

## Apocalypse 819

### Chapter 819 Kickstarting The Trade 6

“Alright, everyone, please follow us,” Kisha said, clapping her hands to get Jason, Adam, and their team’s attention. “We’ll get you something to eat first, and after that, you can head to the marketplace to buy your supplies.”

Upon hearing there was food in the cafeteria, Jason, Adam, and their people lit up with excitement, eagerly following Kisha into the base like ducklings trailing behind their mother. Tristan, meanwhile, refrained from reporting any updates or progress on other matters, aware that outsiders were present and it wasn’t appropriate to disclose sensitive information. He quietly walked a step behind Kisha, giving the newcomers a silent tour of the HOPE Base.

As they moved through the area, the base gradually revealed its impressive structure and efficiency. Everything was well-organized, and the base was bustling with activity. Each person had a role to fulfill, and though it was already past lunchtime, no one appeared hungry or in distress.

Children ran around cheerfully, elders lounged in shaded areas gossiping, and a few even relaxed with a smoke—clear signs that life here was stable and thriving. The more Jason’s group saw, the more astonished they became, realizing that HOPE Base lacked for nothing.

Naturally, since it was already past lunchtime, many of the office workers, especially those involved in drafting rules, regulations, and laws under the Patriarch, had already wrapped up their tasks for the day.

Most of them were older, well-educated men, and aside from their occasional debates over legal matters, they often had plenty of leisure time. With little entertainment available in the base for now, it wasn’t unusual to see them come out to the streets to unwind, casually gossip, and chat with others.

Surprisingly, their presence also served a practical purpose. While they socialized, they often kept an eye on the children, essentially acting as babysitters. This gave most parents, especially the single parents with more physically demanding jobs, particularly those in logistics, some peace of mind.

The logistics team was constantly on the move, delivering supplies to the workshops where artisans crafted goods both for the marketplace and internal use. Items like utensils, mugs, tables, and chairs used in the cafeteria were made in this workshop and distributed through the supply center.

In addition, the logistics team handled restocking materials for stall owners in the marketplace. After receiving the initial startup support, stall owners were expected to purchase their own materials to continue producing goods, which added to the constant flow of tasks for the logistics team. In short, it was one of the busiest departments in the base, and every little bit of support, intentional or not, helped keep things running smoothly.

Of course, watching over children required patience and constant attention, even for the elders. So, to show appreciation for their help, the parents often provided them with small comforts—like cigarettes, snacks, or meals.

These were usually purchased from the Supply Center, which was well-stocked with a wide variety of goods. In the HOPE Base, no one lacked what they needed, as long as they contributed through work.

Meanwhile, the other laborers were busy constructing the new workshop for the clothing store. Some of the artisans from the original workshop were set to transfer there to work under Mrs. Winters, who would now oversee their tasks as part of her expanding responsibilities.

As Jason and the others observed the lively yet relaxed atmosphere of the base, a sense of longing filled their eyes—they, too, wished to be part of this place that felt like a real paradise: Eatopia. They noticed that everywhere Kisha went, people greeted her warmly with smiles and respect. Occasionally, children would run up to her with candy in their hands, offering it shyly before bursting into giggles and scampering away.

Kisha responded with a small smile of her own. Though she often wore a calm and indifferent expression when simply walking around, people had grown used to it. So when she did smile, it felt special—and it made everyone else's smiles grow even brighter.

Not long after, they arrived at the cafeteria. Several warriors were already there, eating their meals, while a number of newly enlisted recruits waited eagerly in line. Having just received their 20% warrior discount, they were determined to make the most of it—eating their fill before the grueling training ahead.

Many of them had witnessed the brutal regimen the first batch of warriors endured, some even crying out in pain during training. But no one had quit—because here, there was no room for weakness. It was either grow stronger or fall to the zombies.

Excitement buzzed in the air, fueled not just by the food but also by the distribution of their first bottle of Scarlet Honey—a highly anticipated moment for every recruit. The cafeteria was alive with energy and chatter.

When Kisha and the others entered, they were met with the savory aroma of freshly prepared meals. Jason, Adam, and the rest of their group stopped in their tracks. Their eyes widened at the generous spread of food behind the counter and the hearty portions already being enjoyed at the tables by some of the warriors in the middle of their meal. Instinctively, they swallowed the lump in their throats, unable to hide their hunger as the mouthwatering scent wrapped around them like a warm embrace.

As they moved closer to the counter, Kisha began to explain. “This is our military cafeteria. It was originally built to provide discounted meals to our warriors—those who spend their days training and defending the base. But we eventually opened it to the public too, for anyone who’s too busy to cook after a long day of work.”

She gestured toward the large menu above the counter. “Because of that, we developed two types of currency here in the base. The first is the work point system, earned by contributing labor or services around the base. The second is something you’re already familiar with—crystal cores.”

Kisha paused to let them take in the menu. “You’ll notice a difference in pricing. Work points are easier to calculate and more commonly used, but if you’re paying with crystal cores, a single one can get you a full meal. That includes rice, a meat dish, soup, vegetables, dessert, and a drink. Enough to fill anyone up.”

Just as she finished, they reached the back of the line.

When the others noticed Kisha standing behind them, they instinctively stepped aside to let her go first. But Kisha shook her head.

“No need. Go ahead and eat first—you’ve got a long day ahead after lunch. I’m just escorting a few guests,” she said calmly.

At her words, everyone’s eyes shifted to the group behind her. They saw a few weary, dirt-covered individuals who looked thinner than most, and it quickly clicked—they must be new arrivals from outside. By now, the residents were used to seeing newcomers, and the cafeteria was always the first stop after entering the base.

The others returned to their place in line, though their chatter quieted a bit. They became more self-aware with the newcomers behind them, especially with their City Lord standing just behind them, some even growing a little fidgety, unsure of how to act.