

Apocalypse 560

Chapter 560 Searching For The Mutated Animals 5

Vulture didn't relent, relentlessly swinging his hammer with precision and purpose. Despite his relentless assault, he maintained tight control over his strength, ensuring he killed only as many mutated pigs as necessary.

The rest he deliberately spared, leaving them alive to be captured and brought back.

"Hurry up! Get the mutated animals out of the space now!" Vulture roared, his voice commanding urgency as he felled the last mutated pig.

Without wasting a moment, the STAU members, still perched in the trees, quickly followed his orders. They didn't even bother climbing down, hastily retrieving the mutated animals from their storage.

A moment later, the creatures they had painstakingly captured emerged, visibly weak and on the brink of death.

Fortunately, several of the Winters' men, equipped with strong offensive and defensive abilities, stepped in to assist Vulture.

Some provided crucial support, enabling the group to finish the task swiftly. Without their help, all the hard work they had put into capturing the other types of mutated animals might have been for nothing.

"Captain! This one's on the verge of dying—its mouth is already foaming!" one of the Winters' men called out, catching Vulture's attention.

He pointed to one of the mutated chickens that appeared to be in critical condition.

Right on cue, the STAU descended from the trees and immediately rushed to check on the mutated animals. They inspected each one thoroughly, administering a few drops of a vial containing blue liquid to stabilize the creatures and ensure they wouldn't succumb to their condition.

It was a calculated risk to have stored the animals in their spatial spaces earlier. Leaving them exposed on the ground could have resulted in their deaths at the hands of the rampaging mutated pigs.

In hindsight, they agreed that it was better to play it safe than regret the loss of their hard-earned captures.

Aside from temporarily storing the mutated animals in their spaces, they had no other viable option.

Without specialized equipment like spare oxygen masks, they could only let the mutated animals endure a bit of discomfort for a short while.

"Check on the surviving mutated pigs and make sure they stay alive. As for the ones that are already dead, store them away—we'll take them back with us," Vulture instructed, his voice firm.

He swung his massive hammer in the air a few times before resting it on his shoulder, scanning the group with a sharp gaze to ensure he hadn't overlooked anything in his orders.

"Alright, we've got everything we need. Let's get ready to head back once you're finished with this batch!" Vulture commanded after a brief pause.

Without wasting time, the team began hauling the unconscious mutated pigs out of the forest.

They didn't bother with planks or other equipment; instead, they grabbed the pigs by their hind legs and dragged them along the ground, leaving visible drag marks behind.

No one cared about the marks, not after the pigs had nearly killed them. Besides, time was of the essence—they needed to return to base before nightfall so they could deploy the bees to search for Sparrow.

After reaching a clearing with a dirt road, the STAU swiftly pulled five trucks out of their spaces. Before boarding, they carefully removed the animals still fitted with specialized oxygen muzzles and large oxygen tanks.

Since the animals were still unconscious, the team loaded them into the trucks and secured them tightly. However, they realized they were short one truck intended for smaller animals that were placed in isolated pods.

Forced to improvise, they collectively cut down more trees from the surrounding area to craft additional planks.

With everyone's cooperation, the task was completed faster than expected, but it was already past noon by the time they finished.

While most of the team worked on the planks, the STAU members, lacking the strength or agile hands for heavy labor, took charge of preparing lunch.

They washed and chopped vegetables, prepared the meat, and set the rice to cook on one side of the clearing. Meanwhile, two or three of the Winters' men stood guard, keeping a vigilant watch over the perimeter to ensure everyone's safety.

When pass lunch arrived, the STAU was done cooking beef curry and deep fried some tonkatsu, they then serves a big bowl of rice with beef curry on top and then on top of it was a big egg omelet and then the tonkatsu on top.

The food was still steaming, its enticing aroma wafting through the clearing and making everyone's mouths water.

After working nonstop since morning and facing life-threatening dangers at every turn, the team was beyond famished. Their stomachs twisted in hunger as they eagerly awaited the long-overdue meal.

As soon as the food was served, the Winters' men, along with Vulture, wasted no time.

They dove in, taking large bites and shoveling spoonfuls of food into their mouths with unrestrained enthusiasm.

"This tastes amazing!" one of the men exclaimed between bites.

"You guys are seriously talented," another added, nodding appreciatively toward the STAU members who had prepared the meal.

"GOD! I'm so hungry I could eat a whole cow!" one of the Winters' men exclaimed dramatically, shoveling another mouthful of food into his mouth.

The rest of the Winters' men chimed in, showering the STAU with compliments for their cooking. The STAU members, caught off guard by the praise, smiled sheepishly.

They knew the men were hungry enough to devour anything put in front of them, but the compliments still warmed their hearts.

In truth, the STAU hadn't done anything extraordinary. They had simply used a ready-made beef curry mix, thrown everything into a pressure cooker, and let it simmer until the beef was perfectly tender.

Still, seeing the others enjoy the meal so much made their efforts feel worthwhile.

No one said a word, understanding that they had done the best they could with the limited resources and tight timeline. Heads bowed over their bowls, they focused on eating in silence, savoring the meal as much as their hunger would allow.

After finishing, they drank water to wash down the food and rested briefly before returning to work.

With their energy replenished, the team quickly completed cutting enough planks. They loaded the planks into one of the trucks, using them to create a second layer inside for better storage capacity.

In Truck Number 1, the team carefully arranged all the captured cows, ensuring they were secure. The Winters' men took their seats at the very back, near the truck's doors, ready to keep an eye on the cargo as they prepared to set off.

They kept the process simple, avoiding unnecessary construction. The truck's frame already featured vertical circular metal bars designed to support its armor, making it convenient for the team to utilize.

They placed the planks across these bars, ensuring each end rested securely on the metal supports.

To reinforce the structure and prevent the planks from buckling under the weight, they added a second layer of planks laid perpendicular to the first.

This cross-pattern ensured stability and balance, providing a sturdy foundation for their cargo.

Only after ensuring the second layer was sturdy enough did they begin loading the animals, maximizing every inch of space within the trucks.

Truck 1 was designated for the larger cows, accommodating the dairy cattle and cattle for slaughter called beef cattle together on the reinforced first layer.

Truck 2 housed the pigs on the first layer and the goats on the second.

Truck 3 was reserved for sheep on the upper level and calves on the lower, as the group had multiple cattle breeds and needed to distribute them across the trucks.

Trucks 4 and 5 carried the poultry, including chickens, ducks, quails, and a growing number of pheasants. These birds were still being raised to increase their population and had not yet been served at the Supply Center.

This systematic arrangement ensured every animal was securely placed and made optimal use of the available truck space.

Only after ensuring all the arrangements were complete and everyone was securely aboard the trucks did Vulture knock firmly on the back of the lead truck, signaling with a command,

"Let's roll out!" Yet, even as the convoy roared to life, his gaze lingered on the distant terrain they had just left behind.

There was a flicker of hope in his eyes, an unspoken anticipation that Sparrow would emerge at the last moment, just as he often did.

But as the trucks began to move, that hope dulled, replaced by a gnawing unease.

Vulture's stomach churned, not from physical exhaustion, but from the growing weight of doubt pressing on his thoughts.

He stubbornly clung to the idea that Sparrow would appear, defying logic and timing like always.

Yet this time, no familiar figure materialized from the shadows, and the absence settled heavily in his chest.

With one final glance at the horizon, Vulture climbed onto the roof of Truck 1 instead of taking his usual place in the passenger seat.

No one knew why he chose to sit there, but no one questioned him either. The drivers started their engines, and the convoy began its slow, steady departure from the area.