

Apocalypse 580

Chapter 580 Vulture's Sorrow And Mystic Practitioners

"You motherfucker... you didn't even wait for me to save you..." Vulture sobbed, his voice trembling.

"It's my fault, brother," Vulture choked out, his voice breaking.

"I should've gone with you, or at least not let you go alone. Maybe I shouldn't have let you go at all. I'm so sorry..." He collapsed forward against the lifeless body of the mutated tree, sobbing uncontrollably, each breath ragged and strained.

Vulture could barely catch his breath as he wept, his heart heavy with guilt. Deep down, he had known the chances of Sparrow surviving were slim, but he had held on to the hope—hope that Sparrow's resourcefulness and cunning would somehow pull him through, that he'd always find a way out of any situation.

That small flicker of hope was what kept him going. But now, the harsh reality had settled in. His brother was gone.

"I'm sorry, brother. I'm sorry." His words were barely a whisper, but with Kisha's heightened senses, she could still hear the raw pain in his voice.

Her heart tightened, and her own eyes began to water. Sparrow had become part of her family, and he was here because of her orders—she couldn't shake the guilt and sorrow that settled in her chest.

Instinctively, Kisha looked up at Duke, standing beside her. His expression was unreadable, his long lashes casting shadows over his eyes, making it impossible for Kisha to gauge his emotions.

The darkness of the night only deepened the silence between them, making everything feel heavier and more distant.

But Kisha could feel the aura emanating from Duke, and she knew he, too, was filled with a mix of sadness and anger.

It wasn't directed at her—she understood that—but at the situation itself. No one could have foreseen the mutated tree lurking near the farm, and even Kisha hadn't expected it to appear so early in the apocalypse.

Just when she thought she was starting to understand the changes sweeping through the world, she was blindsided once again.

These mutated trees, unlike the evolved zombies or mutated animals, were much more intricate and difficult to evolve.

That's why they were the most dangerous, the hardest to deal with, and the true bane of humanity's survival.

Kisha allowed Duke and Vulture the time they needed to process their grief, giving them space to mourn the loss of Sparrow.

Though she too felt the sting of his death, she recognized that the bond between Sparrow and the others ran deeper, having been forged over years of shared experiences.

Her connection with him, while strong, wasn't as rooted in that same brotherly love, and she knew she had a responsibility to find his body.

She couldn't let her sorrow overtake her; there was work to be done.

Pushing her emotions aside, she focused her energy and extended her telekinesis, feeling the surroundings in search of Sparrow's remains.

Kisha closed her eyes, taking slow, deliberate breaths as she grounded herself on the sticky, murky earth.

With each exhale, she steadied her focus, allowing her consciousness to expand beyond her physical form.

As she reached outward, she began to feel her surroundings with a clarity that transcended the limits of her sight.

The world around her became a vivid tapestry of sensations, each subtle detail registering in her mind as though she could see it all.

Gradually, she extended her awareness further, her focus honing in on the presence of Duke and Vulture.

Though her eyes remained closed, she could sense them, still and silent in the distance.

Her heart clenched with sorrow, but she pushed the emotion aside, reminding herself that she had a task to complete.

Slowly but surely, Kisha expanded her reach, gradually acclimating herself to the process.

She was careful, unwilling to rush and risk the negative consequences of hastily pushing her consciousness too far.

She understood the importance of patience—one wrong move could disrupt her entire focus.

"That's right, Host," 008's voice resonated in her mind, breaking the silence.

"You shouldn't rush. Expanding your consciousness too quickly could cause irreparable damage. Repairing a damaged consciousness is far more difficult than mending a damaged dantian. I must say, though, I didn't realize you had such a natural talent or a soul so strong."

"Why soul? Shouldn't it be mind?" Kisha asked, her curiosity piqued by 008's unusual choice of words.

"Master, in the Murim World, consciousness is actually a part of the soul. As practitioners seek to transcend the limitations of their physical forms, they train their souls to grow stronger, which in turn strengthens their consciousness."

"This process makes their minds more resilient and powerful. Practitioners with strong consciousness are less susceptible to tricks or techniques that target the soul or mind."

"A powerful soul also reinforces the mind, making them resistant to manipulations like charm, soul manipulation, mind control, and many more."

"Generally, those with a strong consciousness tend to excel in fields like alchemy, rune mastery, talisman mastery, and other professions that require exceptional mental fortitude." Bell interjected, clarifying 008's earlier explanation.

"In the Murim World, practitioners are classified into two main categories: Martial Arts Practitioners, who focus on enhancing their physical strength and abilities, and Mystic Practitioners, who specialize in cultivating their souls."

"Mystic Practitioners don't necessarily need to excel in physical combat, but they are far rarer than their martial counterparts. This is because individuals with innate talent for mysticism and strong soul are much more difficult to find than those with the physical foundation needed for martial arts," Bell explained, recalling the laws and principles from the Murim world.

"That's certainly interesting," Kisha responded, her focus still on expanding her consciousness through the surrounding area.

"It must be because my 'Mental Capacity' has already surpassed a thousand, which likely allows my consciousness to handle this much more effectively."

"Host, you truly possess a strong soul, which is why you awakened Telekinesis as your ability. As you already know, an awakened ability is tied to one's Talent and Gift, meaning it is something you are born with." 008 paused before adding, "Honestly, now that I think about it, the reason I was thrown—or perhaps summoned—into this lower world might be connected to your soul..."

008 fell silent after that, leaving Kisha's curiosity unanswered. Despite her attempts to probe for more, it refused to elaborate, knowing her interest had been piqued.

Since 008 remained silent and Bell had no answers regarding what 008 had hinted at, Kisha focused her attention back on her task.

Gradually, her consciousness expanded, reaching deep underground.

She could almost see the tangled roots below, feeling their connection with her mind. As she probed further, her senses revealed mangled bodies and scattered bones, more than six feet beneath the surface.

Though the remains were spread out, they formed a rough pattern, as if they had been carefully placed.

It seemed the mutated tree had created a massive pit to store its prey, a place where it stored food for later consumption. The scattered remains were only part of the picture.

Below, a larger pit extended beneath the site where the mutated tree had once stood, filled with dried bodies, some mummified as if their blood had been sucked dry.

The scene felt like an eerie cave of horrors—an unsettling collection of the tree's victims.