

Apocalypse 868

Chapter 868 Force

They never expected to face a woman like Kisha, unyielding and unmoved by their rank. They'd already lost too many good men on the journey here. To walk away with nothing would make it all for nothing.

"How about this," Kisha said with a faint, amused smile. "Why don't you step outside the safety of this base and gather your own supplies? Show us just how coordinated and capable your soldiers really are. Prove to us this 'greater good' you keep talking about is worth starving our people for."

She leaned forward slightly, her voice smooth but laced with steel. "Of course, my people will be going with you. They'll fight too. And we'll see who pulls their weight out there, yours or mine. If your soldiers can't even keep up, then don't expect us to hand anything over. We don't feed dead weight in this base."

Her words were laced with playful defiance, but the message was deadly serious. This wasn't just a test; it was a statement. If the government's forces couldn't prove their worth in the real world, then they had no place making demands. Kisha had no intention of becoming a servant to the same system that abandoned them. Not now. Not ever.

They had fought tooth and nail to gather and protect every bit of supply they had. Even her Territory Space, abundant as it was, hadn't come easily. It took her dying 99 times, over and over again, just to earn the title and gather enough system points to finally buy that item. That one thing that gave her a real chance to turn the tide in this life. And now, others dared to think they could just take advantage of her efforts?

Not a chance. She would never allow it.

Kisha had long since lost her faith in the government. She knew not every soldier was corrupt; there were still those, like Aston and his men, who stayed true to their duty to protect the people. But in a world like this, how many could truly hold onto that mission? When survival demanded sacrifices, darkness took root in the hearts of men. Power became temptation. Rank became leverage.

How many soldiers would still offer their last piece of bread to help a starving stranger... and how many would take someone else's food in the name of the "greater good," just to live one more day?

Kisha wanted to see it for herself. If she pitted them against each other, would they tear each other apart just for one more bite of meat? Or would they finally yield... and choose to follow her?

"And why would we do that?" the same middle-aged officer snapped, his voice tight with barely restrained fury. His chest rose and fell rapidly, his pride clearly stung. He couldn't stand how Kisha kept dismissing his every word with that same calm, amused expression, like he was nothing more than a clown performing for her amusement.

And in truth, that's exactly how she saw him: a clown. Who in their right mind would march into someone else's stronghold and demand that they hand over their hard-earned resources? What else could that be called, if not robbery?

If the government endorsed that kind of behavior, then what were they really? Nothing more than well-dressed thieves, cloaked in authority, stripped of honor. And wasn't their role supposed to be one of service? Weren't they meant to protect and provide for the people?

Still, Kisha hadn't given up on the idea that a few good people remained. Though her trust in the government had long withered, she hadn't forgotten the exceptions, like Aston. Through her many lifetimes, she'd encountered a handful of decent officials scattered across distant shelters. But they were few and far between, powerless and poorly resourced, unable to challenge the corrupted core festering in the Capital, let alone the so-called President pulling its strings.

"My territory, my rules," Kisha said calmly, but this time, her voice carried a razor-sharp edge. Her aura darkened, and the air in the room seemed to grow heavier. "You don't have to obey me. But if you expect to walk out of here with anything in your hands, think again. Nothing comes for free."

She leaned back slightly, eyes narrowing with cold amusement. "I expect an exchange. What you offer determines what you get. And the value of your offering, well, that's for me to decide. So, choose wisely. Think hard about what you're willing to part with."

Of course, her words served a greater purpose. The system had given her a mission: to uncover the truth behind the Capital's experiments. And Kisha knew the Commander General well enough to predict his moves. A coward, yes, but a selfish one. The kind of man who would betray others to save himself. All she had to do was offer the illusion of choice and let desperation do the rest. If he gave up the secrets of the Capital on his own... it wouldn't count as coercion.

And in doing so, she'd turn them against each other, let them unravel from within, and see what kind of loyalty remained when survival was on the line.

She had no need to lift a finger; Kisha could simply sit back and watch them tear each other apart. But her words had clearly struck a nerve, fanning the flames of the officers' frustration. Rage simmered behind their glares. Still, among them, Kisha noticed one man who stood out.

He looked to be in his mid-thirties, standing quietly near the Commander General. Unlike the others, he hadn't spoken once. His expression was tight, troubled, like someone caught between duty and conscience. And Kisha, ever perceptive, saw more than just his face. Floating above his head was a soft green smiley icon with the word "Good", a system marker revealing his moral compass. He wasn't like the rest.

He wasn't here to intimidate or steal. He came for his men to negotiate, not to threaten or kill. And what he was seeing unfold clearly didn't sit well with him; his furrowed brow and clenched fists told her as much. He was questioning everything. Who he was following. What he was fighting for.

But before he could speak, the older officer, the one who had barked orders with arrogance, gave a sharp hand signal.

Three combatants surged forward.

Not the Commander General, but this officer had made the call to strike. That surprised Kisha. She had expected the General to be the coward who'd cave and lash out first. But apparently, someone else decided to play hero.

Kisha, however, didn't flinch. If anything, her eyes glittered with the thrill of it.

They thought they could scare her into submission?

They were about to find out just how wrong they were.

“Young Madam, please allow me,” Tristan said calmly, stepping forward as he gently set the tray he’d been carrying onto the side table behind Kisha. With a soft crack of his neck, he straightened his posture, his expression relaxed yet focused.

The three combatants didn’t bother with words; they lunged at Tristan without hesitation. Behind them, the middle-aged officer smirked with satisfaction, drawing his pistol and spinning it idly in his fingers. He was clearly waiting for his men to overwhelm Tristan so he could turn the weapon on Kisha himself.