

Apocalypse 706

Chapter 706 Duke's Toys

Sparrow, however, seemed completely unfazed. He grinned and responded matter-of-factly, "Well, like I said, Young Madam, they seem like capable fighters. The best way to find out was to send them somewhere challenging—to test their skills, gauge their usefulness, and see if they would still trust my words after everything."

"If they can survive and wait for our arrival, then we'll know they're truly strong enough to be part of our forces and someone who we could trust our backs with. After all, real soldiers and subordinates are supposed to follow their master's orders with one hundred and ten percent commitment."

He spoke with such pride, as if he had just made Kisha's job significantly easier.

Kisha wasn't sure whether to laugh or sigh in exasperation. On one hand, Sparrow was being thoughtful—helping her filter out unqualified recruits before they could join the base.

But on the other hand, she couldn't help but feel bad for those poor souls who had unknowingly walked into a potential death trap.

If they were weak, they wouldn't have stood a chance. They'd be dead the moment they let their guard down. And if they did survive only to realize that Sparrow had deliberately sent them into danger, they would likely abandon the place without hesitation.

So what was the point of her and her people going to the farm to check on them? If Sparrow's test had already driven them away or gotten them killed, what exactly was left for them to assess?

Wouldn't she just be wasting her time going there?

But then again, if those people had actually gone to the farm and waited for Sparrow and his team until the agreed timeframe, it would prove their seriousness about joining HOPE Base and following their leadership. It would also demonstrate their dedication and resolve—qualities that would make them valuable additions to their combat force.

With their non-combatant population steadily growing, they needed more fighters. The recent zombie wave had exposed just how lacking they were in combat personnel. Without her, Duke, and the other core members, Kisha was certain that HOPE Base would have been completely overrun.

'Wait, now that I think about it... if I hadn't doubled the number of combatants we trained from the start, wouldn't our last battle have been a losing one?' Kisha pondered, recalling her mission to prepare a specific number of warriors and make sure that they are ready for combat by the end of the month. That training was meant to prepare them for the zombie wave that had just occurred.

If she had strictly followed the system's recommended number of trained warriors, HOPE Base would have been overrun within the first five hours. They wouldn't have had enough forces to cover the other areas once the first group needed to recover and rest.

It felt as if increasing the number of trained warriors from 500 to 1,000 had also caused the mission's difficulty to double. That was her suspicion—and perhaps the reality.

If she had stuck to the original 500 warriors, considering how they had barely held out against the zombie wave for a full 24 hours, it would have been a massacre. Even with 1,000 warriors, they had still struggled.

Maybe she could have saved herself, her family, and a handful of people—but the entire base? That would have been impossible. No matter how strong she was, even with her strength amplified tenfold, she was still just one person. There was only so much she could do. In the end, the mission would have remained impossible.

Now that Sparrow had brought up the combatants again, Kisha realized she truly needed to increase the number of trained warriors—especially since she now had two territories to protect.

Thinking about it, she felt fortunate that the same catastrophe hadn't struck their hidden base in City A. If it had, she wasn't sure how she would have managed to handle it.

"Alright, let's go check them out—" Kisha started, but before she could finish, Duke suddenly pulled her along, heading in another direction.

Baffled, Kisha had no idea where he was taking her, but Sparrow and the others simply followed without question.

"Where are we going?" she asked, glancing up at Duke.

"Aren't we heading out?" Duke replied with a smirk. "And didn't I promise to show you my private collection hidden in the bunker? This is the perfect time for that. You can pick and choose whatever you like—or better yet, just take everything. Because what's mine is also yours."

His eyes gleamed with excitement, like a kid about to show off his most prized toys.

Kisha followed Duke through a series of hidden jungle paths, weaving through dense foliage and taking unexpected turns. After what felt like an elaborate detour, they finally arrived beneath the very building they were living in.

Duke stopped in front of a small, unassuming door and pushed it open, revealing a much larger, cave-like entrance beyond it. The massive door was reinforced with layers of security—retina scan, fingerprint scan, and even a voice recognition system.

"One missing step," Duke muttered as he stepped forward, "and this bunker stays sealed forever."

After Duke completed the security scans, he pushed open the bunker door—a massive, two-foot-thick slab of reinforced steel. Judging by its sheer density, it looked sturdy enough to withstand a bombing. The entire entrance was expertly concealed, making it nearly impossible to find unless you knew exactly where to look.

Stepping inside, they were greeted by a waiting elevator. Duke pressed the button for Underground Level 1, and as the lift descended, Kisha noticed there were at least four underground levels. The ride was smooth and eerily silent, and within moments, the doors slid open.

What lay beyond left Kisha momentarily speechless.

An expansive underground hangar stretched out before her, so vast she couldn't even see where it ended. Lining the space were high-tech helicopters, jets, armored cars, and military-grade trucks—each gleaming under the overhead lights, which flickered on in sequence, illuminating the massive chamber. The ceiling was several meters high, designed to accommodate even the largest aircraft with ease.

And that wasn't all. Scattered among the military vehicles were luxury sports cars, classic models that were no longer in production, and even a few rare, limited-edition vehicles—each meticulously preserved. The armored cars weren't just standard-issue; they were reinforced with titanium plating and heavy-duty bulletproof materials, making them nearly impenetrable.

After taking Kisha on a tour around the hangar, Duke pulled her along once more, leading her to Underground Level 2.

The moment the elevator doors opened, Kisha's breath hitched.

If she thought the weapons cache from the mountain farm was impressive, it paled in comparison to what lay before her now. Rows upon rows of high-grade, state-of-the-art weaponry lined the vast underground armory. Every firearm, explosive, and blade here wasn't just advanced—they were engineered for maximum efficiency and destruction. Some of these weapons were so lethal, Kisha was certain they could single-handedly wipe out entire squads in mere minutes.

It was no exaggeration to say that this collection was a menace to society, built for nothing less than total warfare.