

Apocalypse 558

Chapter 558 Searching For The Mutated Animals 3

But no matter how hard they tried, their talons couldn't even graze Vulture's skin.

His ironclad defense held firm. Eventually, the chickens' frantic movements slowed, and they hung limply from his hands, their exhaustion evident.

If not for the steady rise and fall of their chests, one might have thought Vulture had accidentally choked them to death.

With only two mutated chickens caught—each as large as a turkey—Vulture instructed the group to securely tie them with strong ropes, ensuring their talons and beaks were rendered useless no matter how much they thrashed.

As an added precaution, he had metal scraps from the wrecked animal farm fashioned into covers for their beaks, preventing any accidental injuries. The foresight to salvage the metal scraps proved invaluable.

Once the chickens were safely restrained, the group resumed their journey, eventually reaching the flowing river where the other team had previously encountered the mutated fish.

However, instead of fish, this time they were met with mutated ducks, eerily gliding through the water.

The mutated ducks were now even more flamboyant than before, resembling oversized swans with comically loud quacking sounds.

Their feet were as large as the hands of a six-foot-tall man, their necks longer and fluffier, and their bodies were three to five times their original size.

Although they lacked sharp nails or beaks, their speed in the water was astonishing—akin to a speedboat.

They darted through the river in a frenzy, racing to catch the mutated river fish, even though the fish were larger than them. Undeterred, the ducks repeatedly dove into the water, causing the fish to scatter in panic like frightened cats.

The mutated ducks resembled swift submarines as they dove underwater, moving with remarkable speed and precision.

It was no wonder the fish scattered in terror—once a duck locked onto its prey, it wouldn't relent until it captured the chosen fish.

After successfully catching a large fish, the bulkier ducks, noticeably larger and more muscular, would bring the catch ashore and share it with the smaller ones.

Based on their observations, Vulture and the others speculated that these mutated ducks had retained some of the characteristics of their predecessors.

The smaller ducks were likely females, while the males were not only larger but also had distinctive features: feathers atop their heads standing upright, slightly elongated, resembling small tails.

Once the male mutated ducks dragged their hunted fish to their respective female partners, the females would respond with delighted quacks, their tails wagging enthusiastically.

Their necks would sway back and forth towards their partners, as if expressing their gratitude. After the males finished their task, the pairs would begin eating the fish together.

Observing from the shadows, Vulture and the others noticed a surprising detail: the mutated ducks had sharp, saw-like teeth hidden inside their large beaks.

These teeth retracted when not in use, making it easier for the ducks to bite through the tough scales of the mutated fish and tear the flesh from their bones with remarkable efficiency.

This time, even Vulture hesitated to step forward and repeat his earlier tactics with the mutated chickens.

Just the sight of the mutated ducks was enough to send a shiver down his spine. However, when he turned around to suggest a plan or seek input, he was met with everyone's expectant gazes.

It was clear they had unanimously decided to leave the decision-making—and the "honor" of taking action—to him, without a single word needing to be said.

Vulture instantly choked on his own spit, his throat tightening as anxiety bubbled up. The thought of those mutated ducks possibly snapping off one of his fingers with their terrifying saw-like teeth was enough to make his stomach churn.

While part of him was eager to take action, the ducks' proximity to the water posed a serious problem. If startled, they could easily escape into the river.

He furrowed his brows, falling into deep contemplation as he struggled to devise a solution.

'Maybe if Sparrow were here,' he mused, 'he could use his agility to sneak up on them while they're on land and knock them out quickly.'

But with Sparrow absent, Vulture realized this challenge was his to face alone, adding to the mounting pressure.

As soon as Vulture thought of Sparrow, an uneasy knot twisted in his stomach, adding to the growing tension. Shaking off the nerves, he decided to focus on the task at hand.

Moving carefully, he began crawling closer to the mutated ducks, using the seven- to ten-inch grass as cover. It wasn't particularly tall, but it was dense enough to conceal him as he slithered like a snake.

The cacophony of quacking and splashing from the ducks playing in the water, combined with the noisy interactions of other pairs, masked the sound of the grass rustling. This gave Vulture the opportunity to inch closer undetected.

His eyes locked onto a male and female mutated duck engrossed in their meal, seemingly oblivious to their surroundings.

However, as Vulture got within range, the male duck suddenly raised its head, its alert posture suggesting it had sensed something. Vulture froze in place, holding his breath as the duck's sharp eyes scanned the area.

Seizing the moment before he was discovered, Vulture extended his hand, channeling his focus. A cluster of earth erupted from the ground, snaking around the ducks' feet like living vines, binding them securely in place.

The sudden action caught both ducks by surprise, giving Vulture a small but critical victory.

Surprised by the sudden restraint, the two mutated ducks let out loud, alarmed quacking, flapping their large wings frantically in the air as if attempting to take flight.

However, upon realizing their feet were firmly bound by the earth, they quickly shifted tactics. Using their saw-like teeth, the ducks began biting at the dirt bindings with fierce determination.

Despite their panic, the sight was almost surreal—these massive creatures, resembling oversized swans with their elegant yet intimidating forms, were struggling against their confinement.

Vulture didn't waste the opportunity. While the ducks were preoccupied with their futile escape attempts, he stealthily approached from behind.

Without hesitation, he repeated the same strategy he had used on the mutated chickens earlier. With swift precision, he grabbed the necks of both ducks, aiming to subdue them.

The moment he made contact, the mutated ducks reacted violently, flapping their powerful wings with renewed vigor. The male's wing struck Vulture square in the face, while the female's slammed into his side, leaving a stinging sensation.

Undeterred by the flurry of blows, Vulture tightened his grip, enduring the onslaught until the mutated ducks' struggles weakened.

Finally, their flapping slowed, and after a few more moments of resistance, the mutated ducks fell limp, their fight extinguished. Vulture let out a breath he hadn't realized he was holding, his body aching from the scuffle but triumphant in his efforts.

Although Vulture's strong defenses kept him from sustaining any physical injuries, the relentless beating from the mutated ducks' wings left him feeling mentally drained, as if he had taken a psychological beating instead. The experience left him frustrated and fired up.

After taking a brief rest with his team by the river to recover and regroup, they quickly prepared to move on, eager to leave the unsettling encounter behind and continue their journey.