

## **Apocalypse 846**

### Chapter 846 Caring Husband

On Duke's side, they had already completed the installation of the first 500 compost bins on one section of the site. However, the piping and safety testing were still underway. Since biogas methane can be hazardous to both humans and animals if inhaled, this phase was crucial to ensure the system's safety and efficiency. Duke was fully occupied working alongside Hugo and the rest of the team.

Coincidentally, they ran out of rubber, which was a vital material for sealing the bins and constructing the main gas chamber's important parts. Fortunately, Kisha had granted Duke access to the territory interface.

After spending some time getting familiar with its functions, he summoned the interface. A bluish holographic map of the entire island appeared before him, visible only to him, as Hugo and the others lacked access.

He navigated to the upper right corner, found the search bar, and typed in "Rubber Tree." He was hoping to locate rubber trees somewhere around the mountains. If they were available within the territory, it would save him the trouble of leaving HOPE Base to search for external sources of rubber, something they urgently needed to complete the remaining 500 bins and finish the main chamber.

Fortunately, Duke discovered that there were several dozen rubber trees scattered around the mountain area. It wasn't all just lumber trees; many had other practical uses. Kisha's territory space truly was a treasure trove; they just needed to explore, and almost everything they needed was already there.

Turning to Hugo, Duke said, "Hugo, keep an eye on things here for a while. I'll go harvest as much rubber as I can so we can keep working without any more delays." He gave Hugo a firm pat on the shoulder.

Hugo nodded seriously, clearly understanding the urgency and silently urging Duke to go. Without wasting another moment, Duke followed the map's directions. As he moved, a glowing green arrow appeared on the ground in front of him, pointing the way through the terrain, another helpful feature of the territory interface.

As he made his way up, he passed by Kisha, who was sitting in meditation. Sweat had formed on her forehead, and she was so deeply focused that she didn't even notice his presence. Something felt off. Duke paused and watched her closely. Her breathing was shallow, and her eyelashes fluttered like someone fighting exhaustion. She looked utterly drained.

He didn't want to disturb her. Duke was genuinely worried about Kisha's condition, but he also knew he couldn't interfere while she was redirecting her spiritual energy and mana, tempering her body to strengthen her vessel and level up her aura. His concern was visible in the way he lingered, eyes locked on her, but in the end, he forced himself to leave, reluctantly, knowing any disruption could harm her progress.

Yet, not even a minute had passed before he returned to her side, moving as silently as possible. He just couldn't bring himself to walk away. Watching her like this, sweat trickling down her face, her body trembling faintly, tugged at his heart.

Duke carefully studied her condition. It didn't take long for him to confirm his suspicion: something had happened to Kisha earlier she went out. He didn't know what it was, but it had clearly taken a toll on her body. She was pushing herself too hard.

So, he decided to help in the only way he could, by nourishing her body.

Duke hurried back to the animal farm and gathered a few fresh chicken eggs. Then, he picked several plump, red tomatoes, ripe, sweet, with just the right balance of acidity. After that, he ran to the lake and caught a few large freshwater fish, their scales glistening in the light. He also retrieved some ground beef he'd stored earlier from the warehouse and grabbed a handful of fresh spices and herbs from his private stash.

When he returned, he glanced at Kisha, still sitting motionless, deeply immersed in her meditation. Without making a sound, Duke pulled out a cooking pot from his space ring, filled it with water, added a pinch of salt and a dash of vegetable oil, and set it on a camping stove, which he had also summoned from his space. Quietly, he began to prepare a hearty, nourishing meal just for her.

First, Duke cleaned the fish he had caught from the lake, expertly removing the gills and innards. Once they were gutted, he rubbed coarse rock salt over their silvery bodies, coating them evenly to enhance the flavor. Then, taking sturdy 14-inch bamboo sticks, he skewered each fish through the center.

One by one, he planted the sticks firmly into the ground, surrounding them with fist-sized stones to keep them upright and steady. Soon, six large fish stood in a circle, propped and ready for roasting.

With the water in the pot still heating, Duke conjured a controlled fireball in the center of the circle. Carefully adjusting the flame's intensity, he ensured the fish would roast evenly without charring.

Turning to the meat, he began working on the meatballs. He cracked a few eggs into a large bowl, added the ground beef, a bit of flour, and a generous sprinkle of herbs and spices. Before mixing, he took a moment to wash his hands thoroughly, even after gutting the fish; he had done the same. Cleanliness was second nature to him, especially when preparing food for someone he loved.

Thanks to his elemental control, water was never an issue. He simply conjured clean ice with a snap of his fingers and melted it with a soft flame to rinse off any grime. Then, with clean hands and steady focus, he began mixing the meat by hand.

After mixing the meat and spices to the perfect consistency, Duke began rolling the mixture into large, hearty meatballs. He set them aside one by one, then turned his attention to setting up the cooking space.

Carefully, he moved the pot to hang above the fire he'd made for the fish, suspending it from a sturdy stick balanced across two posts. Then, he placed an iron pan on the camping stove, waiting until it was hot enough before pouring in a generous splash of oil. When the oil shimmered and crackled gently, he began placing the meatballs into the pan, the sizzling sound signaling the start of their browning.

As he worked, he stole a glance toward Kisha.

Even the smell of food hadn't broken her concentration. That told him everything that she was deep in her mental space, meditating and training her consciousness. But just because her eyes were closed didn't mean she wasn't aware.

In fact, this form of meditation was exactly what allowed her to remain alert to her surroundings while focusing inward. Unlike traditional meditation, which left practitioners vulnerable, Kisha's method let her refine her control over both spiritual energy, mana, and aura without compromising her awareness.

It was one of the many advantages of being a mental ability user. Training her consciousness increased her Mental Capacity, a rare skill that gave her a serious edge over other awakened ability users.

After all, most awakened ability users could only meditate by fully focusing on the flow of their spiritual energy. Because of this intense concentration and the delicate balance of the energy flowing through their body, even a minor disruption could throw their energy off balance, causing their spiritual flow to go haywire or, in severe cases, resulting in damaged or even ruptured meridians.

To avoid backlash, they would shut off their external senses entirely, committing their full attention inward. This made them extremely vulnerable during meditation, as they remained unaware of their surroundings and unable to respond to external threats.

But since Kisha was meditating with her consciousness within her mental space, she could observe her surroundings as if watching a full 360-degree projection. It was as though her consciousness hovered above her, allowing her to perceive everything happening around her in real time.

Kisha had felt Duke's presence the moment he walked by. She knew he had stopped and stood silently by her side, watching her with concern. In truth, she wanted to tell him to go, but when he actually did, she felt like a resentful wife, unsure of her own heart until he was gone. When Duke returned, quietly setting up a meal for her with such care, she felt warmth bloom in her chest.

It was sweet, like the first flush of young love.

Even now, as he bustled about, glancing over at her every now and then to make sure he wasn't disturbing her, Kisha didn't open her eyes. She didn't want to break the moment. Instead, she just smiled inwardly, savoring the feeling of being cared for by the man she loved.

Once the meatballs were done cooking and the water had started to boil, Duke added the spaghetti pasta into the pot, giving it a gentle stir to ensure every strand was submerged in the hot water.

While waiting for the pasta to cook, he skewered the plump red tomatoes and held them over the fire, letting the skins blister and char slightly. As the aroma deepened, he rotated the fish to cook evenly on the other side. Then, once the tomatoes were nicely roasted, he peeled off the skins and mashed them into a rich, fragrant paste.

Then he minced some garlic and reheated the same iron pan, adding a bit more oil before tossing in the garlic. As the aroma filled the air, he added the freshly mashed tomatoes, their rich, smooth red hue bubbling with promise.

He seasoned the sauce with a blend of spices, then grated some aged cheddar cheese into the mixture. Right on cue, the pasta reached perfect al dente, and Duke folded the meatballs into the sauce, followed by the pasta itself, stirring everything together as the pan stayed over the flame.