

Apocalypse 553

Chapter 553 What Happened To Sparrow 3

In one swift motion, the shadowy figure leaped from the corner, soaring into the sky, their form silhouetted against the blinding sunlight.

As they ascended, the harsh light cast an eerie, elongated shadow across the ground.

The sudden movement caught the attention of Vulture's team, and they instinctively squinted against the glare.

Realizing the threat, they immediately raised their arms in a defensive cross, bracing themselves for whatever was about to strike, their bodies tense and prepared for impact.

"You motherfuckers!" The man shouted in fury, his voice full of raw anger.

With a sudden, swift turn, he launched a midair spinning kick aimed at the nearest target.

The force of the strike was devastating, sending the unfortunate victim flying.

Though the person attempted to brace the impact by crossing his arms defensively in front of his chest, the sheer power of the kick overwhelmed him.

He was slammed into the armored truck with a sickening thud, his back crashing against the metal with such force that he gasped in pain, struggling to recover from the impact.

"Ugh!" A muffled groan of pain echoed through the air, causing everyone to tense up, ready to strike again.

But before they could make another move, they froze, their eyes locking onto the figure.

Covered head to toe in mud, only the faint outline of their eyes and a few contours of their face were visible, barely recognizable beneath the thick, muck-covered layer.

It took a moment for the realization to hit—this person was someone they knew, someone they hadn't expected to see in this state.

"Ah, it's you guys?!" One of Vulture's men exclaimed in disbelief, halting mid-attack.

His words caused the entire team to pause, their eyes shifting back to the others who had been hiding.

As they noticed the stop of gunfire from Vulture's side, the group from the other side slowly emerged from their cover, cautiously lifting the objects they'd been holding high into the air once more.

The muddy figure turned to glance at his companions, his gaze meeting the realization that, despite their efforts, Vulture's team still couldn't see what was being raised in the air.

"Fuck this!" he growled, slamming his foot into the ground. "No wonder there's been this misunderstanding!" His voice was tight with frustration as he spoke through gritted teeth.

One of Vulture's team, still on edge, cautiously asked, "What do you mean?"

The muddy figure exhaled sharply, shaking his head in frustration. "We noticed something wasn't right on your side, so we didn't want to startle you by getting too close too quickly."

"We found a piece of cloth along the way, tied it to a stick, and raised it as a signal. But we didn't consider the position of the sun, and we didn't realize you wouldn't be able to see it clearly."

Someone on Vulture's team let out an awkward laugh, scratching the back of their head.

They weren't usually this clumsy, but today had been a mess.

Emotions had gotten the better of them, and in their rush, they'd overlooked key details, letting their bloodlust take over the moment they spotted a target.

The others slowly approached Vulture's team, each of them in a similarly sorry state as the man who had first come forward.

Covered in mud from head to toe, some of it had already begun to dry and crack on their skin.

"What happened to you guys?" someone from Vulture's team finally asked, eyeing them with a mix of concern and confusion as they took in the sorry state of the newcomers.

The first man who had confronted them let out a weary sigh before speaking. "When we got separated from you guys, our driver headed northwest, but unfortunately, a couple of mutated cows started following us—two or three of them, and they seemed intent on impaling us with their horns."

"We barely managed to escape, but luck was on our side when we stumbled upon a ditch, knee-deep in mud. It must've been a pond that dried up from the heat, only to fill up during the storm."

"We immediately abandoned the truck, and the STAU with us used their space to hide it. We buried ourselves in the mud, hoping the mutated cows wouldn't pick up our scent."

"We couldn't risk a direct confrontation—no matter what attack we threw at them using our awakened ability, it didn't work, and there were three of them. So, we had no choice but to stay hidden." The man paused, clearly still shaken by the memory.

"Luckily, after we all took cover in the mud, the mutated cows didn't follow us in, or we'd all be dead by now. But even so, getting out of that mud was no easy task. It took us forever to free ourselves, and by the time we finally managed to get out, we were exhausted."

"Fortunately, that spot wasn't too far from here, so we decided to make the journey on foot. We moved cautiously, knowing the mud on our bodies would mask our scent, giving us a bit of protection against any mutated creatures lurking around."

With his explanation, Vulture's team gained a clearer understanding of what had happened after they were separated.

Despite their grim appearance, it seemed that no one was seriously injured or missing.

Given that, it truly felt like they had been incredibly fortunate to survive an encounter with three mutated cows that had relentlessly pursued them.

"Are you sure you hid in the mud, and not in a pile of shit?" one of Vulture's men teased, pinching his nose.

Only then did the others notice the overpowering stench that surrounded the newcomers, causing everyone to instinctively take a step back.

"Guess you weren't all that fortunate after all," they added with a grin.

They all chuckled for a moment, and after some time, the rest of the team slowly appeared in their line of sight, emerging from the same direction the other muddy people had come from.

When the last of them arrived in front of Vulture's group, they quickly did a head count to ensure no one from truck number 4 was missing.

There were six trucks in total that had gone out with Sparrow. Each truck had no more than six people onboard, including the STAU assigned to each one.

Only one truck didn't have a STAU—this truck was supposed to carry the isolated pods for smaller animals like chickens, ducks, and rabbits.

Sparrow's truck had been number 1, so now, with two trucks' worth of people gathered, they were still missing four more trucks.

The newcomers, already on edge, started to grow more concerned. It wasn't until they looked around that they realized Sparrow wasn't with Vulture's team either.

"Wait, where's Captain Sparrow?" one of the newcomers asked, confusion flickering in their eyes.

At first, they had assumed he was out scouting or looking for the rest of the team.

But as soon as the question was casually raised, the faces of Vulture's team dropped, and the air grew heavy with unease. The newcomers' expressions tightened with the unspoken worry that something was very wrong.

No one answered, as no one knew how to respond. Even Vulture, still lost in his own thoughts, remained silent.

But when he heard Sparrow's name, it was as if he'd been shocked awake.