

## **Apocalypse 551**

### Chapter 551 What Happened To Sparrow

Luckily, his defenses had improved just enough to prevent any serious injuries, but the impacts were enough to blur his vision for a few seconds, causing him to nearly lose his balance and stumble multiple times.

Despite the constant stumbling and the grim state he was in, he pressed on, urgency driving him forward.

He kept his focus on his surroundings and his back, but no matter how hard he searched, there was nothing—nothing following him. And it was driving him to the brink of madness.

Another rustling of leaves and the eerie creaking of trees filled the air as a gust of wind swept past him.

Sparrow's stomach churned, and the hairs on the back of his neck stood on end.

"Fuck!" he growled under his breath, then leaped forward, pushing himself to go faster. '

'Just a little more, he urged himself.

His legs burned, but he didn't stop, knowing he was closing in on the vast rice fields ahead.

He had no idea how long he'd been running—time blurred in his mind.

All he knew was that he was nearing the farm, though still not close enough.

Ahead, there was a clearing, his last chance.

Once he reached it, he could use it to force whatever was following him into the open.

It was his only shot at uncovering his pursuer—or perhaps, by then, the thing chasing him would give up and retreat.

He didn't know what to think, but as she leaped from branch to branch, the golden expanse of the rice fields came into view in the distance.

A smile slowly spread across his face, and a wave of excitement surged in his chest.

In that final moment, he pushed himself higher, leaping with all his strength to land a few meters outside the forest, right in the middle of the sprawling field.

Ack!

Cough...

Cough...

Sparrow's vision blurred almost instantly as the golden hue of the rice field swayed before him, carried by the gusts of wind.

Everything felt distant, and his surroundings began to darken.

Desperate, he reached for the radio clipped to his belt, intent on sending a message that he wouldn't make it back.

But his strength was slipping away, and before he knew it, the radio fell from his hand, clattering to the ground as a stream of blood rushed from him, staining the earth beneath.

Through his blurry vision, Sparrow looked down and saw himself suspended above the golden field, his stomach gruesomely torn open.

Thick, thorny vines twisted through the gaping wound, their barbs glinting ominously.

"Fuck... A m-mu...ta...ted plant," he managed to gasp, his voice weak and fading.

Darkness quickly enveloped him, and in an instant, the vines that had skewered him yanked his body back into the forest. The eerie silence returned, as if nothing had ever happened.

Sparrow vanished into the shadowy depths of the forest, leaving only his blood-stained radio abandoned in the middle of the swaying golden rice field.

The wind carried a haunting stillness, rustling the stalks softly as if nothing had happened.

Suddenly, the radio crackled to life. "Sparrow, over," a voice called, cutting through the silence, unanswered.

"Sparrow, do you hear me? Over." Vulture's voice rumbled through the static, his tone strained as he continued to call out for Sparrow.

But no response came.

When Sparrow sent him away, Vulture had reluctantly complied, immediately boarding the truck with the rest of the team.

He delegated the driving to his co-passenger while he focused on monitoring their surroundings, ensuring their escape route was clear.

They had driven a considerable distance before Vulture allowed himself to glance back, hoping to catch sight of Sparrow.

But the forest remained ominously empty, with no sign of their comrade.

Tension thickened as they pressed on, eventually reaching the farm.

What greeted them was a scene of utter devastation—a once-thriving place now reduced to ruins.

The wreckage was everywhere, and it was clear the farm had been nearly obliterated.

At least, this time, they encountered no further threats, but the absence of Sparrow weighed heavily on all of them.

Only when they stopped in front of the farm did Vulture try calling Sparrow's radio again.

He convinced himself Sparrow was only a few kilometers behind, making his way to rendezvous with them—because that's how it always was.

Sparrow was their reconnaissance expert, as elusive and quick as an eel.

If anyone could outmaneuver danger and survive an ambush from the unknown, it was Sparrow.

He was the one who always managed to slip through the tightest traps and emerge unscathed. In Vulture's mind, Sparrow would be the last of them to fall.

But as the static crackled in response to his calls, an uneasy silence began to gnaw at his confidence.

As soon as they touched down, Vulture felt an unbearable weight settle on his chest, like a boulder pressing down, suffocating him.

Sweat began to bead on his forehead, and his heart pounded painfully, each beat echoing in his ears as if it were being twisted by an unseen hand.

The ominous sensation only grew stronger with every passing second.

Gripping the radio tightly, he called out, "Sparrow, do you copy?"

His voice carried an edge of desperation, but the silence that followed was deafening.

The more he called Sparrow's name without a response, the louder and heavier the pounding in his chest became, a primal warning that something was deeply, horribly wrong.

"Fuck! Sparrow! Answer me!!!" Vulture roared, his voice raw with frustration and fear.

In a surge of rage, he slammed his fist onto the hood of the truck with a resounding 'bang', leaving a massive dent in the armored vehicle's surface.

The sound echoed in the uneasy stillness, but it brought no answers—only more suffocating silence.

Bang!

Everyone turned to look at Vulture, unease spreading among them like wildfire.

The sight of him, usually composed and unshakable, visibly distressed sent a ripple of worry through the group.

They exchanged glances, searching for answers in each other's faces, but none could explain what was happening.

This was unlike anything they'd ever seen before.

Sparrow had disappeared without contact for days in the past, and Vulture had never reacted like this.

They all knew the unspoken rule: trust in Sparrow and each other's capabilities.

Vulture, more than anyone, was familiar with how resourceful and resilient Sparrow was.

During those times of absence, Vulture never faltered; he simply focused on training, confident Sparrow would return like he always did.

So why now? Why was Vulture acting like this? The tension in his clenched jaw and the raw emotion in his eyes unnerved them all.

If even Vulture, the rock of their team, was shaken, then what could it mean? What had happened to Sparrow?

They all wanted to ask Vulture what had gotten into him, but the sheer intensity of his presence held them back.

His bloodshot eyes burned with suppressed fury, and his clenched fists trembled as if he were moments away from flipping the entire truck with his bare hands.

No one dared to step forward, not even to voice their concern.

Even though other teams were still missing, their fates uncertain, Vulture had never reacted this way before.