

Apocalypse 478

Chapter 478 Aston's Scheme

"Understood." Aston gave a nod and stepped aside.

Sparrow quickly briefed his team on their last mission to Port City, and within moments, they were ready to depart.

Rakan, watching the truck drive away, cast a final glance before turning away.

He followed Aston, his six surviving subordinates trailing behind him.

They no longer felt any obligation to assist the people left in Port City's shelter.

After all, when Victor's men had driven them out, those people had only looked on with disdain, as though they had committed unforgivable crimes by not killing Sparrow and seizing their supplies.

When Victor made his move on his own people, those they had once treated with care had stood by, indifferent to the fate of their lives.

At this point, it was clear that returning to Port City wasn't the best choice for him and his subordinates.

Though they were tough and ruthless, they were still human, and still felt the sting of betrayal, after all they'd done to help those people to survive, it was something they couldn't ignore.

For that reason, they felt no shame in bowing down to Kisha.

They recognized their limitations in surviving alone in this harsh world.

Rather than leading as he did in Port City, Rakan preferred to follow the same person Sparrow was loyal to—someone clearly hundreds of times stronger than he was.

With determined strides, Rakan followed Aston into the base, his six most trusted men close behind him.

They felt relief and gratitude for following Rakan's lead and making it out alive.

As they took in their surroundings, they were struck by the security and order of the base—it was almost as if the apocalypse hadn't touched this place.

Children played freely in the streets, and the atmosphere was calm, giving the impression that a zombie breach was an impossibility here.

They were amazed to see that the residents inside the base didn't seem forced into anything—especially not supply runs outside just to survive.

Everyone looked well-fed and occupied with their own tasks, sparking curiosity about where the base sourced its supplies.

As they observed, people went about their day, doing a variety of jobs—running errands, delivering documents, or transporting goods.

It was almost as if society had returned to normal, with no sign of the zombie threat outside.

Aston led them to the central hall for registration, then guided them to temporary tent accommodations.

Most of the tents were nearly deserted, as previous occupants had been moved to better housing under Kisha's direction.

The remaining tent residents were recent arrivals who, by working hard, were close to earning the privilege of selecting more permanent accommodations, just like those who came before them.

For Rakan and his subordinates, even these tents felt luxurious compared to the rags they'd slept on back in the Port City shelter.

Aston chuckled as he noticed their excitement. "Don't get too comfortable just yet. This is only the basic setup we provide for new members. Once you've started working and earned enough points, you'll be able to upgrade to better accommodations, like larger apartments."

"Apartment? Points?" one of the men asked, eyebrows raised in confusion.

Aston nodded. "Here in HOPE Base, people have a choice in the work they do based on their skills and strengths. You can work in different departments or take on odd jobs—construction, security, or administrative work."

"No matter the role, you'll earn what we call 'work points,' our currency here in the base. You can use these points at the supply center to get your basic needs. Later, I'll show you where it is."

He explained this in his usual businesslike manner, straightforward and stern, like the seasoned commander he was.

"Really?!" one of the men exclaimed, visibly impressed.

Rakan, however, seemed more thoughtful. After a pause, he asked, "If that's how things work here, how do you support so many people? Who handles the supply runs?"

Aston turned with a smirk.

"You've met Sparrow. He and the other Captains lead teams on supply runs. Those capable of fighting can register as warriors, and their compensation is higher than most, so it's a popular choice."

"However, we limit the number of people who can join, unless they were soldiers or had combat experience before the apocalypse." With that, Aston led them back toward the central hall.

After a few minutes of walking, Rakan and his men found themselves in front of the mission board, their eyes widening as they read the requirements for becoming a warrior.

They couldn't hide their astonishment.

"Is this for real?" Rakan turned sharply to Aston, disbelief clear on his face.

"As real as it gets," Aston replied, unfazed.

Rakan's gaze drifted back to the compensation section, his expression shifting to one of deep intrigue.

[Compensation:

5 kilograms each of rice, vegetables, and assorted meats per week. 400 work points per week. 20% discount at the Supply Center (exclusive to warriors). Free medical check-ups and essential medicine for warriors and their immediate family members. One bottle of Scarlet Honey every two weeks. Additional perks may be introduced as the base and resources expand.]

"I want to apply," Rakan declared, his eyes sparkling with confidence.

"My men and I are high-ranking mafias, especially myself. We're no strangers to combat. We're confident we can handle any task you throw our way."

He couldn't help but imagine the supplies and rewards that would come with the position, the thought fueling his determination.

"Alright, I'll register all seven of you. And since you'll be warriors under my care, I can't let you go hungry," Aston said with a knowing smirk.

He led them to the cafeteria, where the seven men attacked their food with the ferocity of starving wolves.

They devoured every bite, not caring that they had already reached the free limit of what they could eat.

Aston didn't stop them.

In fact, this was his strategy.

As a commander, he knew that offering them a hearty meal would not only satiate their hunger but also lure them into working as warriors.

He couldn't pass up the opportunity to recruit more capable hands into his ranks.

From the very beginning, Aston had intentionally brought up work points, the warrior roles, and the compensation to pique Rakan and his men's interest.

He had observed their muscular builds and knew they were more than capable fighters, likely stronger than some of the warriors already in the ranks.

After seeing their hunger for the opportunity, he was certain they would be a valuable addition.

True to his expectations, once they finished eating, Rakan and his six men were eager to jump into work without hesitation.

They didn't even pause to rest or acclimate themselves to the base.

Their hunger for action and rewards was palpable, and they were ready to prove themselves right away.

'They've taken the bait,' Aston thought, a sly smile tugging at the corners of his mouth as he led Rakan and his men to the side of the wall where Vulture and his team were working.

Rakan and his subordinates were tasked with guarding the opening left after the cargo trailers, which had acted as a makeshift barrier, were moved further outside.

The shift created a massive gap in their defenses, and it was up to them to hold the line.