

Apocalypse 832

Chapter 832 A Little Break

After all, the more they used their spatial abilities, the more experience they gained—and with enough experience, there was a chance their ability would level up. If that happened, their storage space could increase drastically. That ability was their only value to the team: helping gather supplies from the outside world. They didn't want to lose their one clear purpose, so when Fred offered to bring them along on a mission, they didn't hesitate. They just nodded and agreed to go.

After finalizing their plans, the STAU members brought out food for everyone—a simple packed lunch from the cafeteria. They needed all the energy they could get, so they sat down to eat together. Even Jason and the others were given meals.

Since Rakan was stationed on the rooftop, Fred prepared a lunchbox for him. He carefully tied a cloth around it to prevent it from bursting open midair, then threw it up toward the roof. Rakan caught it effortlessly. The utensils were packed inside, and a bottle of cold drink was secured to the lunchbox with the same cloth.

Rakan settled at the edge of the rooftop, his feet dangling over the side as he ate. Meanwhile, Clyde and Reeve delivered food boxes to Rakan's subordinates, who were stationed at other entry points. Once done, they returned to join the rest of the group for their meal.

Jason and the others were slightly hesitant to accept the free meal. They had brought some biscuits and energy bars with them, but both he and Adam were reluctant to use their cured meat strips just yet. Since they were being escorted by superhumans, there was little need for them to fight. Their main task was to collect crystal cores from fallen zombies and finish off any that were still clinging to life.

Because they were handling the crystal core gathering, Fred and his team had agreed to give them 10% of the total collected. So, in reality, Jason and Adam's team weren't losing out. Still, they wanted to conserve as many supplies and crystal cores as possible. They also weren't sure if they'd have to pay for the lunchboxes.

Seeing their hesitation, Fred spoke up with a grin. "Don't worry, the lunch is on the house. It was prepared specifically for this mission. Just leave us a good rating later," he joked.

Jason and the others exchanged confused looks—they had no idea what Fred meant by "good rating."

What surprised them even more was that they had no idea where all the lunchboxes had come from—especially since the group hadn't brought many large bags. Sharp-witted as ever, Jason quickly guessed it might have something to do with the team's supernatural abilities. Deciding not to overthink it, they accepted the food and began eating so as not to waste too much time outside.

Before they dug in, however, Fred handed out bottles of water and liquid hand soap so everyone could clean their hands first. For awakened ability users like Fred's team, the risk of turning into zombies was virtually nonexistent—their energy cores offered strong protection. But for Jason, Adam, and the rest of their group, a single mistake—like accidentally ingesting infected blood—could be fatal. As regular humans, their immune systems weren't strong enough to resist the virus.

So, they carefully washed their hands and wiped them dry with clean cloths, making sure there was no blood, brain matter, or residue under their nails. After all, they were the ones handling the crystal cores and had direct contact with the zombies.

After washing their hands, they began to eat, but because of how delicious the meal was, some of them couldn't help but feel tears prick their eyes. Then suddenly...

Roar!

A guttural growl echoed from a corner, and an armless zombie shuffled into view. Its feet were twisted unnaturally, clearly sprained while it was still human, likely injured while trying to escape, only to be caught by the zombie after him. A massive bite mark marred the side of its neck, with a large chunk of flesh missing. Its stomach was clawed open, revealing organs exposed between wide, gaping wounds. At the other end, intestines dangled grotesquely from its side.

No matter how hard they tried to ignore it, the sight churned their stomachs. Despite the tempting meal in front of them, Jason and the others felt like vomiting.

Before anyone could react further, Rose abruptly flung out her hand. Slowly, a small ice crystal floating in the air began to grow, stretching and sharpening until it became a massive, gleaming 'Ice Crystal Spear'. Jason watched in awe as the spear grew larger and larger, then, without Rose touching it, it shot forward with tremendous force.

The spear struck the zombie's head with a sickening impact. Instead of collapsing to the ground, the zombie was pinned against the wall—impaled by the 'Ice Crystal Spear' through its skull. Its feet dangled lifelessly above the floor, and a few drops of black blood dripped down.

Jason and the others quickly turned away, not expecting to find a disgusting sight waiting for them.

It was one thing to see something like that when they weren't eating—but during a meal, it completely ruined their appetite. The once-delicious food now tasted like wax in their mouths, and they could no longer enjoy it.

Meanwhile, Rose, who had vented her annoyance on the zombie, calmly returned to her meal as if nothing had happened. The others were just as unfazed. Even the youngest, Clyde and Reeve, continued eating eagerly, never even lifting their heads during the commotion.

After all, scenes like this were nothing compared to what they'd witnessed under Kisha's command. Her way of fighting turned battlefields into meat grinders—quite literally. Torn limbs, shredded flesh, and scattered entrails decorated the ground like disgusting confetti, with zombie blood raining down from above. Compared to that, this lone zombie was practically harmless and more bearable.

So for Clyde and Reeve, there was nothing particularly disgusting about it—they simply kept eating.

Seeing how unaffected the others were, Jason and his team stayed quiet and forced themselves to eat, shoving down the food despite the queasy feeling in their stomachs. They tried to suppress the disgusting images in their minds, determined not to waste such a rare, hearty meal. After all, it wasn't every day they got to eat something this good.

Once they finished, the group began walking at a leisurely pace while Fred explained the route and briefed them on the mission plan, making sure everyone was on the same page. After about thirty minutes of walking and digesting, they resumed their journey—this time at a sprint.

For the next two and a half hours, they moved almost nonstop, aided by the stamina boosters. Adam and the others didn't know what the liquid was at first, but once they realized its effect, they were stunned. Their view of HOPE Base shifted completely. Clearly, the base was filled with all kinds of advanced resources—and now, more than ever, they felt lucky they hadn't completely offended Kisha the day before.

Thanks to the stamina boosters, they were able to maintain their pace until they reached a location just two streets away from their target—the car dealership building. But instead of continuing directly, they came to a stop at a tall building nearby, ready to regroup and prepare for the next step.