

Apocalypse 419

Chapter 419 How Duke Lead

Despite the efficiency of the team and the speed of the drones, the operation had taken nearly an hour.

Even with their skillful handling, it took time to thoroughly follow the web-like formation Duke had mapped out.

However, within that hour, they had managed to cover a substantial portion of the eastern part of the city.

The methodical process was necessary—Duke's plan demanded precision, leaving no gaps that could compromise their mission.

Clearing such a large area in this time was a significant achievement, as it allowed them to eliminate any potential threats while simultaneously gathering valuable intel on the city's layout and key locations.

The drones' surveillance revealed more than just enemy positions; it also provided insight into strategic points they could use to their advantage in future operations.

As the team prepared to advance to the next section, they knew they were making progress, but Duke's instructions remained clear:

'No rushing. Ensuring each zone was fully secure was essential, as any overlooked threat could spell disaster later.'

After finishing up in the current area, Duke led the team to the next location, moving with an air of calm efficiency.

It almost seemed as if he was more of a babysitter than a commanding officer, guiding them through the city and ensuring they stayed alive and well.

He only provided extra resources, like food or supplies, when absolutely necessary—just enough to keep them going but never coddling them.

Some of the warriors began to realize that Duke's approach felt more like a practical exam for soldiers on their first real mission.

His leadership style resembled that of an instructor overseeing a field test, quietly observing and evaluating.

Duke wasn't just leading them—he was grading them, taking note of how they handled themselves under pressure, how they followed his orders, and how they adapted to the challenges they faced.

It became clear that this wasn't just about clearing areas or defeating zombies.

Duke was using this mission to assess their capabilities, identify their strengths, and reveal any weaknesses that might surface under real combat conditions.

This field experience was like a proving ground, a way for Duke to determine how each of them would perform in future, larger-scale operations.

He needed to know who could be relied on, who showed potential, and where the gaps in their training were.

By stepping back and letting them take the lead while offering just enough guidance, Duke was allowing them to show their true potential while also learning what issues they might face as they progressed.

It was a test not only of their skills but also of their endurance and ability to think independently in the heat of battle.

And they weren't wrong—Duke was indeed doing exactly what they suspected.

It was much like the final phase in military training, where cadets are sent on a minor mission before they can officially graduate.

These missions were often reconnaissance-based, never involving high-risk target elimination.

The goal was to test their readiness in the field under controlled, but real, conditions.

Just like those military exercises, Duke had briefed them thoroughly on the area's condition, the challenges they might face, and the tactical choices available.

He had mapped out their formations and ensured that all the resources they would need were prepared in advance.

It was clear that his role mirrored that of a seasoned veteran or instructor, present not to fight the battles for them but to observe, guide, and ensure they didn't fail completely.

The situation reminded some of their past training, where everything was laid out—what to expect, how to proceed, and what decisions could make or break the mission.

All the cadets had to do was execute and prove they could apply their training in a real-world environment.

They were expected to demonstrate not just individual skill but the ability to function as a cohesive unit, each member contributing without becoming a burden to the team.

Duke wasn't just watching for combat ability, either. He was assessing their discipline, their communication, their adaptability under pressure—traits that separated a good soldier from a great one.

The real test was whether they could execute the mission while maintaining the unity and trust that any strong team requires.

In essence, Duke was testing not just their survival skills but their potential as leaders and dependable warriors in future, more dangerous missions.

When Duke briefed the warriors before the mission, while Kisha was busy preparing the supplies, he had already mapped out their strategy in detail.

He spread out a large, comprehensive map of the entire city, where he had carefully marked the key locations for their web-like surveillance formation.

The warriors weren't required to memorize the exact locations, as Duke would personally lead them to each spot.

Instead, their primary focus was to remember the radius they needed to cover when deploying their drones.

Duke had instilled in them the importance of precision and attention to detail.

He knew from experience that in urban warfare, especially in a city infested with zombies, even the slightest gap in intelligence could lead to disastrous consequences.

By breaking down the mission into manageable sections and providing a clear, structured plan, Duke ensured that his team could focus on execution without being overwhelmed by the scale of the operation.

His leadership allowed them to concentrate on their individual tasks while understanding how each small part contributed to the larger objective.

In this way, the warriors weren't just following orders—they were learning to operate as a cohesive unit, with each member playing a vital role in the success of the mission.

Thanks to Duke's exceptional memory and analytical skills, the moment he laid eyes on the sewer system's blueprint, he had already committed it to memory.

With his photographic memory, this was a simple task—he not only memorized the entire sewer layout but also quickly analyzed the key junctures where he needed to set up his formations.

These intersections were critical to controlling access and movement within the sewers, and Duke had pinpointed them with precision.

But his analysis didn't stop there. Duke had also memorized the city's layout in detail, seamlessly linking the sewer system's blueprint to the city above.

Without needing to constantly reference the map, he mentally overlaid the two, forming a comprehensive understanding of how the underground passages connected with the streets and buildings above.

This allowed him to anticipate potential threats, movement patterns, and strategic advantages both on the surface and below ground.

By combining his deep knowledge of the city's structure with his mastery of the sewer system, Duke had already identified and mentally marked all the critical vantage points across the entire city.

These points weren't just random high ground; they were carefully selected locations that would give him and his team the upper hand in monitoring and controlling key areas.

Whether above or below the surface, Duke had crafted a tactical framework that allowed him to anticipate movements, bottleneck the undead, and protect vital entry points before the team even stepped into the field.

This ability to instantly process complex layouts gave Duke a distinct advantage over his enemies and even his own team, who relied heavily on maps and visible markers.

For Duke, everything was already mapped out in his mind, allowing him to focus on strategy and execution without ever needing to pause and recheck his plans.

His foresight and preparation made him a formidable leader, ensuring that he was always several steps ahead, ready to adapt and counter any situation that arose.