

Apocalypse 549

Chapter 549 Being Followed

Unfortunately, they hadn't managed to fully escape.

One mutated cow had still followed them—the very one they had just killed.

Now, with no one from the other teams responding and their current location isolated, he had no idea where to even begin searching for his teammates.

Honestly, they shouldn't have gone to the farm in the first place.

They already had the livestock from Hera's space prepared and could have moved them out and transported them back to the base as soon as they found a safe location.

Going to the farm was primarily a way to investigate the situation, especially after encountering the mutated rats.

Sparrow and the others needed to determine if other animals were also starting to mutate and assess whether these creatures posed a significant threat to the base.

They intended to report their findings back to Kisha.

However, it was shocking to realize that even before they reached the farm, mutated cows were already in the forest, causing havoc near the city.

This raised a troubling thought—if they hadn't gone out, these mutated cows might still have found their way toward the city.

And who knows what chaos might unfold if the zombies and mutated animals ended up fighting each other?

"Fuck!" Sparrow cursed under his breath.

He had already strayed too far from his team, and going any farther would only make it harder to return quickly.

Reluctantly, he changed direction, picking up his pace.

He couldn't afford to stay away for too long—Vulture and the others might find themselves in the middle of another dangerous situation while waiting for him.

"Sparrow, over..." Vulture's voice crackled through the radio.

Sparrow halted mid-movement, gripping a tree branch with his right hand and hanging there like a monkey. His left hand reached for the radio strapped to his belt.

"What's wrong?" he replied, his voice calm but tense. The radio crackled again, the weak signal distorting Vulture's words, causing them to turn garbled at times.

"Any lead?"

"None. I've already tried a few directions, but I can't find their tracks," Sparrow said, his voice heavy and hoarse.

Vulture could hear the frustration and self-reproach creeping into his tone.

Sparrow rarely cared about losing others, but the Winters men were different—they were brothers, the ones they had grown up with.

Even after all they had been through, even with their hardened exteriors, the bonds they shared still carried a sense of warmth and loyalty.

This was why the normally composed Sparrow, who hadn't even flinched when his people were gunned down during his showdown with Victor in Port City, was now on edge.

The thought of losing his team was eating away at him.

"Don't be too hard on yourself. How about we head to the farm? Maybe they all went straight there, thinking that's where everyone would regroup," Vulture suggested, trying to comfort Sparrow.

The truth was, none of them had discussed a rendezvous point in case they got separated.

It wasn't something they had anticipated—splitting up was far too dangerous, and operating separately was never part of the plan.

Sparrow hadn't even considered the possibility, and now he realized it was a mistake, one he wouldn't easily forgive himself for.

Reflecting on Vulture's words, Sparrow nodded in agreement.

It occurred to him that he'd been away for quite some time.

Perhaps Vulture and the others had already finished changing the tires and maintaining the truck, and they were now growing worried about his prolonged absence.

With that thought, Sparrow secured the radio back onto his belt.

Gripping the branch firmly with both hands, he swung his body forward, using the momentum to propel himself to the next tree.

Moving swiftly, he leaped from branch to branch, his movements fluid and controlled.

This time, however, he adjusted his path, choosing a slightly different route on his way back to ensure he didn't miss any signs of his other teams.

As he moved forward, Sparrow forced himself to clear his mind of worry.

He knew it wouldn't help their situation and might even cloud his judgment when he needed to stay sharp.

However, the moment he managed to steady his thoughts, he noticed something unsettling—the eerie silence around him.

There were no sounds of insects, no rustling leaves, not even the whisper of the wind.

The unnatural stillness sent a chill down his spine, and his hair stood on end.

His instincts were screaming at him, warning that something was very, very wrong.

The last time he felt this way, he knew his life was in immediate danger.

Without hesitation, he halted in his tracks, pausing atop a tree branch a few meters above the ground.

His decision wasn't driven by a reckless desire to confront the danger head-on, but by a deep concern that he might unwittingly lead it back to his unsuspecting team, putting their lives at risk.

For now, the nature of the danger remained unclear, and Sparrow couldn't be sure if it was following him like a predator stalking its prey.

Smart predators often followed this routine to locate the nest of their prey, ensuring they could return to it again and again whenever hunger struck, securing a steady food supply.

However, this kind of behavior was typically seen in predators with a family to feed, or those preparing for winter.

In the worst case, it could be a predator hunting purely for sport, taking pleasure in the chase, and killing without any need for sustenance.

Sparrow feared that the danger lurking in the shadows might be the latter—an unpredictable predator hunting for sport.

If that were the case, it would be catastrophic for his entire team to face such an unknown threat.

Without betraying any change in his demeanor, Sparrow feigned exhaustion, deliberately breathing raggedly and fanning himself to add to the illusion.

He leaned back against the tree, his eyes scanning the area methodically with his "Hawk Eyesight."

He was determined to leave nothing unchecked—every small rock, twig, dead leaf, or subtle shift in the bushes or leaves around him was scrutinized for any sign of movement or danger.

No matter how thoroughly he scanned his surroundings, there was nothing—only the unnerving silence, a sign in itself that danger was lurking nearby.

'Is it another invisible-type evolved zombie? Or maybe a mutant animal that could camouflage?' Sparrow thought to himself.

His mind raced with possibilities as he tried to piece together what was happening, searching for clues to understand the nature of the threat.

Once he had a clearer picture, at least he would have a fighting chance—an idea of how to confront or counter this unknown danger.

The longer he stayed, the heavier his heart became, yet there was still no sign of movement around him.

If it were another invisible evolved zombie, he might have been able to detect some distortion in the space around him, just like the last time he fought with such a zombie.

The same would apply to a mutated animal that could camouflage itself in its surroundings.

But no matter how hard he searched, even using his 'Perception Skill' to slow everything around him and heighten his awareness, there was nothing.

Every little detail should have been easier to detect, but the silence and stillness persisted, leaving him with an unsettling sense of being watched, yet finding nothing to prove it.