

Apocalypse 654

Chapter 654 Leaving The Bunker

Although he was fairly certain the aircraft had been prepped for a getaway—meaning the fuel tank was likely full—he wasn't about to take any chances. The last thing he wanted was to discover a problem mid-flight when it was already too late to do anything about it. A malfunction at high altitude could spell disaster, and he wasn't willing to gamble with their lives.

"Yes, sir! We're on it!"

Group 6 sprang into action, momentarily leaving the civilians behind as they moved to inspect the chopper for any potential issues. However, the moment they stepped inside, they were immediately hit with the overwhelming stench of rot.

Their faces contorted in disgust as they gagged, eyes watering as they fought the urge to vomit on the spot. Instinctively, they turned to glare at Sparrow—only to find him watching them with a smug, teasing smile.

"That bastard knew!" one of them cursed internally. "He knew how bad it smelled in here and didn't even warn us! I bet he was just waiting for us to suffer the same way he did so he wouldn't be the only victim!"

Despite their silent complaints, they said nothing aloud. They had been with Sparrow long enough to recognize when he was messing with them. Gritting their teeth, they sucked in deep breaths of fresh air before stepping inside to complete their task.

The sight inside wasn't any better. The chopper's interior was littered with corpses—zombies with caved-in skulls, black blood pooling around them, brain matter smeared across the seats. It didn't take a genius to figure out that Sparrow had just finished cleaning house.

While Sparrow rested against a stack of crates near the helipad, Group 6 worked efficiently to clear the chopper of zombie carcasses. The civilians initially tried to help, but the moment they stepped inside, they became a gagging, vomiting mess—completely useless and more of a hindrance than anything else.

Seeing this, Sparrow and the Winters' men didn't bother waiting for them to adjust to the stench. Time was of the essence, and they couldn't afford delays. Without hesitation, they took over, hauling out the rotting bodies before turning their attention to checking the chopper's monitors and inspecting the entire cockpit for any issues.

Once the checks were complete, everyone prepared to leave. Sparrow, feeling slightly better, pushed himself up from where he had been resting.

ROAR!

A deafening, bone-rattling roar echoed across the helipad, freezing everyone in place. The civilians went pale.

"It followed us here!" someone gasped in horror, their voice nearly breaking into a scream.

Sparrow's sharp gaze snapped toward the source of the sound. Beyond the fence, not far from where they stood, the mutated tiger emerged—battered, blood-soaked, and barely clinging to life. Its eyes, oozing thick streams of blood, glowed with a terrifying, unrelenting fury.

"Fuck! Everyone, get inside the chopper, now!" Sparrow barked, his voice cutting through the rising panic.

The mutated tiger's roar hadn't just shaken them—it had also drawn the attention of the zombies trapped within the bunker. A thunderous banging erupted from the bunker's doors, a relentless, eerie rhythm that felt like a fist pounding against their chests. The sound alone confirmed their worst fear—there were no survivors inside. Every last person had turned.

The grim realization settled over them like a suffocating weight. The people who had once occupied the chopper had likely been trying to escape the same fate, only to die before they could even lift off the ground. And now, if they didn't move fast, they'd share the same end.

Sparrow, Group 6, and the civilians scrambled toward the chopper, the suffocating stench inside the aircraft now the least of their concerns. The enraged, mutated tiger had locked onto them, its fury propelling it forward.

The civilians rushed inside in a panic, children stumbling in their fear. Some tripped and fell, but the adults quickly scooped them up, shoving their way onto the aircraft. Sparrow was the last to board, his sharp gaze sweeping over the group to ensure no one was left behind before he climbed in.

Outside, the mutated tiger lunged at the fence, only to be met with a powerful jolt of electricity. The current crackled through its massive body, sending plumes of smoke billowing from its scorched fur.

But the shock wasn't enough to bring it down. Instead of retreating, the beast roared in fury, stepping back, its bloodied frame trembling—but not from pain. It wasn't just enduring the agony; it was ignoring it entirely.

Sparrow immediately took the pilot's seat, gripping the controls as two members of Group 6 rushed to assist him. Meanwhile, the rest of the team secured the chopper, slamming the hatch shut and helping the civilians strap themselves in.

Those without seats clung to whatever they could—handrails, cargo straps, even the edges of the bloodstained seats. No one cared about the sticky remnants of decayed flesh or the dark stains of zombie blood soaking into the fabric. The stench was unbearable, but fear overpowered disgust. All they could do now was hold on and pray they made it out alive.

Sparrow flicked the switches around him, his hands steady despite the chaos. He grabbed the sticky headset—the same one worn by the zombie he had killed earlier—and placed it over his ears. His teammates kept their eyes locked on the monitors and instrument panels, scanning for any warning lights.

"Sir, we're ready for takeoff," one of them reported.

"Prepare for takeoff!" Sparrow repeated loudly, making sure everyone in the back heard him. The civilians scrambled to buckle up, bracing themselves as the chopper rumbled to life.

Sparrow gripped the controls and slowly lifted the helicopter off the ground. But just as the aircraft ascended, the mutated tiger exploded through the fence. Its powerful claws shredded the metal, forcing a path through as sparks crackled from the broken wires. The residual electricity made the beast sluggish for a moment—it shook its head, growling weakly.

Seizing the opportunity, Sparrow maneuvered the chopper higher, pushing the throttle forward. But the tiger wasn't giving up. Its furious eyes locked onto the rising aircraft, its muscles tensing. Meanwhile, the deafening bangs from the bunker door grew more frantic, signaling that whatever was trapped inside was dangerously close to breaking free.

The mutated tiger took a few steps back, its muscles coiling like a spring. Then, with a powerful lunge, it propelled itself forward, using the stacked crates as a makeshift springboard to launch even higher. Its massive body soared through the air, claws outstretched, aiming straight for the ascending chopper.

"Sir! It's going to reach us!" the man beside Sparrow shouted, eyes wide as he watched through the side window. The tiger had gained enough momentum—if it latched onto the aircraft, they'd be in serious trouble.

Reacting instantly, Sparrow yanked the controls, tilting the chopper sharply to the side. The sudden jolt sent the passengers in the back stumbling, and those without seats lost their grip and tumbled across the cabin. Cries of alarm filled the air as some slammed into the walls, while others barely managed to hold onto whatever they could.

Fortunately, the children were securely strapped in, spared from the worst of the turbulence. Still, a few passengers weren't so lucky—some hit their heads and started bleeding, while others twisted their ankles or wrists in the chaos.