even while they slept.

This revelation further disheartened Aston, adding to the exasperation of his already dismal situation. He realized he had been kept in the dark, while his own people had been taking advantage of him until they discarded him once he was no longer useful.

As a soldier of higher rank, he managed to keep his emotions in check and regain his composure. Having pledged his allegiance to Kisha and her team, whether or not there was a binding contract, he was committed to following them. Especially now that he knew of their connection to the Winters, he trusted that no one with ill intentions would be associated with them, as Duke would not allow it.

Reflecting on this, he felt much better about their mission. It wasn't just successful—it was remarkably fruitful. They had gathered a wealth of information and had also removed the weeds that had infiltrated their ranks, those rotten apples who had called themselves his comrades.

However, Kisha's sharp gaze then fell upon Reeve, who was attempting to make himself as inconspicuous as possible, as though fearful of being noticed. Kisha had observed his suspicious behavior for some time; if anyone aroused her suspicion, it was him. Despite her initial doubts, life was full of surprises, and Reeve was not among the traitors—but he was clearly hiding something.

The uncertainty of what Reeve was hiding unsettled her deeply. Whatever it was, it didn't sit well with her, as it could potentially pose a threat not only to them but also to her group in the future. The possibility that it might not directly concern them didn't ease her concern; rather, it heightened her apprehension about its potential implications down the line.

"Now." Her cold voice was directed squarely at Reeve, causing him to jolt and stiffen in place. He knew Kisha's words were aimed at him, yet he couldn't bring himself to meet her gaze, gripped by fear. Having been accustomed to admiration and protection, the harsh realities he faced with Kisha and her ruthless team were entirely new and terrifying for him.

The presence of Kisha and Duke was particularly daunting; their aura was overpowering and intimidating.

"Why did you join this mission if you can't even protect yourself? And what are you hiding?" Kisha's voice was icy as she interrogated him, each word laden with menace. It sent chills down Reeve's spine as if a colossal serpent had coiled around him, its frigid scales pressing against his skin with a threatening intensity.

Reeve pursed his lips, searching for the right words as he felt the weight of everyone's gaze upon him. He couldn't evade the truth any longer. With a shaky voice, he began to explain, "I... I was running away."

His admission caused Kisha to raise an eyebrow, her silence urging him to continue, though her scrutiny only intensified Reeve's anxiety.

"I used to be a teen idol. My group and I were on our way to a concert in City B when the apocalypse hit," he continued, each word trembling with emotion. "I heard there were no survivors at the concert location. Only a few of us from my group made it out because we were literally outside that time, and we got separated. Thankfully, Commander McMillan saved me."

As Reeve spoke, his voice grew increasingly shaky, reflecting the turmoil he felt recounting his ordeal.

"After the soldiers successfully fortified the shelter and expanded it to accommodate more survivors, I learned that some of my group had also found safety there. By then, Commander McMillan had assigned me various odd jobs for the military.

While carrying out my duties, I happened to overhear soldiers describing a few young men who sounded like my friends, but..." Reeve paused, taking a deep breath as tears welled up, as if he were baring his heart, revealing his grievances and fears.

"But I found out they were dragged away by some soldiers and sold to the Coltons in exchange for rations, becoming the Young Master Coltons' sex slaves..." He paused, a hiccup escaping him, on the verge of breaking down. "I heard they're being tortured there, and now the soldiers are eyeing me to send to the Young Master's bed, seeing how the other slaves are dying like flies."

"I was scared, but I wanted to help my friends. I knew I couldn't do anything for them, so when I heard that Commander McMillan was personally going out on a mission, I had no choice but to follow for my own protection. But I was also afraid that he or you might sell me, or that I would end up in a situation similar to those of the Young Master Coltons.

My paranoia consumed me." With that, he wailed in fear and pain, pouring out all his anxieties, worries, and sense of helplessness.

"At first, I thought I was safe because all of you are so strong. But then, when I saw how ruthless you were with Commander McMillan's second in command, I began to fear that you were no different from the Coltons. It scared me to my core, so I tried to keep my distance and be as useful as possible.

I was terrified of all the possibilities." As he started to divulge what he had been hiding for days, he couldn't stop; it poured out like water from a broken dam.