

Chapter 29: June 15

The chapter opens with June reflecting on her recent release from the hospital and her return to a luxurious apartment in Denver. She anxiously awaits Day's arrival, preoccupied with thoughts of what he wants to discuss. The return of her dog, Ollie, a remnant of her past life, brings her comfort, but she remains unsettled by the opulence surrounding her and the unresolved tension with Thomas, her former captor. Outside, a light snow falls, mirroring her quiet unease as she grapples with her new reality and the emotional weight of recent events.

June's thoughts drift to Kaede's recent burial, a moment she insisted on honoring with a proper gravesite. She wonders if Day blames himself for Kaede's death, just as she does, and if this guilt has delayed their reunion. Her introspection is interrupted by Day's arrival, and she is struck by his transformed appearance in a formal Republic uniform. His beauty, accentuated by the elegant attire, leaves her momentarily speechless, highlighting the unfamiliarity between them despite their shared history.

Day explains the uniform was for a photo with the Elector, a gesture of his reluctant alignment with the Republic. He presents June with a lavish ruby pendant, a stark contrast to the paper clip ring he once gave her. The gift, funded by the Republic, symbolizes their changed circumstances, yet June cherishes the memory of the simpler token. Their conversation is polite but strained, with Day maintaining a reserved demeanor that keeps June at arm's length, leaving her uncertain about his true feelings.

The chapter closes with June tentatively asking about Day's brother, Eden, whose survival comes at the cost of his vision. Day's terse response underscores his lingering grief and the emotional distance between them. June's attempts to bridge the gap are met with quiet resistance, leaving both characters suspended in a moment of unspoken tension as they navigate their complicated relationship and the uncertain

future ahead.

