

## Apocalypse 103

### Chapter 103 The Face Off

As another hour passed without incident, tension hung heavy in the air, constricting everyone's throats. With each tick of the clock, the realization sunk deeper: their enemies were gradually unraveling their tactics. It was only a matter of time before the Winters' sanctuary within the building would be discovered.

In the cramped confines of the apartment, the prospect of combat seemed daunting. With their own people filling the space, any altercation could quickly turn chaotic, leaving them vulnerable to a swift attack. Their only solace lay in the hope that their adversaries wouldn't resort to explosives or other destructive means to eliminate them.

Vulture pondered why their adversaries hadn't employed such a tactic yet. With the Coltons having already dispatched death warriors after them, it seemed logical that a single warrior armed with a detonator could swiftly eliminate them. Was their hesitation a deliberate strategy, designed to prolong the Winters' struggle, akin to a cat playing with its prey before delivering the final blow?

If the Coltons' young master was indeed orchestrating this sinister game, it spoke volumes about the twisted nature of his mind and the extent of his power in this apocalyptic landscape. With chaos reigning supreme, he could wield authority unchecked, crafting his own reality where he dictated the rules unchallenged.

In this lawless realm, power became the arbiter of morality, blurring the lines between right and wrong until they were indistinguishable. The very concept of ethics seemed to fade into obscurity amid the relentless pursuit of dominance.

Vulture drew in a slow, deliberate breath, hoping to sharpen his senses and extend his perception beyond the confines of the apartment walls. With each inhale, he sought to tap into an ability akin to

Kisha's, whose heightened senses surpassed those of ordinary humans. Yet, despite his efforts, he found himself unable to replicate her extraordinary sensitivity.

As the horizon began to brighten, casting a faint glow into the room, tension mounted among the group, who anxiously awaited the awakening of the couple.

Mrs. Winters broke the silence with a whisper, her gaze fixed on the intertwined figures on the bed. "Do you truly believe my son will awaken in half an hour?" she questioned softly. Duke held Kisha in a tender embrace, her form nestled against his, seemingly undisturbed by the turmoil surrounding them.

Meanwhile, the Duke himself slumbered with an air of tranquility, a serenity that had rarely graced his features before.

Previously, Duke struggled with sleep, often working himself to exhaustion, managing only 4 to 6 hours of rest each night. However, on this occasion, both Duke and Kisha had slumbered for over 8 hours, their rest extending into the early daylight hours. Mrs.

Winters couldn't help but feel a growing concern for Duke; she knew the risks involved if the awakening process failed, potentially resulting in their transformation into zombies. Despite her worries, Vulture and Sparrow exuded confidence that the awakening would proceed smoothly for the pair.

'Even if Duke succeeded in awakening, what about the lady in his arms?' Mrs. Winters thought. She knew that everyone's pinning their hope on Duke awakening so that he could regain control of his people and he can direct them on what to do and how to tackle this issue and how they were going to retaliate against the Coltons.

The tranquility shattered as the sound of breaking glass echoed through the apartment, followed by a hail of bullets raining down from the balcony. It was clear: their enemies had located their hiding spots. Several assailants hung from the balcony, brandishing assault rifles, while continuously firing their guns to rain bullets on them.

Mr. Winters swiftly pulled his wife to the floor, shielding her with his body, while Tristan did the same for the Patriarch. Agonizing groans reverberated from outside their room, likely signaling that their comrades had been caught in the gunfire. Despite their urge to check on them, they couldn't risk leaving their current position while the assault persisted.

Protecting the Winters remained their top priority.

Fortunately, Vulture had conjured a thick, concentrated earth wall to shield Duke and Kisha, who lay on the bed. However, the shattered glass flying around managed to reach them, adorning their bodies like glistening crystals. Tristan and the others held their breath, fearing the glass might harm them.

Yet, simultaneously, they couldn't help but notice how the glass lent an oddly beautiful aesthetic to Duke and Kisha's forms.

Following the gunfire, the assailants from the balcony breached inside. Several of the Winters' guards lay wounded on the floor, with gunshots in their shoulders, stomachs, and other areas. However, those who found good hiding spots escaped unscathed, utilizing crevices and blind spots for cover. The injured, though fortunate to be alive, owe their survival to these strategic hiding places.

Without them, their fate would have been sealed in an instant.

Caught off guard, they barely had a moment to recover before the attackers swarmed in not just from the balcony, but also from the front door. It was a relentless assault, a pincer attack that left them reeling, with enemies converging on them from multiple directions.

The bees had been tirelessly patrolling throughout the night, leaving them exhausted and some even perishing from sheer fatigue. Witnessing their loyal sentinels succumb one by one, Tristan reluctantly ordered Bell to let the remaining bees rest, despite his inner conflict. He grappled with the decision, torn between prioritizing their protection and sparing the bees further strain.

Sparrow intervened, cautioning against such a sacrifice, mindful of Kisha's inevitable wrath upon awakening.

With several dozen bees already lost to exhaustion, Tristan deemed it too heavy a toll to allow the remaining ones to meet the same fate. Recognizing the urgency of their situation with only half an hour left to wait, he reluctantly ordered the bees to stand down and rest. Meanwhile, their group remained on high alert, prepared for any imminent threats.

As their enemies closed in from both directions, the Winters' guards swiftly ushered the injured into the safety of the room, while the uninjured ones braced themselves and tried to return fire. The ensuing chaos attracted the attention of zombies from floors above and below, compounding their already dire situation.

It seemed their enemies had no intention of leaving anyone alive, as they systematically closed off every possible exit. The assailants stormed into the apartment, unleashing a relentless barrage of gunfire that tore through the surroundings, leaving behind a landscape pocked with bullet holes.

Their weapons roared without restraint, filling the space with deafening echoes that drowned out any hope of return fire from the Winters' side. Forced to take cover, they could only bide their time, waiting for a fleeting opportunity to strike back.

It was uncertain how long the onslaught lasted before their assailants ceased firing, perhaps depleting their ammunition or pausing to allow for a counterattack. The respite was short-lived, however, as the echoing roars of zombies outside signaled a grim continuation.

While the invaders dealt with the undead threat, some of the Winters' guards seized the opportunity to return fire, claiming the lives of two enemies near the balcony door. Yet, amidst the chaos, the adversaries remained vigilant, lying in wait for any sign of the Winters' presence.

Tragically, one of the Winters' guards fell victim to their ambush and was struck down while seeking refuge near the living room.

The confined space posed a significant challenge for the Winters' men to mount a counteroffensive, restricting their movement and options for cover. Despite the odds, they remained resolute, returning fire with lethal precision. Their retaliatory strikes proved effective, claiming the lives of nearly half of their attackers.

However, this resolve came at a cost, with casualties mounting among their own ranks as well.

Amidst the chaotic exchange of bullets between the two parties, a palpable surge of electricity crackled through the air, almost seeming sentient as it sought out the assailants with deadly precision. Like a living serpent, it struck down the intruders one by one, causing them to collapse to the ground in a convulsing heap.

Though immobilized by the electrifying shock, they remained alive, their bodies twitching uncontrollably from the force of the electrocution.

But the Winters' men wasted no time in seizing the advantage, disregarding the mysterious source of the electricity. They swiftly aimed their weapons at the fallen assailants, ensuring they remained incapacitated.

"You're making enough noise to wake Kisha," Duke's raspy voice carried from the room where the Winters were huddled together. The door bore the scars of bullet holes, nearly torn off its hinges by the relentless onslaught.

Beyond the door was the awake Duke who was now leaning on the headboard while patting Kisha's head as if he was coaxing her back to sleep. His brows knitted into a frown, everyone on the room was beyond surprised when they saw Duke open his eyes and as if he was never asleep, instantly sat up, Vulture didn't even have the chance to conjure another earth wall around Duke to protect him.

Bullets tore through the perforated door, aimed directly at Duke's face, but in a breathtaking moment, electricity crackled to life around him. The bullets hung suspended in mid-air, mere inches from Duke's gaze, before anyone could register what was happening.

Then, in a swift and startling turn of events, the same electric energy surged out of the room, accompanied by a sudden silence from outside. A collective thud reverberated through the apartment, the gunfire quelled. It was only then that Duke calmly uttered his words.