

Apocalypse 572

Chapter 572 Search And Rescue Mission 8

"Vulture, get a grip," Duke said, his voice grim but firm. "If Sparrow's still alive, he's probably waiting for us, stuck in a dire situation. If we waste any more time here, he could be dead for real. Don't jump to conclusions—not until we see his body for ourselves."

Duke didn't want to say it, but the words were necessary. He needed Vulture to pull himself together. Kisha and Duke couldn't afford to babysit him.

If even Sparrow, with all his skills, had been caught off guard and unable to fight back, it meant their enemy was powerful enough to push him into a corner.

They couldn't afford to be distracted or broken, not now. If they allowed their spirits to drop, it would only drag them all down.

Vulture's blank expression and dull eyes slowly shifted toward Duke. He stared at him for a long moment before, suddenly, he burst into a sob. "Master, Sparrow..." His voice cracked, choking on the words.

Duke didn't hesitate. He slapped the back of Vulture's head again, the sound sharp and quick, as though trying to jolt his mind awake.

"Did your brain fill up with water?" Duke snapped. "Let me slap the stupid out of you so you can think straight."

The scolding tone was harsh, but there was something oddly comforting about it. It was as if Duke were nagging a son, and despite the gravity of the situation, it carried a warmth that spoke volumes about the bond they shared. It was a reminder that, in the midst of all this, Duke saw them as family.

Vulture's worry for Sparrow was palpable, but Duke's own anxiety was just as strong. He needed Vulture to pull himself together—not for Duke's sake, but for Sparrow's.

They needed to find him, and Vulture's current state wasn't helping anyone.

After a moment of sobbing, Vulture wiped his eyes with the back of his arm, looking every bit like an aggrieved child struggling to hold back his tears.

With a quiet hiccup, he stood up, silently clipped his walkie-talkie back onto his belt, and without a word, fell in line behind Kisha and Duke once more.

Duke paused, his scolding over, and a faint smile tugged at the corner of his lips. He turned and started walking behind his wife, though the smile quickly faded, replaced by a hard, cold edge. A murderous glint flashed in his eyes as he glanced ahead.

He didn't tolerate anyone laying a hand on his people, and the thought of one of his trusted men being reduced to this... it only fueled his anger.

The fire of vengeance burned hotter within him, and the need to make sure the culprit suffered—not just die easily—consumed his every thought.

They all pushed their personal thoughts aside, refocusing on the mission to find Sparrow. The weight of the situation was clear—any lapse in attention could mean missing a crucial clue or failing to spot danger before it was too late.

Being absent-minded now could cost them everything. After taking a moment to school their emotions, they steeled themselves and moved forward once more.

Since they were retracing their steps from where they had first found the blood trail, it was easier to follow the path back.

Kisha, Duke, Vulture, Zeus, and the Scarlet Bees moved through the forest, the quiet urgency of their steps punctuated only by the distant rustling of the trees.

Kisha kept the Scarlet Bees within a specific range, ensuring they formed a protective ring around the group.

As they moved, the bees maintained a constant radius, a protective shield, and a detection network, scanning the surroundings for any signs of danger.

With the Scarlet Bees forming a protective perimeter, any incoming threat would be detected almost immediately, giving Kisha and her group the opportunity to quickly formulate a plan to defend themselves. This added security allowed them to focus on the task at hand.

With renewed determination, the group continued their search through the forest, following the blood trail.

As they moved deeper into the woods, the sight of more blood only heightened their anxiety. The further they went, the more unsettling it became.

Despite having traveled a considerable distance, the blood trail was still fresh, and the amount of blood visible was increasing.

Their worries deepened. If Sparrow hadn't died from the wounds already, the sheer loss of blood could be life-threatening.

Even if he had survived the initial injury, the danger of bleeding out grew with every step they took.

The deeper they ventured into the forest, the colder their bodies became, gripped by the growing fear for Sparrow's life. Then, without warning, the blood trail abruptly stopped.

They were no longer sure of their exact location. The dense trees surrounded them, obscuring their sense of direction, and tall grass swayed eerily in the silence. There were no signs of life—no buzzing insects, no rustling leaves.

It was then that they all realized: they had unknowingly entered the den of a dangerous predator.

The abrupt halt of the blood trail only solidified the grim possibility that they were now in the territory of the creature that attacked Sparrow.

Given their initial suspicion that the enemy was a flying creature, Kisha and Duke silently began scaling the nearest trees, moving with quiet precision.

The Scarlet Bees hovered above, scouting the canopy and keeping watch from all angles.

Meanwhile, Zeus and Vulture scanned the ground below, searching for any signs of the creature's nest—whether it was perched in the trees or burrowed into the earth.

As much as they were in a rush, the unknown nature of their enemy forced them to slow down. Without any clear idea of what they were up against, caution became their only option.

Kisha relied heavily on the Scarlet Bees to carry out the search and detect any threats, careful not to alert the enemy.

The bees shrank to their smallest form, their wings beating with almost imperceptible softness, minimizing the sound they made as they moved through the area.

They had no idea how vast the creature's territory was, or where its boundaries lay. The only choice was to remain as cautious as possible.

Kisha, Duke, and the others scanned their surroundings, searching for any signs—marks on the trees, perhaps—indicating that the creature had claimed this land as its own.

It could be like a bear, marking its territory to ward off intruders, a clear sign of territorial dominance. They needed to be certain, though, before making any moves.

Kisha and the others searched the area, but found nothing—no sign of a nest, no tracks, not even the faintest hint of other animals, insects, or mutated creatures.

The eerie silence was unsettling, and the absence of life around them was deeply odd. It became painfully clear that whatever creature they were dealing with was not just a predator, but a force of destruction—murderous enough to either kill everything in its vicinity or drive it away.

The possibility that it had devoured anything in its path loomed over them, an even darker thought.

As they continued to scan the surroundings, their expressions grew grimmer with each passing moment.

The more they realized the deadly nature of the creature they were up against, the more their fear for Sparrow intensified. The thought that he might be facing something so merciless was almost too much to bear.