

Apocalypse 51

Chapter 51 City B 2

Throughout the chaos, Kisha and Duke remained inactive, leaving all the action to Sparrow and Vulture. It suited them fine for others to perceive them as mere ornaments with intimidating appearances, rather than capable fighters.

Kisha had little interest in battling the sluggish zombies that offered no crystal cores, deeming it a waste of her time. Meanwhile, Duke's primary concern was Kisha's safety. Despite his trust in her abilities, he couldn't shake off his needless worry, preferring to stand by her side to ensure she remained out of harm's way.

The newfound confidence among those who joined the fight was palpable. Despite Fred's occasional reminders to avoid complacency, he allowed them to revel in their newfound courage. It was a reminder that even in the face of danger, maintaining hope and confidence could fuel their determination to survive, far better than succumbing to despair and resignation.

The woman stepped forward towards Kisha, expressing her gratitude. "Thank you for sending us help," she said. Kisha raised an eyebrow; she hadn't directly intervened in the fight. Nonetheless, the woman instinctively approached her to express her appreciation.

The woman noticed Kisha's skepticism but couldn't resist giving a confident smirk. "I witnessed your subtle gesture of sending your people to assist us. And judging by how they responded to you, it's clear you're the one leading this group." She paused, casting a thoughtful glance around at Kisha's team before continuing.

"As a fellow woman leader of a group, I can't help but wonder: do you possess formidable combat skills, or do you just have a really useful head atop your neck?"

The woman's demeanor wasn't meant to be rude, but rather straightforward, a trait ingrained in her due to her profession. She sought to establish a genuine rapport with Kisha and her group, expressing her intentions openly and honestly.

However, Kisha maintained her stoic expression and simply nodded at the woman before guiding her people back to their journey on foot. Though the woman seemed frustrated by being ignored after posing her question, Kisha had no time for idle chatter.

The woman's group had suffered numerous casualties, with many members bitten or killed by the relentless onslaught of zombies attacking them from all sides.

She found herself in a difficult situation. While they understood that the zombies were no longer human, it remained emotionally challenging for them to kill them. Moreover, killing those who were still breathing, particularly those who had only been bitten, posed an even greater moral dilemma.

However, she was unwilling to endanger the remaining people with her. Her expression turned grim as she reached a decision in her mind. Wails filled the street, echoing and reaching the ears of Kisha's group. They felt fortunate to be under Kisha's leadership because they knew that if they weren't, they might have met the same fate as the group they had just passed.

Once again, they were reminded they were still alive and kicking, owed to Kisha's exemplary leadership and navigation skills. While they couldn't quite decipher her methods, they weren't foolish; they had discerned that since joining Kisha's group, their travels had become noticeably smoother, with fewer conflicts and obstacles to contend with.

Since joining Kisha's group, they hadn't experienced any casualties. Previously, they often found themselves besieged from all directions, with only a handful managing to escape and preserve their lives. The young and the elderly were particularly vulnerable in these situations.

Despite Fred's efforts to save as many people as possible, the task proved to be more difficult than anyone could have imagined. Consequently, most individuals began to regard Kisha as something akin to a deity—a beacon of hope and their sole salvation in a world that had devolved into a living hell.

Everyone remained focused, setting aside thoughts of "what ifs" and other conjectures. They understood the importance of staying alert, knowing that danger could lurk around any corner, especially during their travels on foot. They recognized that a moment of inattention could lead to unforeseen complications, and so they remained vigilant at all times.

Kisha was aware that the woman and her group trailed just a few meters behind them, after having dealt with the bitten and those beyond saving. However, she paid them little mind, confident that they harbored no ill intentions towards her. Thus, she allowed them to continue on their way without interference.

"Sparrow, Vulture, be prepared; we have incoming from the east," Kisha announced, her pace slowing as she spoke. The members of the group immediately snapped to attention, their expressions tense with nervous anticipation. Despite their apprehension, they remained alert, ready to respond from their positions.

Moments later, a horde of over a dozen zombies emerged from the eastern street, varying in agility and condition. Some moved swiftly, while others struggled with stiff bodies and broken limbs.

The civilians with combat skills quickly delegated the task of dealing with the agile zombies to Sparrow and Vulture, while they themselves confronted the slower, more manageable zombies using makeshift household weapons.

Sparrow and Vulture accepted the arrangement without hesitation, confident in their ability to handle the task at hand. However, as they engaged in combat, they discreetly inspected the heads of the zombies they killed, adhering to Kisha's instruction to monitor for the formation of crystal cores.

Disappointingly, they found that the cores had not yet formed, prompting them to redouble their efforts to kill the zombies as swiftly as possible. Their focus remained on ensuring their group's safety so they could press on with their journey and hopefully arrive at the evacuation center before dawn.

The group trailing behind rushed forward to offer aid to Kisha's group, eager to reciprocate the assistance they had received. However, upon reaching Kisha's position, they were met with a surprising sight—the battle had already concluded. Momentarily stunned, they stood in disbelief, their readiness to help rendered unnecessary in the face of Kisha's group's swift and efficient action.

They could only silently go back to their group feeling useless.

Kisha guided her group through the most secluded streets of City B, which were narrow and often deserted. Though they had encountered only one horde of zombies while following her, aside from the instance with the second group, some members began to wonder if she was leading them aimlessly, potentially setting them up for an ambush.

However, they quickly remembered that they lacked significant resources, dispelling any suspicion of foul play.

Fatigue weighed heavily on everyone, and the old man, in particular, attempted to voice his complaints multiple times. He believed Kisha was leading them aimlessly, masquerading confidence without certainty. Despite his proficiency in talking, he was not the brightest bulb among them and he was as cowardly as he could be.

Every time Duke cast a menacing glance his way, the old man would abruptly fall silent, quelling his incessant babbling.

Before anyone succumbed to exhaustion, they finally caught sight of towering walls made from piled cargo trailers and concrete materials, standing at an impressive height of 10 meters. Additionally, makeshift lookout towers had been constructed, though they appeared somewhat wobbly. Nevertheless, they were sturdy enough to accommodate two individuals standing watch.

One of the lookouts caught sight of Kisha and her group, but since they were still a distance away, it was not easier to differentiate them from a zombie horde. Using binoculars to confirm, the lookout then tapped the person beside him.

"Hey, watch it, man! You nearly pushed me off the tower! Are you trying to get me killed?!" the other man exclaimed, his frustration evident as he readjusted to a safer position.

"Sorry about that," he muttered, passing the binoculars to the other guy while pointing in a direction.

"Another zombie horde?" the second lookout questioned, but instead of taking the binoculars, he aimed his rifle in the indicated direction.

"Hey! What do you think you're doing?!" the first lookout exclaimed, quickly pressing the second lookout's rifle down before he could accidentally pull the trigger. "Those are survivors!" he roared, emphasizing the urgent need to differentiate between friend and foe.

"What?! You've got to be kidding me!" he exclaimed, snatching the binoculars from the other guy. As he peered through them, he too noticed the figures moving in the direction indicated by the first lookout. However, the sight of actual people walking in that area was unusual, as typically only zombies roamed the city streets.

Spotting civilian survivors was a rarity for them, given that civilians were often ill-equipped to handle the brutality of the situation. Many lacked the resilience needed to survive, succumbing to the horrors around them and becoming part of the zombie horde. Those fortunate enough to survive often appeared disheveled and mentally unstable, bearing the scars of their traumatic experiences.

"Hey, inform gate 1 of the incoming survivors!" The first lookout ordered the other guy as he tried to count the number of incoming people.

Sensing an intense gaze upon him, Duke couldn't resist glancing up towards where the first lookout stood. Duke's sharp eyes and menacing aura sent a shiver down the lookout's spine, prompting him to quickly avert his gaze and focus instead on estimating the numbers of the approaching figures. Meanwhile, the second lookout contacted the gatekeeper via radio to alert them of the situation.

"Incoming survivors at gate 1. Prepare for inspection!"