

Apocalypse 836

Chapter 836 - Hoarding Cars

The expensive-looking suit it wore suggested the zombie had once been a wealthy client, probably waiting here for paperwork to finish or perhaps placing an order for a custom car.

Now, that same client was partially buried under the rubble from the collapsed roof, arms flailing wildly, unable to move its lower half.

There were only three other zombies on the floor—two in black suits who looked like they had once been bodyguards, and one female staff member in an office uniform. The woman's scalp was half-detached, hanging grotesquely like a wig on the back of her head, exposing part of her skull beneath. She shuffled toward the rubble with one dragging foot, her milky eyes locking onto Fred, who was still peeking through the hole.

Her growls triggered the others, the bodyguard zombies turning with stiff, menacing movements. Meanwhile, the buried zombie swiped helplessly at the air, reaching up toward Fred with broken, bloodied fingers.

"The situation downstairs wasn't anything major," Fred said, tilting his head slightly before jumping down with his dagger in hand. When he landed, he drove the blade straight into the skull of a zombie trapped beneath the rubble. Rose and Evelyn followed immediately, swiftly killing the remaining undead around them.

Once the lounge was secured, the rest of the group jumped down from the rooftop. Instinctively, they began sweeping the area for supplies—weeks of survival had drilled the habit into them. Jason and a few others made their way to a small fridge and an adjacent pantry tucked into the lounge's corner.

Inside, they found a decent stockpile: stacks of Evian bottled water, rows of imported cookies and muffins, and a few pastries still within their shelf life. There was a loaf of bread, but it had already molded over, so they left it untouched. They hauled the usable supplies into a pile near the center of the room.

The fridge, though powerless, still had bottles of water and various drinks inside. Nearby, sacks of coffee beans and tins of loose-leaf tea caught Jason's eye. He hesitated. The beans and tea looked expensive, possibly rare, but they weren't essentials. Carrying them would only weigh them down.

Just as Jason was debating what to do, one of the STAU members entered the pantry. He then scanned the items silently. Before Jason could make up his mind, the sack of coffee and tea vanished before his eyes—whisked away by the STAU like he had read his indecision and resolved it for him.

Just as the STAU member was about to exit the pantry, something caught his attention—a large industrial coffee machine tucked into the corner. Not just one, but three of them, the kind typically found in busy coffee shops. Intrigued, the STAU turned and made his way out of the pantry, scanning the small bar area in the lounge.

There, he found another coffee machine—sleek, high-end, and clearly more luxurious than the ones inside. The shelves beneath held a collection of elegant coffee cups, fine tea sets, and various accessories.

The STAU's eyes lit up with excitement. With a single wave of his hand, everything vanished into his spatial storage—machines, cups, and all. Without pause, he returned to the pantry and lifted his hand again. In an instant, the room was spotless. The once-cluttered shelves were now pristine, and the remaining sack of coffee beans disappeared alongside the industrial machines.

Jason, who had been standing nearby, blinked in surprise. The entire stockpile—including the machines—was gone. One moment they were there; the next, they had been whisked away by the STAU without a trace.

He had already suspected that the STAU members were awakened ability users, just like Fred and the others, and that they might possess the ability to store items in a separate spatial dimension. But seeing it firsthand was a completely different experience. Watching supplies vanish into thin air right before his eyes left him stunned. It confirmed just how valuable these STAU members were, especially for supply-gathering missions. Jason couldn't help but look at the STAU with a sense of reverence as the person silently turned his back and rejoined the others.

At the center of the lounge, a collection of drinks—including Evian bottled water—and pantry items were neatly organized. Adam's team took 10% of the supplies, set aside another 10% for Jason and his group, and allocated the remaining 80% to Fred's team. Fred raised an eyebrow at the generous split but didn't reject their goodwill.

Adam and his team were doing this not only to show gratitude but also to build a bond with Fred's group, to demonstrate goodwill and their desire for a solid working relationship. More than that, Adam and the others were self-aware. They knew they wouldn't have made it this far without Fred's team, and in their eyes, the larger share was simply what Fred's team rightfully deserved.

When Fred gave a nod to the nearest STAU member, the entire portion of their supplies instantly vanished—swept into their space storage with a single gesture. Meanwhile, Adam and his group were still struggling to pack their portion manually into their heavy backpacks, watching in awe as Fred's team finished the process effortlessly in seconds.

With wide eyes, they stared up at the STAU member, then glanced over at Fred. Their expressions fluttered, mouths opening and closing like fish out of water, but no words came out. They didn't know what to say—or even what to feel. It seemed unfair somehow. Not only did these people have the power to fight off threats with their awakened abilities, but they could also gather and store supplies effortlessly, with a simple wave of the hand.

Still, deep down, Adam and the others understood something important: if they stuck close to these people, they might one day share in their strength, their resources, and their ease of survival. That hope, however faint, kept them moving forward.

After a brief moment of awe, envy, and quiet admiration, Adam and his team buried their feelings and got back to work. They had assumed that after witnessing awakened ability users for the first time yesterday, nothing else could surprise them, but the STAU members had just proved them wrong. Once again, they were left both amazed and slightly envious.

"Alright, everyone, get ready for action," Fred called out, his voice firm and steady. "We're leaving this safe zone and heading down to the warehouse to check out the vehicles there and also check out the showroom. We don't know what's waiting for us down there, so stay sharp. Stick together and don't wander off on your own—understood?"

As he spoke, Fred stepped toward the floor-to-ceiling window. He slipped two fingers into the edge of the shutter and pulled it back just enough to peek outside. His eyes narrowed at the sight: hordes of zombies aimlessly shuffling along the road, weaving between jammed cars and overturned trucks. The entire street was choked with wreckage and the undead.

There was no room for maneuvering—not on that road.

Fred let out a quiet sigh of relief, grateful they had made the right decision by choosing an alternate path. He was especially glad he had listened to Clyde's suggestion without letting pride get in the way—he didn't feel threatened or overruled just because a younger team member had voiced a better idea.

Had they forced their way in through the main road, they would have been overrun by the zombie horde with little room to maneuver, and the outcome would have been disastrous.

Now, their priority was to ensure the zombies remained unaware of their presence. The car dealership's showroom was lined with glass panels, meaning the entire front of the building was exposed. If that massive horde spotted them and charged all at once, no matter how reinforced the glass was, it wouldn't withstand the force of a hundred zombies crashing against it.

After Fred made his stance clear and saw everyone nod in understanding, the group set out. Their formation remained the same—protecting the regular humans in the middle—but this time, Fred and Evelyn moved slightly ahead to clear the path. They wanted to secure the area as they advanced, ensuring they wouldn't be boxed in by zombies from multiple directions. By sweeping and securing the building room by room, they'd have a clear escape route back to this floor if things went south later on.

Clyde and Reeve guarded the front of the formation, shielding the civilians, while Rose remained at the rear to cover them from behind. As they exited the room, Evelyn was the first to charge forward, her body encased in gleaming metal, hands already morphed into deadly blades. Fred followed a step behind, dagger in hand.

The hallway door opened, revealing five zombies shambling nearby. The undead turned at the sound and began staggering toward them. Evelyn moved like lightning—cutting down three zombies in an instant with swift, precise strikes. A fourth lunged at Fred, but he deflected its reaching arm and drove his dagger into its temple. As the final zombie stumbled toward him, Fred kicked its leg out from under it, sending it sprawling. Before it could crawl closer and bite him, he swiftly plunged his blade into its skull.