

Apocalypse 699

Chapter 699 Work Reassignment

He had a keen ability to recognize those who could help him survive, which was precisely why he had chosen to overshare his plans when first meeting the Winters' men.

For someone like him—who had spent his life working at the bottom of society—wariness was second nature. People in his position often had no voice, easily overlooked or discarded without consequence.

Seeking help was futile because, more often than not, it simply didn't exist for people like them.

They were frequent targets for human trafficking and other crimes, which had ingrained in them a habit of keeping information close to their chest and being wary.

Yet, despite this ingrained caution, Hugo instinctively recognized when it was worth taking a risk and revealing more than usual—an insight that set him apart.

For someone who had ingrained wariness and caution into his very being, Hugo's decision to openly share his future plans with complete strangers was nothing short of remarkable.

He had no way of knowing their identities or intentions—whether they were good people, opportunists looking to take advantage of him, or, at worst, cannibals.

After all, Kisha had witnessed such horrors in her previous life, and in desperate times, it wouldn't be surprising if some had turned to such extremes.

Yet, despite the risks, Hugo chose to gamble. This meant he had already assessed the Winters' men, recognizing them as strong individuals from a well-supplied shelter—all from pure observation, a skill honed over years of navigating the docks as a porter while keeping his eyes peeled.

It was this keen awareness that had kept him out of trouble for so long. More impressively, he didn't make it seem like a calculated move. Instead, he presented his openness as a casual, honest conversation, ensuring that the other party never even realized he was testing the waters.

Kisha was convinced that Hugo would be a valuable addition to her team. He was humble and down-to-earth—qualities that made him approachable even to those who distrust authority.

She knew from experience that there were always people skeptical of those in power, herself included.

While such individuals hadn't yet reached City B or her territory, it was only a matter of time before they did. When that day came, unrest would be inevitable.

But having someone like Hugo—someone who could bridge the gap between leadership and the common people—would be an invaluable asset. He had the ability to earn their trust and keep tensions from escalating into outright conflict.

Especially since Kisha planned to open HOPE Base's gates to other shelters and bases soon, she knew she would inevitably encounter groups like Hugo's—communities of people who had been oppressed for so long but had now managed to carve out their own sanctuary.

Having fought to build their own oasis, these people would naturally be wary of larger, more powerful bases. Some might even see them as threats or competitors rather than allies.

If Kisha was unlucky, these groups could turn hostile, and during those struggles, they might even use her own people against her—just as it had happened in her previous life.

Back then, a well-known base built by laborers union, one powerful enough to rival military-run strongholds, had set its sights on her territory.

They had manipulated the laborers within her own base, stirring resentment and turning them against her. Before she even realized what was happening, they had stripped her of her resources—and, ultimately, her life.

Having Hugo around reminded her of that past betrayal—something she had nearly forgotten since it happened so long ago. But now that the memory resurfaced, she also remembered one thing clearly—she had a debt to settle, and it was time to make them pay.

Now that she thought about it, someone like Hugo must have perished in Port City in her previous lives—or perhaps he survived under a different name. After all, she didn't recall anyone named Hugo Benjamin making a name for himself during the apocalypse or establishing a shelter.

But Kisha didn't dwell on it.

With each reincarnation came the inevitable butterfly effect.

The choices she made altered events, shifting the fates of people and situations alike. Just as she had saved thousands of innocent lives earlier than in her past life by pulling them from the Coltons' grasp, she knew the most important thing now was to focus on the present—planning ahead with the manpower and resources she currently had.

After determining where Hugo stood, Kisha gave him a nod and shifted her focus to the rest of his people, waiting for them to arrive. While observing his status window, she simultaneously monitored the territory's interface map, where the orange dots represented Hugo's group coming closer to their location, probably running.

This feature made it easier for Kisha to track their movements within her territory, as they were distinctly marked apart from the green dots—her recognized people.

Among the differently colored markers, one stood out the most: Melody's glaring red dot, making her easily identifiable even in a crowd.

Kisha kept her gaze on Hugo's people, and once they had all gathered, she uttered just two words before turning away: "Follow me."

Stunned, Hugo and his group hesitated for a moment, unsure of what to do. It wasn't until Kisha's figure was nearly swallowed by the darkness that they snapped out of it and hurried after her.

She led them straight to the cafeteria, where the Blythes' family was finishing their meal. Unlike the others, the Blythes had arrived later due to their responsibilities tending to the farmland and the small livestock Kisha had left for the territory before leaving for City B.

Having spent the entire day working, they were covered in dirt and sweat—especially those who had been handling the animals. Rather than dining with the rest and risking ruining anyone's appetite with their smell, they had chosen to eat separately.

Their plan was simple: finish their meal, clean up, and then retreat to their rooms for a much-needed shower and rest. Unaware of the earlier drama that had unfolded in the cafeteria, they were focused solely on refueling after a long day's labor.

As the Blythes family was mid-bite, they noticed Kisha entering the cafeteria—an unexpected sight given that the place should have been deserted by now. What caught their attention even more was the group trailing behind her, people they had only glimpsed from a distance earlier. But the biggest surprise was seeing Kisha herself.

It had been a long time since she had left with Duke, and now, here she was—the very person who had assigned them to their current roles. A wave of mixed emotions washed over them, though they couldn't quite put those feelings into words. Instinctively, they paused mid-chew, setting their utensils down as they processed the moment.

Still, they didn't speak first. It was Kisha who broke the silence.

"Hello again. I know you've all been doing an excellent job maintaining the farm and taking care of the animals, even though none of you had prior experience before taking on this role. Your hard work and dedication are truly commendable," Kisha said, getting straight to the point as always.

"So, I'm giving you the opportunity to pass your responsibilities to these people. Teach them the ropes, and once they're ready, you can choose to transfer to the department you've always wanted to work in."

Her words took the Blythes family by surprise, but beneath their initial shock, a flicker of delight shone in their eyes.