

Apocalypse 905

Chapter 905 Survivors

After Fred nodded, he and his team stayed behind to guard the door. Meanwhile, Sparrow and the rest of the group moved cautiously inside, now on full alert. The fact that the door was locked from the inside could only mean two things: either some survivors had barricaded themselves in and were waiting for rescue, relying on the supplies within, or a group had claimed the supermarket as their base.

Either scenario meant potential danger, and Sparrow knew they couldn't afford to let their guard down. Leading the group, he decided to switch off their flashlights to avoid drawing attention; the flashlights offered limited visibility anyway and would only alert anyone lurking inside.

Instead, Sparrow signaled for the Space-Type Ability Users (STAU) to come over.

With a quick hand signal, Sparrow instructed the STAU to take out the night vision goggles stored in the corner of their Space. Understanding immediately, the STAU retrieved over a dozen goggles and distributed them to the team.

Once everyone had their gear on, they turned off their flashlights and handed them back to the STAU.

Sparrow then resumed the lead, with Vulture right behind him. The back area of the supermarket was even darker than the main floor, and almost no light made it through.

Thankfully, with the night vision goggles, they were able to navigate the pitch-black interior without difficulty. Without them, moving through this part of the building would've been nearly impossible.

So instead of Sparrow taking the lead this time, it was Vulture at the front, his entire body encased in sturdy earth armor. Sparrow followed closely behind him, with the rest of the team trailing in tight formation.

They kept no more than a foot of distance between each other, making sure no one would be picked off or fall out of line, especially in case a mutated zombie lurked in the shadows, waiting for a chance to strike.

If they were suddenly attacked, the close formation would allow them to push those in the line of fire to safety and duck down together as one. Sparrow was determined to protect his people; he refused to return to base bearing grim news or unnecessary losses.

And so, they moved cautiously and stayed on high alert as they made their way toward the warehouse behind the supermarket. Before reaching it, they had to pass through a long hallway cluttered with large pushcarts used for restocking the shelves, along with ladders and other scattered equipment. Each step was taken with care, mindful not to make a sound.

Fortunately, the path remained clear, and no threats appeared until they finally reached the warehouse door, only to find it securely locked. Evelyn, who was positioned in the middle of the group, stepped forward and used her metal manipulation ability to unlock the metal bolt with ease.

As soon as the lock clicked open, Vulture cautiously slipped through the door first, leaving Sparrow and the others waiting just outside. Even without entering, a pungent stench wafted from within, making everyone instinctively tense up.

But not long after, Vulture's voice echoed from within the warehouse. "Sparrow... I think you need to see this," he called out, his tone uncertain and slightly awkward.

Without delay, Sparrow stepped through the door, leaving the others behind. The intense, pungent stench hit him square in the face, making him grimace. But it wasn't just the smell, light poured into the warehouse, momentarily blinding him through his night goggles. He had no choice but to remove them.

Inside the supermarket, it had been pitch black, windowless, and cut off from the sun, making the hallway as dark as the night. But the warehouse was different.

It had large windows positioned high on the third floor to allow natural light and ventilation. Since it was still early in the day, sunlight flooded the room.

Now that he could see clearly, Sparrow realized the reason Vulture had called him over wasn't the light; it was the people. Dozens of survivors huddled together, looking like beggars. They were covered in layers of grime and filth, their clothes ragged and their eyes weary.

Though the warehouse was stocked with supplies, one thing they lacked was water, especially for cleaning. None of them dared to waste drinking water to wash themselves, unsure when help would arrive. They had endured in silence, surviving—but just barely.

"Are you here to rescue us?" one of the men asked, stepping forward to face Sparrow and Vulture. He appeared to be the leader of the group, and like the others, he held a crowbar, just one of the many tools they had scavenged from the warehouse for defense.

At his question, the tension in the air shifted. The survivors, who had been clutching their makeshift weapons with wary eyes, began to relax. Slowly, cautiously, they lowered their arms, all eyes now fixed on Sparrow.

Despite Vulture's unusual appearance, his body encased in armor that made him look like a man sculpted from earth, his exposed face revealed his humanity. And while he drew curious glances, it was Sparrow who truly caught their attention. With his tactical gear and night goggles, he looked every bit like a soldier from a government rescue team.

That glimpse of hope, the idea that rescue had finally come, sparked something in the weary survivors. For the first time in a long while, their expressions lit up with anticipation, and a wave of excitement rippled through the group as they awaited Sparrow's response.

"Are you really here to rescue us?" another person asked, their voice trembling with emotion. Many of them looked like they were on the verge of tears, overwhelmed by the sudden rush of hope.

They had been trapped inside the supermarket for what felt like an eternity, over two months in total. With no electricity and hordes of zombies roaming outside, they hadn't dared to leave. Time had blurred together, and they had long lost track of the days.

Fortunately, they had taken shelter inside the warehouse, where supplies were plentiful enough to keep them from starving. But even with food, their minds were slowly unraveling, tormented by fear, uncertainty, and the gnawing worry about their families and whether this nightmare would ever end.

Cut off from the outside world, they hadn't heard any news. Occasionally, someone would try to sneak a look beyond the warehouse, only to be driven back by the horrifying sight of the zombies that devoured their coworkers and shoppers.

Sometimes, they witnessed other survivors looting the supermarket, but when they tried to make their presence known, they were met with brutal violence, people fighting to the death over supplies, showing no mercy.

After that, they became even more cautious, even more afraid. Survival came at the cost of silence. But now... seeing Sparrow and Vulture standing before them, something flickered in their eyes.

Hope.

Even if they didn't trust other survivors, they still believed the government would come to rescue them, so they waited, and waited, inside the warehouse.

Over time, many groups had come and gone, looting what they could from the supermarket. But the survivors who looted the supermarket early on never returned. Perhaps they died out there, or maybe they found a safer place to live.

After all, if they had known there were still untouched supplies in this supermarket, they would've come back, ransacked the place, and taken every last item for their own shelter. But no one ever did.

Maybe those people never made it back. Maybe they were all gone.

And so, the survivors hiding in the warehouse never saw another human again. But despite the silence, the fear never left them. The terror of what lurked beyond those walls kept them paralyzed, too afraid to leave, too unsure of what waited on the other side.

Seeing the hope in their eyes, but also the fear in their actions, Sparrow didn't hesitate to crush their expectations. He wasn't a saint, and he wasn't there to save everyone. He couldn't afford to bring people who might only slow down the mission or become dead weight.

In this world, survival had to be earned, not handed out. People needed to learn to fight for themselves instead of placing all their hopes in the hands of others, because in the worst cases, it wasn't just death waiting for them, but exploitation by those willing to use the desperate for their own gain.

So Sparrow spoke plainly, his voice calm but firm. "No, we're not from the government, and we're definitely not here to rescue anyone. We're just here to gather supplies."

"If you're still waiting for the government to come save you, I suggest you stop. That system fell apart a long time ago. Society has crumbled. The world outside is in chaos. The zombies have overrun most of the country, and more than half of humanity has already turned. There are only a handful of bases and shelters left, still fighting to survive."

He gave a casual shrug, as if what he said was just a matter of fact, not something that had just crushed the last hope of the desperate people in front of him.

"Then... what about my family?!" one of the men suddenly screamed, breaking down as tears spilled from his eyes.