

Apocalypse 72

Chapter 72 They Got Each Other's Back

Armed with a clear map, Sparrow navigated swiftly toward the second 'X' mark under the cover of darkness, moving with utmost stealth to avoid detection.

Despite the unexpected and unsettling encounters, Sparrow found solace in the silver lining—the valuable information he had gleaned. In retrospect, he deemed the temporary discomfort of witnessing such scenes a worthwhile trade-off for the insights gained. His elation was palpable, manifesting in an uncontrollable grin that adorned his face.

This newfound clarity eased his task, sparing him the arduous endeavor of blindly scouring the area for potential vantage points held by the enemy.

While the newfound clarity lessened the weight of pressure on Sparrow's shoulders, he remained vigilant, knowing all too well that appearances could be deceiving. It was entirely possible that what he had stumbled upon was merely a decoy, or that the lookout and snipers had relocated for reasons unknown.

Such uncertainties compelled him to maintain his guard, ever watchful for any unforeseen developments.

However, a thought struck Sparrow: the enemy likely possessed a radio. Realizing this, he decided to take a momentary break on one of the rooftops to replenish his energy reserves. Constantly utilizing his wind ability to navigate the rooftops had drained him of spiritual energy, necessitating a brief respite to regain his strength so this was just the perfect opportunity for him to snoop around.

As Sparrow rested, he retrieved the food he had intended to eat earlier and settled in. With a flick of a switch, he activated the radio, tuning in to listen for any chatter among the other lookout positions while he indulged in his meal.

As anticipated, the other lookout personnel grew weary during the long night of vigilance, prompting them to engage in casual conversation over the radio to stave off boredom.

"Looks like Johnson and Rick are still at it, huh?" One of the voices chuckled teasingly over the radio.

"Well, what do you expect when you've got two horny mutts in the same spot?" Another voice chimed in, dripping with disdain.

"Hey, lighten up. Being cooped up here without any female company is driving us all crazy," the other man remarked nonchalantly.

"Hmph! That's no excuse for fooling around with each other," came the retort.

"Hey, cut them some slack. Even I'm resorting to self-pleasure to keep sane. At least, they've got each other's backs," the other man chuckled, his laughter echoing through the radio.

Listening to their conversation, Sparrow couldn't shake the memory of what he had witnessed earlier. Suddenly, the food in his mouth seemed flavorless, almost like wax, and he lost his appetite instantly, though he managed to suppress any urge to retch.

After the hysterical laughter subsided on the other end of the radio, the man continued with a more serious tone. "But on a serious note, what do you reckon young master is scheming?"

Another voice interjected into the conversation. "What, you're getting cold feet? The Winters reign has come to a close. It's the Colton family's turn to ascend and steer us into a new era. Besides, who even remembers Duke Winters? For all we know, he's already been turned into one of those monsters," the voice declared with a tone of condescension that grated on Sparrow's nerves.

Nevertheless, he made a conscious effort to suppress his emotions, particularly now that he was beginning to grasp the bigger picture of what was unfolding.

"Enough with the speculation. Our duty is clear, and it's not our place to question our superiors or indulge in idle gossip," a stern voice interjected, cutting off any further discussion on the matter.

Sparrow found himself frustrated, having only gathered small clues. However, based on the conversation he overheard, he could already begin to piece together the puzzle. Yet, he couldn't recall any conflicts between his master and the Colton family, nor could he recall any disagreements between Duke and the Colton's young master that might have led to these events.

However, he couldn't shake off the suspicion that perhaps the Colton family sought to absorb the decades-long history and power of the Winters for themselves.

A mocking sneer curled on Sparrow's lips at the thought. "If my master isn't fit to guide humanity to safety, then who else could?" he mused to himself. "They're certainly overestimating their own abilities. Ha!"

"You guys better check on Johnson and Rick." the stern voice echoed through the radio once more. Sparrow was just about to switch it off when those words reached his ears, causing his heart to nearly leap out of his chest.

From their earlier conversation, Sparrow deduced that the Johnson and Rick they referred to were the same individuals he had encountered on the rooftop moments ago. With this realization, his mind kicked into overdrive, racing to concoct a plan to avoid raising suspicions among the other lookouts.

"Relax. Those two horndogs will be at it until dawn, so you might as well get some rest and not fret over them. They'll be fucking each other like rabbits all night long," the man chuckled once more before the radio fell silent again.

Observing the lack of further communication from the other end, Sparrow breathed a sigh of relief, though his heart continued to race. He found solace in the fact that the individuals on the other side were well-acquainted with the habits of those two men.

This familiarity spared him the need to expend energy concocting strategies to prevent arousing suspicion, allowing him to focus on the task at hand without unnecessary distractions.

After steadying his nerves and ensuring his safety, Sparrow opted to take a brief power nap while concealed. This decision granted him a respite from the constant worry of potential zombie attacks or the risk of detection by enemy forces seeking out infiltrators.

After half an hour had passed and a fraction of his energy and spiritual reserves had been replenished, Sparrow sprang back into action, resuming his scouting mission around the southeastern part of the western district.

Upon confirming the presence of a lookout at one of the 'X' marks on the map, Sparrow proceeded with assurance to verify the other designated locations. Carefully navigating his way around, he then stealthily infiltrated the marked circle, intent on uncovering the elusive hideout rumored to be hidden within its boundaries.

Given the size of the circle, Sparrow speculated that the ideal location for the hideout would be in the center. This strategic placement would afford them a considerable distance from any monitored exits or entrances, minimizing the risk of detection by the enemies. Furthermore, equipped with efficient communication devices, they could ensure prompt information relay without concern for delays.

Concerned about the possibility of the enemy employing detectors to monitor for unfamiliar devices and signal frequencies, Sparrow took precautionary measures. He opted to power off his own communication device, one utilized by him and his team, to err on the side of caution and minimize the risk of detection.

Luck was on Sparrow's side as he discovered that the enemy forces had indeed positioned their hideout at the center of the circle, providing optimal coverage. This became evident from the patrols conducting rounds on the rooftops and the strategically placed lights illuminating each street, making their presence somewhat conspicuous.

Their conspicuous presence made them easy for Sparrow to spot, but he didn't have the luxury of time to estimate their numbers. With only a handful of men on patrol and the likelihood of others resting indoors, conducting an accurate headcount proved to be a challenge.

Though tempted to infiltrate the hideout for additional intel on their plans, Sparrow hesitated, mindful of his mission parameters set by Kisha and Duke. They had tasked him solely with pinpointing the hideout's exact location, and he was reluctant to deviate and potentially jeopardize their strategy. With this in mind, he refrained from further action after confirming the markings on the map.

Opting to return to his group, Sparrow took advantage of the shroud of darkness enveloping the night. His movements went undetected as he skillfully navigated his way back, evading any suspicion as he lurked around the enemy base.