

Apocalypse 670

Chapter 670 - Welcome Back!

Eagle and Hawk also relaxed, smiles spreading across their lips as they took in the sight of Sparrow—alive and well.

They had often heard updates from Keith about their master, the people around them, and the development of City B's base under Duke and Kisha's leadership.

Though they never questioned how Kisha managed to communicate with Keith, they were simply grateful for any news.

Now, seeing Sparrow standing before them, it felt like years had passed since their last meeting. Even from a distance, they could sense the sheer strength and power radiating from him.

It was undeniable—Sparrow had grown immensely, his presence commanding respect. Compared to him now, they almost felt as if they had been left in the dust.

"It's been a while..." Eagle nodded in approval as he studied Sparrow.

Behind him, the squad that had arrived consisted of Winters' men—survivors from different cities and regions who had endured countless hardships to reach the hidden base.

They, too, recognized Sparrow, and the tension in the air eased. Smiles spread across their faces, relief and camaraderie replacing the wariness from moments before.

They then began following a trail through the forest to reach Sparrow. It took them 20 minutes to navigate the path while maintaining their formation, carefully avoiding any hidden traps along the way.

Once they made their way around and finally stood in front of Sparrow, he and his team began opening the back door of the bus to exit safely. Sparrow was certain there were still landmines nearby, possibly even right beside the bus, and he wasn't willing to risk triggering any by mistake.

After opening the back door, Sparrow and his team locked eyes with Eagle and the others. He didn't allow anyone to disembark until Eagle gave the go-ahead. One of Eagle's men stepped forward with a metal detector, carefully scanning the area to pinpoint the exact positions of the landmines.

Only after the path was confirmed did Sparrow instruct his team to follow the narrow trail, ensuring everyone stepped precisely in the safe zones without triggering any explosives.

Once everyone safely disembarked from the bus and reached Eagle's side without any issues, Sparrow simply used his Whirlwind ability to propel himself upward, leaping effortlessly to join them in a single bound.

The man holding the metal detector scratched his head in disbelief—he had been waiting for Sparrow to exit the bus like everyone else, only to be left behind in an instant. With no other option, he sighed and made his way back on his own.

"Welcome back!" Eagle said, opening his arms wide for a hug.

Instead of accepting it, Sparrow gave him a deadpan look, his expression laced with disdain.

"Man, that was cringy. I swear, I felt my skin crawling with bugs..." He hugged his arms and scratched them a few times as if trying to shake off imaginary discomfort.

Eagle's face darkened, looking as black as the bottom of a scorched pot, which only made Sparrow burst into laughter. Before Eagle could retreat in frustration, Sparrow grabbed his hand, pulled him in, and gave him a firm, brotherly hug.

"It's been a while. I'm glad to see you all," Sparrow said, patting Eagle's back before turning to embrace Hawk and the rest of his brothers one by one.

After their brief reunion, the smiles quickly faded from their faces, replaced by a serious demeanor, as if their lighthearted exchange had never happened.

"Let's head back and talk," Eagle said, signaling with a hand gesture for everyone to turn around and move out.

They maintained a tight formation, positioning one of the Winters' men behind each civilian to ensure no one misstepped. The terrain was riddled with traps, and a single mistake could lead to disastrous consequences.

To further prevent mishaps, each Winters' men carried a child, making sure they wouldn't be left behind due to exhaustion. The combination of fatigue, nerves, and anxiety made it too easy for the civilians to falter and make mistakes, and they couldn't afford any of that.

On the journey back, it took them nearly an hour to reach the parked vehicles. When it was just Eagle and his team, they could easily navigate the trap-riddled path since they were the ones who had set the traps and knew exactly which areas were safe.

However, with civilians in tow—many of whom had never encountered such dangers before—they had to proceed with extreme caution, sticking closely together and taking each step deliberately. This slow, methodical approach significantly prolonged their retreat.

When they finally emerged from the treacherous path, the civilians let out heavy sighs of relief, many collapsing to the ground as fear and exhaustion caught up with them. Their bodies trembled from the sheer stress of the journey.

Only they knew how terrifying each step had been—how their hearts pounded so violently it felt like they might burst from their chests, how their palms and feet were slick with sweat, and how their legs threatened to buckle under the strain.

Every cautious step had felt like walking on the edge of disaster, and now that they were safe, the overwhelming tension left them drained.

Now that they were finally out of danger, every nerve in their bodies loosened with relief, leaving them feeling utterly boneless and weak as they slumped to the ground. Eagle let out a small chuckle as he scanned the exhausted group before speaking.

"You all did well," he said, his voice carrying both praise and reassurance.

His words brought a sense of accomplishment to the weary civilians, and a few managed to offer him grateful smiles despite their exhaustion.

However, while most were visibly relieved, Sparrow remained nonchalant—yet there was something off about him. His face was noticeably pale, a stark contrast to his usual composed demeanor.

Eagle's eyes narrowed in concern, his brows furrowing as he took a closer look.

'Something wasn't right.'

Without wasting any words, Eagle took the lead and guided everyone back to the base. The civilians were prioritized, boarding the three vehicles first, which required multiple trips—three in total—to transport everyone safely.

By the time the final group arrived and the last vehicle rolled through the vicinity of the base, the sun had already reached the other side of the horizon, casting the base in the soft glow of afternoon.

"Please lead them to the dormitory and help them get settled," Eagle instructed one of the Winters' men who had been stationed at the hidden base. "Make sure they're familiar with the layout—show them the cafeteria, shared dormitories, communal baths, and other essential areas."

Since the civilians were still under discreet surveillance, they would be housed in shared dormitories rather than having private rooms like Keith and the others. The monitoring had to be subtle, ensuring the newcomers remained unaware that their movements were being closely observed.

Usually, only high-ranking members like Duke, Eagle, Hawk, and Sparrow were granted private rooms. Those in lower ranks shared accommodations with others, while new recruits were placed in large communal dormitories that could house up to 50 people, offering little to no privacy.

But even so, no one minded being assigned to the lowest-tier facilities in the base. The civilians were simply grateful to have a safe place to stay, and that alone was enough to bring smiles to their faces.

Many bowed humbly to Sparrow, Eagle and the rest of the Winters, their gratitude evident in their expressions. Even the children, following the adults' example, bowed seriously, while some struggled to hold back their tears of relief.