

## Apocalypse 196

### Chapter 196 They are Dead

The old man wasn't offended by Kisha's blunt words. In fact, they reassured him. As a man who grew up as a farmer, he was accustomed to hearing such blunt and crude language from the other villagers. He could at least tell when someone meant to offend and when they did not.

But unlike him, who grew up in a village and only visited the city to see his son's family, his grandchildren were different. They were angered by Kisha's words, thinking she was looking down on them and expressing disdain for their perceived weakness and uselessness. The twins glared at Kisha, but she merely chuckled at their not-so-intimidating scowls.

"Alright, follow us," Kisha said as she stood up and began walking ahead. She handed them a different type of bread with filling and a drink. The others in the market, seeing this, tried to approach Kisha in hopes of being picked up for a meal. However, with just a single, fierce glance from Duke, as menacing as a death god, they all froze and stopped in their tracks.

Kisha and Duke didn't head back immediately; instead, they continued to walk around the market, looking for things to buy. Noticing that most people were just trying to make a living by exchanging goods, she didn't mind purchasing a few miscellaneous items from the vendors. Some thought she was being wasteful, while others believed she was easy to fool.

But when others tried to take advantage of her, they were swiftly taught a lesson, and she didn't buy from their stalls. As a result, no one dared to exploit her again. Instead, they eagerly waited in their stalls, hoping she would consider their items.

Kisha bought a few more clothes for the Wyatt family, along with utensils, toothbrushes, and other necessities. She also purchased some gold, in case it proved useful in the future. She wasn't lacking

supplies, and with the Wyatt family's help, she was confident she could at least double her current stock.

At the same time, she didn't want anyone dying of hunger because they couldn't gather supplies on their own.

She didn't know if there were more people like the Wyatt family hiding in the crowd, so it was better to be generous now and be seen as a good person. This way, when the time came, they would be more likely to follow her lead.

Although she believed that her primary responsibility was to protect her family and not be concerned with anything else, she also understood the need for cooperation. Yes, she had all the means to support herself and her family with ample supplies, but what would happen when the zombies grew stronger? Would her territory alone be enough to fend them off?

That's why, despite knowing it would be a hassle, she believed it was possible to nurture the right people. She had always wanted to create her own squad and establish a self-sufficient base. This time, she felt confident she could finally create the safe haven she had envisioned for so long.

So, in order to do that, she needed to temper the people in the shelter as soon as possible, if they did a great job, she would bring them to the base to lead a better life.

From the corner of the market, some people had been following Kisha and Duke for a long time. Observing them buying miscellaneous items, they assumed Kisha and Duke were merely trying to appear like important people and well-supplied to feed their egos. Convinced of this, they left to report their findings.

They didn't have the time to monitor Kisha and her group's movements constantly, especially when they seemed to be living an ordinary life in the shelter.

Once Kisha was certain their tail had disappeared, she, Duke, and the Wyatts proceeded to an alley. Kisha instructed the Wyatts to wait at the entrance while she and Duke ventured inside to meet with some people.

As they reached the shadowy corner of the alley, they spotted two men crouching like hooligans. Upon seeing Kisha and Duke approaching from the darkness, both men stood up alertly. However, as Kisha and Duke drew closer and were recognized, the two men visibly relaxed and exclaimed, "Master! Young Madam!" They then bowed slightly in acknowledgment.

"It's been a few days. How have you guys been?" Duke asked, his tone neutral, though Kisha sensed he was relieved to see his subordinates doing well in their absence.

"Master... um," the two exchanged a glance, evidently contemplating whether to share something or simply report that they were doing fine.

"What is it?" Duke asked not bothered by their sneaky glances.

"Master, the thing is... During your absence, we've encountered a problem. We're missing two people," Bald Eagle timidly began, then quickly added, "We've searched extensively, but unfortunately, we couldn't find them anywhere. We fear they might have been captured by the Coltons and could be undergoing torture."

He trembled at the thought of what could have happened, particularly after their meticulous efforts to conceal their location from the Coltons. If his suspicions were correct, their young madam was likely biding her time for the opportune moment to retaliate.

"But if they talk after being tortured..." He hesitated, not due to a lack of faith in his people's resilience and unwavering loyalty to their master, but the unsettling possibilities loomed large.

"They're dead," Duke stated flatly, his expression betraying no emotion and his voice steady.

Tristan observed his master's aloof demeanor and sensed that something significant must have occurred. He understood Duke well; if any of their comrades had been harmed by the enemy, Duke would undoubtedly seek retribution. "An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth," as he always said.

Tristan knew Duke's deep protectiveness towards his people made it implausible for him to be indifferent about their deaths unless... Tristan's thoughts trailed off, a chill creeping into his heart at the implication.

Bald Eagle stared at Duke with wide eyes, his mouth agape enough to fit a fist. But before he could fully process Duke's meaning, Duke continued.

"They were Coltons' moles deeply embedded among us, attempting to alert the Coltons of your arrival at the shelter and critical information they gathered about our awakened abilities, Kisha, myself, and the others," Duke explained gravely.

He paused, letting the weight of his words settle, then continued, "They must have been well-prepared for any scenario—or perhaps they themselves were unaware of each other's identities or who among us had been compromised until they felt it safe enough to surface and report back."

"And what better opportunity to do that than when I and the other core members left the shelter, leaving all of you vulnerable?" Duke's calm and indifferent demeanor spoke volumes. It was the calm before the storm, signaling his brewing rage over the Coltons' latest stunt, which compounded with their history of malicious actions.

Bald Eagle's already wide eyes widened even more as its rim turned red, even he didn't know who to trust anymore aside from their master and the Winters. He felt betrayed and frustrated, angry even.

They had been oblivious to the danger lurking within their midst, nearly falling into the hands of the Coltons unnoticed. After a moment of stark realization, Bald Eagle's voice trembled slightly as he asked his master, "Then, who killed them?"