

Apocalypse 339

Chapter 339 The Difference

Vulture glanced back at Kisha and Duke, who, despite being surrounded, showed no signs of fatigue as they effortlessly sent zombies flying. He couldn't help but wonder why they weren't using their awakened abilities—doing so would have made dealing with the horde much faster and more efficient. However, this wasn't the time or place for him to question Kisha's reasoning.

If Duke, who had been following her lead without hesitation from the start, wasn't raising any concerns, Vulture knew he had to trust her judgment and follow orders as well.

Since Kisha clearly wanted him to escort the survivors back to ensure they wouldn't be a distraction during the fight, Vulture had no choice but to press the survivors to move faster and head back to the base. He knew she didn't want anything slowing her down, so he focused on getting them to safety.

"Let's move and head back with me. They'll be fine, but staying here will only put them at greater risk trying to protect you!" Vulture's voice was somber, his eyes narrowed in warning. The survivors glanced at each other, guilt and embarrassment washing over them. They knew he was right—they were helpless here, just a sitting duck waiting to be protected.

They all turned in the direction Vulture pointed and broke into another run after their brief rest. Even the leader reluctantly followed, his exhaustion too great to lift his makeshift spear. They had been running and fighting nonstop for so long, and despite being a well-trained bodyguard and skilled fighter, he couldn't endure much more.

His body was battered, fatigue setting in hard, and the lack of food and water over the past few days was taking its toll, even on him.

Even he was astonished that he had made it this far on sheer willpower alone. Out of the original hundred survivors heading to City B, only about twenty had managed to reach this point. They were desperately seeking refuge in the survivor base in City B, which they knew had been established by nearby soldiers stationed with the Minister of Defense.

As soon as Vulture led the survivors to safety, Kisha and Duke took a strategic step back, positioning themselves back-to-back while they cleared their path with swift, decisive swings of their weapons. Duke flashed a playful smirk at Kisha.

"Wifey, are you holding back your awakened ability because you want to work out, or are you trying to turn this into a friendly competition to see who takes down the most zombies?"

Kisha's lips curved into a smile at Duke's challenge, appreciating his lighthearted approach amid the chaos.

"You really know me well," Kisha said with a hearty chuckle. "Why don't we make it a competition? After all, this is a great exercise for both of us."

With a playful grin, she swiftly decapitated a zombie that lunged at her, its teeth bared and ready to bite.

With a shared, unspoken understanding, both Kisha and Duke fell silent and began fighting with renewed intensity. They were still holding back earlier to avoid endangering the survivors in their path, but with fewer concerns now, they could focus fully on the battle.

Kisha moved with agile precision, slicing through the zombies in her way like a graceful swan gliding through water, while Duke used his explosive strength to cleave through the undead as if they were nothing but butter.

The intensity of their combined attacks grew as they faced a relentless swarm of zombies. The undead pressed in from all sides, and the pile of carcasses around Kisha and Duke began to obstruct their movement, risking tripping or slowing them down. Realizing the need for a strategic adjustment, Duke decided to flank the horde, aiming to create a pincer attack with Kisha.

By splitting their assault, they could tackle the horde from both ends, improving their chances of clearing a path.

As he continued to fight, he began to feel the strain of exhaustion, though it was manageable. Sweat started to bead on his forehead, and he couldn't help but notice Kisha moving through the horde with effortless grace. He wondered if her stamina had increased or if his own fatigue was due to his heavy reliance on raw strength and wide, sweeping movements with his spear.

Kisha's efficiency with smaller, precise movements contrasted sharply with his more stamina-draining approach.

After arriving at this conclusion, he felt confident it was correct. As far as he knew, his stats weren't much different from Kisha's. But then he recalled the items Kisha equipped the previous night, and it suddenly made sense. He realized he was partly right, but there was more to it.

Kisha wasn't just using melee weapons instead of her awakened ability to conserve energy; she was testing the limits of her stamina, seeing how long she could fight without tiring. She wanted to know if her stamina would continuously recover because of her passive skill and if others within a certain range would experience the same effect.

[Passive Skill: Healing Dome in effect, Spiritual Energy and stamina recovering]

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The system notifications for her passive skill kept flooding the edge of her peripheral vision. She had moved them aside once she realized they were constantly popping up, reminding her of the skill's activation.

While she wished she could mute them, that wasn't an option, so she positioned them in the far corner of her sight—just enough to keep track of the alerts without them obstructing her view of the zombies flanking her.

Kisha didn't stop Duke from moving to the other end of the horde, wanting to observe whether he would notice the difference. This would be a valuable asset when long battles were inevitable, especially in the apocalypse. Earlier, she had already tested how spiritual energy recovery improved when she was nearby—though it wasn't a significant increase, it sped up noticeably.

However, stamina was different, more subtle and dependent on a person's movements. Like her own efficient, controlled strikes, it seemed possible that with the right approach, stamina recovery could feel almost limitless.

As proof of this, Kisha didn't feel even the slightest fatigue or break a sweat despite her constant movement. In contrast, Duke, who already had monstrous stamina and was accustomed to long, grueling battles, was starting to sweat. After all, they had been fighting the zombie horde for over an hour straight, yet Kisha's endurance remained unshaken.

Kisha drove her smaller katana straight through a zombie's head, then swiftly spun around to deliver a horizontal strike to the one sneaking up behind her, cleaving half its skull and splitting its brain in two. Glancing around, she noticed only about a hundred zombies remained, with the road littered with zombie carcasses. In the past hour alone, she and Duke had slain over half a thousand zombies.

The relentless horde kept coming, drawn to them like moths to a flame, seemingly indifferent to the threat of death.

As the battle neared its end, Kisha decided to go all out, abandoning her earlier strategy of conserving energy. She unleashed more explosive strikes, mirroring Duke's powerful attacks. With a slight twist of her body, she spun around, her blade slicing clean through an incoming zombie.

Without pausing, she followed up with a swift kick to the next zombie's chin, then executed another spinning kick, snapping the zombie's spinal cord with a sharp crack.