

Apocalypse 45

Chapter 45 Disguise 2

Somehow, Sparrow felt offended by Vulture's gaze, so he kicked him in the ass.

Duke had been staring at Kisha with a gaze dripping with honey, making her feel uncomfortable as her stomach churned. She cleared her throat to break the tension.

Thanks to Sparrow's sudden question, it pulled her out of her predicament. "But, I just wanted to ask, did you prepare this makeup material before the apocalypse happened? How come you conveniently have it?"

"Oh! This?! My little brother Keith is an anime fanatic and has often gone to cosplay conventions since we were young. I often helped him make his costumes and apply his makeup, so I've gotten used to it. When we evacuated our place, I also took all our belongings, so this was among those things," Kisha explained as she reminisced about their past.

"No wonder you're so familiar with the tools!" Vulture quipped.

The silent Duke finally spoke. "But why do we have to disguise ourselves now? Are we close to our target location?" He asked with seriousness.

Kisha shook her head and said, "No, we're still far from the target location. However, I think that we'll soon encounter more people who are fleeing as well. So, we'll have little time to disguise then. It's better to be prepared ahead for a foolproof plan than be blindsided later on."

Recognizing the wisdom in her words and the importance of avoiding trouble to reach their destination swiftly, Duke remained silent. His trust in Kisha was unwavering, knowing she had his back in every situation.

As they pressed onward, Sparrow skillfully maneuvered their armored vehicle to the edges of the abandoned cars littering the highway, pushing them aside to clear a path. Thankfully, the sturdy construction of their armored car ensured it could withstand the impact without sustaining damage or scraping against other obstacles along the way.

However, this method unavoidably prolonged their journey to escape the highway congested with abandoned vehicles. What would typically be a one-hour drive to exit the highway ended up stretching to two and a half hours.

Considering traversing on foot as an alternative briefly crossed their minds. Yet, they quickly dismissed the idea due to the considerable amount of time it would consume, not to mention the inconvenience compared to traveling by vehicle.

Therefore, Kisha decided to conduct a test by checking her territory. Upon realizing that others couldn't see her system interface, she speculated that they likely couldn't see the holographic territory she possessed either when she displayed it in front of her. If they could see it, it wouldn't be a problem too because they were the people she could trust with her secret.

She viewed this as a chance to experiment within the confines of people she trusted.

Besides, she was planning to let Duke know of her system anyway but not now and she thinks that she doesn't even have to spill the beans for him to figure out, he's always that smart and observant but still,

she would divulge it. She just had the feeling that Duke would appreciate it more if it came directly from her mouth.

Unbeknownst to Kisha, Duke had been attentively observing every subtle change in her expression: every furrow of her brow, every flutter of her long eyelashes. Gradually, his throat grew dry, and his body warmed as if he were coming down with a fever. Sensing that another thing was acting up, he quickly averted his gaze and stared out of the window.

He wasn't sure if he had masochistic tendencies because, as far as he was aware, he didn't. Yet, he couldn't help but feel drawn to Kisha, triggering a mix of emotions within him that bordered on torture.

As if, his abstinence over the years came crashing down on him like a flash flood, threatening to break the damn in a second. This strong pull he felt was doing wonders in his mind and body.

He closed his eyes, attempting to refocus on the important matters he had set aside before all this chaos emerged. Seeking solace in his thoughts, he pushed away thoughts of Kisha, striving to regain mental clarity. Eventually, he drifted back to sleep.

Kisha, meanwhile, had been engrossed in manipulating her territory, exploring its capabilities. It wasn't until 008 notified her that Duke had been watching her, though he didn't seem to notice anything unusual. She speculated that others might only see her territory's system interface once they became her administrators, granting them authority to manage her territory but with restricted access.

Now that she had a better understanding, Kisha discovered some amazing uses for her territory and its subspace farm. She realized that it had far more potential than she initially thought, leading her to giggle like a child with the realization that her investment hadn't been in vain.

As night fell, Kisha and her companions found a secure location to rest. Thanks to Kisha's inventory of pre-cooked food, they didn't need to bother with cooking. They simply ate whatever was available and settled down for rest. Sparrow took the first watch, keeping watch over them during the first half of the night, while Vulture would take over for the latter half.

As Vulture settled in for his watch, Kisha suddenly snapped her eyes open, startling both him and Sparrow. Not only did Kisha open her eyes, but she also immediately sat up, triggering a sense of déjà vu for the others. They couldn't help but recall the last time Kisha had reacted like this: it was when they were almost ambushed by a horde of zombies at the gasoline station while on the run.

So, Sparrow and Vulture immediately became alert, scanning their surroundings for any signs of danger. Kisha motioned for silence, placing a finger to her lips. "Shhh." Duke, now awakened by the commotion, silently moved closer to the door, his body low to the ground as he approached cautiously.

Kisha retrieved her smaller katana from her inventory and crouched low to the floor, ready for any threat. Meanwhile, the other two positioned themselves near the windows, ensuring all entry points to the room were covered.

After ten tense minutes of waiting, the room remained silent, but as the fifteen-minute mark passed, the door began to creak open from the outside. No one rushed in immediately; instead, a pistol was cautiously pointed into the room, its wielder assessing the situation before making any further moves.

Before anyone could enter, Kisha had already concealed herself within the shadows cast by the shelf, adeptly melding into the darkness. Her eyes gleamed with the intensity of a stalking puma, poised to spring upon her prey as they drew nearer.

Advancing cautiously, the figures outside took measured steps, their movements betraying apprehension. However, in a swift motion, Duke intercepted, pressing a dagger against the throat of the leading individual, while Sparrow and Vulture sealed off any chance of escape from behind. Emerging from the concealment of shadows, Kisha scrutinized the newcomers with keen observation.

Amidst the intruders stood a woman cradling a baby, drawing Kisha's immediate attention. Her gaze swept over the group, revealing a mix of ages, from the elderly to the young. The man Duke had apprehended wore a black S.W.A.T. uniform, his hands raised in surrender.

"Please, don't hurt the civilians," he blurted out, the words tumbling from his lips in a rush, his tone desperate as he raised his hands in a gesture of surrender. He didn't entertain even a moment's thought that Duke might slit his throat in an instant.

Kisha nodded at Duke, signaling for him to release the man. "Are you all survivors?" she inquired, her voice cold yet tinged with concern as she observed the weary and hungry faces of the newcomers.

Kisha retrieved her large bag, originally meant to act as a cover for their supplies, and began distributing food to the group of the S.W.A.T member. Initially, reluctance lingered among the survivors, perhaps intimidated by Kisha's group's ominous appearance.

However, the woman with the baby, driven by maternal instincts, accepted the provisions without hesitation, recognizing the necessity for her child's well-being.

Hence, the rest of the group followed suit, accepting the supplies from Kisha and hastily indulging in the food, wary of the possibility that Kisha might rescind her offer.

It was only then that the S.W.A.T member, regaining his composure, responded to Kisha's inquiry. "Yes, these folks are from a neighboring small town. I'm Fred."

"Kisha, that big guy is 'D' and those two are just his lackeys." Kisha introduced her companions herself, and upon hearing her label them as lackeys, Sparrow and Vulture felt like crying.

"Where are your other team members?" Kisha asked, scanning the surroundings for any sign of additional S.W.A.T. personnel.

Fred's expression darkened. "They didn't make it... I'm the only one left to safeguard the civilians and guide them to the evacuation center."

"That's indeed saddening, but you have to stay strong. These people rely on you, and you have to live for your comrades," Kisha randomly said just to create a rapport with Fred.

"Thank you, Kisha," he replied with a grateful smile before adding, "Are you guys heading to City B too?"

Kisha nodded.