

## Apocalypse 177

### Chapter 177 Looking for the Winters 2

Aston quickly clarified, "Don't misunderstand. The drone's battery is extremely limited, and with our restricted access to electricity, as you've seen from our equipment, we wouldn't have even had an upgrade if we hadn't raided the Coltons' base for supplies.

We stumbled upon some heat-detecting drones in their camps and hoped to utilize them, but without a way to recharge them here, I thought it best to save them for when they're truly needed. Luckily, one of my men brought one along in his backpack, but that's all we have."

Aston spoke quickly, his nerves masked behind a facade of calmness. He was keen not to be misunderstood by Kisha and her team, wanting to maintain a positive connection with them even as they got back to the shelter.

Knowing Aston from her previous life, Kisha understood that he meant no harm and quickly accepted his explanation. She raised the question primarily for transparency, ensuring Duke wouldn't misunderstand or feel jealous. Glancing at Duke, the imposing figure who could be both endearing and intimidating when jealous, she found it both amusing and slightly unnerving.

This side of him was new to her, something she hadn't encountered before.

Duke's behavior stemmed from his lack of experience in relationships. Despite witnessing the close and loving bond between his parents, he had never experienced such feelings himself. Consequently, when it came to Kisha, he found himself overwhelmed by emotions, often becoming possessive due to his deep-seated love and longing for her.

His reactions were driven by a passionate desire to protect and cherish her.

Kisha understood this, and that's why she was also making an effort to protect his feelings as much as he wanted to protect her.

Now that they had the drone—a tool Kisha also possessed in her inventory but couldn't utilize at the moment—she pondered a strategy. "How long do you think the drone's battery will last before it runs out?" she inquired, fingers pressed thoughtfully against her chin.

One of Aston's men, with a bulky backpack strapped behind him, stepped forward to provide details. "If we use it strictly for reconnaissance, the battery could last up to two hours, not including the time needed for return. However, if we're willing to drain the battery fully without retrieval, it might last up to four hours," he clarified, before going back behind Aston.

"That time frame might be too short for the drone to explore the central area effectively. We need to take several factors into consideration too," Kisha remarked thoughtfully, feigning contemplation. She understood Aston's determination to find the Winters, but she also knew there was nothing left here. To save time, she needed to guide them towards her desired outcome.

She was reluctant to leave Duke's family in the shelter on their own for too long, knowing he would grow increasingly concerned about their safety with every passing moment, especially with the ongoing threat looming.

"How about this: I'll send Sparrow for reconnaissance in one-third of the central area, and the drone can cover the rest. To do that effectively, we'll need to advance a little closer to the central area to give the drone ample access and time for exploration. This approach also provides us with a clearer retreat strategy," Kisha explained, considering their options carefully.

Despite feeling like they were searching for a needle in a haystack, she knew they had no choice. Revealing that she had the Winters all along would only arouse suspicion, making their course of action to hide the Winters futile.

What if the Coltons still have a spy there who can communicate with them? They could potentially turn the whole shelter upside down searching for the Winters while Kisha and Duke are away.

In such a scenario, the Winters would be at a disadvantage, being unfamiliar with the terrain and lacking the manpower and equipment to mount a defense would surely lead to the Winters falling into the Coltons' hands.

Hearing Kisha's explanation, Aston did not even have to think that she was right and they followed the plan, they continued to move forward as close as possible to the center while they are defending themselves from the horde that kept on increasing, while also trying to look around the place to see if the Winters are there.

Despite the growing challenges they faced with each step forward, Kisha remained steadfast and determined to press on without pause.

Aston's team has gotten exhausted from following from behind even when they are being protected by Kisha and her people, Kisha and Duke spearheading the advance while Sparrow and Vulture guarding the rear, but the sheer number of zombies is still overwhelming and mentally draining for the soldiers, especially for Reeve who wasn't even originally a soldier.

After an hour, Kisha and the rest found refuge in an empty warehouse, the soldiers too exhausted to lift a finger. Kisha's team mirrored their fatigue, and outside, the warehouse was surrounded by zombies.

Aston marveled at how they had reached the place unscathed. Normally, such a dire situation would have resulted in heavy casualties, but somehow they had managed to navigate through safely.

The warehouse happened to be the closest to the center, prompting Kisha to assign Sparrow to his reconnaissance task while Aston's team operated the drone to survey the surroundings. Finding a quiet corner, Kisha settled in to rest briefly, but during this respite, she tasked 008 with searching for something specific.

"008, remember that contract?" Kisha said, her tone cryptic.

"What contract, host?" 008 asked, clearly confused.

"The contract for the servants," Kisha gently reminded 008.

"Ooooh! That?! Would you like me to buy it?" 008 asked excitedly, now understanding that Kisha was being mischievous again and had something planned.

"Yeah, I've had my fill of this. It's exhausting and taking forever. I could really use a break," Kisha quipped, knowing well that rest was a rare luxury in the apocalypse. This playful statement was her way of bantering with 008, who understood her intentions perfectly.

"But we need that as a backup plan in case things go wrong. I don't want to be caught off guard by anything unexpected," Kisha added, her tone shifting to a more serious note. It was evident she was contemplating something important.

"But that's exactly what makes it unexpected; something you can't prepare for," 008 muttered, simultaneously scouring its sales connections for the item.

"I know, but it's better to be prepared. Even if I can't use it right away, it'll be useful in the future. It won't go to waste," Kisha explained, her mind feeling burdened from exhaustion, both physical and mental. Duke sat beside her, uncapping a bottle of cold water.

"Drink first and then rest." Duke offered, placing the water bottle near her mouth. Kisha tilted her head to drink, feeling the cold liquid soothing her throat. Afterward, she rested her head against Duke's arm, finding comfort in his presence.

While Kisha rested, Duke gently massaged her soft hand, which had been wielding the katana since earlier while fighting in the vanguard. Seeing her exert herself so much pained him. He understood Kisha's efforts to protect his family, and even though he could take revenge on the Coltons single-handedly on his own, especially now that he has awakened his ability.

However, knowing Kisha was there to shield him filled him with happiness. He silently vowed to support her and relish the sense of security she provided that he has never felt before. He felt pampered and loved which was as sweet as honey that he couldn't contain the happiness swirling in his heart.