

God of Blackfield

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The scorching heat and dust particles penetrated the barracks.

“We’ll be neutralizing the leader of SISS, a group of Sunni Muslims. We have a total of five units and forty-nine men, including us, and the enemies are individually armed. They have an estimated force between 350 and 500.”

Commander Sharlan explained today’s operation while pointing at the map with his baton.

“What did he say?” Dayeru asked. The Algerian’s command of French was lacking, so his question came in English, which he knew a bit better.

“Be quiet.” Kang Chan immediately cut him off with a curt response.

“The 3rd unit will be in charge of clearing the way and covering us. Bear this in mind—the only target is the enemy leader, Masallan. Once the target has been neutralized, break contact. Ignore all remaining hostiles.”

“Channy?”

“Tsk.”

Kang Chan lifted his hand, acting as though he was about to hit Dayeru.

Dayeru ducked and rolled his big eyes.

“Departure in 30 minutes. Any questions? Yes, Kang Chan?”

As soon as he was done speaking, Sharlan gestured to Kang Chan with his chin. All eyes focused on Kang Chan.

“Is the pullback time the same as before?” Kang Chan asked in fluent French.

Sharlan nodded without hesitation.

That marked the end of the operational briefing. There was half an hour left before departure; that was enough for them to check their equipment and smoke a cigarette.

“Channy!”

Dayeru’s arms, coming out of his sleeveless shirt, were as thick as Kang Chan’s thighs. He was a bald Algerian-born man with big eyes. Due to his dark complexion, his eyes and white teeth shone particularly brightly.

When Dayeru got angry, his better judgment would go down the drain. Because of that personality trait, he was an absolute sore loser. Even then, he had nothing on Kang Chan, the unit captain. That was because Kang Chan was more venomous than him.

“Daye!”

“Yes.”

“Kill. And fall back when I tell you to. Got it? Kill! I’ll signal! Fall back! Understood?”

“Okay!”

In dozens of battles together, large and small, Dayeru had only followed Kang Chan. Since Dayeru couldn’t understand the fast-paced instructions in French flowing out of the walkie-talkie, Kang Chan’s clear and simple explanations and instructions were his only lifeline.

Chi-ik!

“It’s time to go.”

Kang Chan got up as soon as he heard the squad leader’s order, and the members of his unit followed suit. Each unit was supposed to have twelve people; Kang Chan’s had a Korean captain—himself, three Algerians, one Australian, two Americans, and two French soldiers, so he was missing three.

The official language used was French, and even though language proficiency was the most important test, Kang Chan had insisted on passing Dayeru and ultimately bringing him to Africa.

African winds were dry and hot. When one inhaled, it felt as though the heat would melt the insides of their noses and lungs, so covering their noses and mouths with mufflers felt cooling instead.

With about 20 minutes left before they got to their destination, Kang Chan took a cigarette out of his pocket and put it in his mouth.

Clank. Tch. Tch. Tch-it.

The gasoline in Zippo lighters often evaporated on a hot day, so people often ended up getting burned, and there were cases where pockets would catch on fire because of fiber friction. Thus, in places like these, the Zippo lighter fluid was mixed with kerosene. It was harder to light them, but in any case, it was better than running out of lighter fluid and not being able to use them at all.

“Hoo.” Kang Chan thoroughly exhaled the cigarette smoke.

‘2007.’

Whenever he went to combat, he didn’t want to get into the habit of counting the days, so he deliberately recalled the year, over and over again. It had started off as a promise to himself that he wouldn’t become someone that lived from day to day, but it had now become a habit.

“Captain.”

“What?”

Kang Chan was so accustomed to speaking Korean that unless it was under special circumstances, he would speak in Korean. And strangely enough, the emotions were accurately conveyed in urgent moments.

“Harem tonight, okay?”

“Nokay!”

Smithen was an ignorant American. He would always talk about his dream of marrying a pretty French lady, building a ranch and vineyard, and starting up his own winery. However, none of his comrades believed he could make that dream come true. His flaw was that he liked women too much, and his merit was that his comrades could rest comfortably during the time he went out to look for women.

“Stop!”

Hearing Kang Chan mumbling that word to himself, all the members of his unit stopped moving, like they were frozen solid.

It was a grassland. There was still some time left before the dry season, so there were still some bushes here and there.

Kang Chan threw his cigarette on the ground and stepped on it as he quickly scanned the surroundings.

‘What is this feeling?’

The most indisputable reason why Kang Chan had been able to survive in this brutal land thus far, as well as the reason why the members of his unit believed in his words rather than weapons, was his sixth sense—the foreboding sensation he was experiencing right now.

2km to the destination.

The members of his unit were frantically scanning the area, trying their best to find the cause behind Kang Chan's reaction.

“Hey, Malkov!”

Kang Chan faced Malkov and pointed his index and middle fingers at his own eyes before gesturing towards his 10 o'clock and 2 o'clock with his fingers. He was telling Malkov to look in those directions with his binoculars.

“No, Channy.” Malkov shook his head.

“What?”

If any of the soldiers didn't participate in an operation without providing a specific reason, they'd be deported if they were lucky, and if they were unlucky, the death penalty was a possibility as well.

Thump. Thump.

But what on earth was making him feel so uneasy that his heart was pounding?

Kang Chan took a deep breath. He put his index and middle fingers together, and designated each and every one of their positions, starting from the left. The members moved swiftly after seeing his gestures as if already engaging the enemy.

Pow! Pow! Pow!

Like a scene from a movie, even Smithen ran and jumped behind a relatively barren tree that exposed pretty much everything behind it.

'That bastard!'

Seeing the dust behind Smithen rise like a flare, Kang Chan inhaled twice to suppress his murderous intent. Now, all that was left was Dayeru.

“Daye.”

Because the letters at the end of Dayeru's name made it sound Japanese, Kang Chan had started calling him 'Daye' for short, and at some point, the rest of the members had

also started calling him by the same nickname. Dayeru rushed over to Kang Chan, wobbling left and right.

Kang Chan's eyes were glistening, lighting his sun-scorched face. He was an Asian man with a slender face and big eyes, as well as a slim build. More than one or two people had ended up wrecked because they had misjudged his abilities. Of course, as rumors about him spread, nobody picked a fight with him anymore.

"Kill on sight," Kang Chan said.

"On sight?"

The words 'kill on sight' had actually come out of Kang Chan's mouth. Needless to say, he had said it in Korean.

Dayeru had spent the last five years together with Kang Chan, and since it was only the seventh time he had heard those words, it meant that today was truly going to be a tough day.

He nodded and thought about how Koreans were extremely ruthless. His understanding of the words 'on sight' was that he had to kill absolutely *everyone*. What kind of people lived by such a principle?

"Why aren't you moving?"

Dayeru bolted for the position he was assigned to.

"Hmm."

Kang Chan got the eight members of his unit to spread out in a semicircular formation, with Dayeru in the center, and he squatted behind the latter.

'Since we're screwed either way, might as well not regret it.'

It was a thought that surfaced as he wondered if he had made the right choice just now. In any case, deportation was almost guaranteed because of the contributions they had made in the past. It was better to be discharged than to get all his men killed in this damned land.

Initially, Kang Chan had thought his premonitions coming true was mere coincidence. However, he had changed his mind after ignoring them and coming face to face with death as a result. The loss of a few comrades had been very effective in convincing him to trust his sixth sense.

Pew! Pew! Pew! Pew!

At that moment, sharp sounds of something cutting through the air could be heard.

“Channy!”

Malkov flung his binoculars down onto the ground and called out to Kang Chan. The latter had already seen it too.

Almost all of their allies walking around had been gunned down by a sniper.

“Fuck.”

It was a trap. They had completely fallen into it.

“Which bastard?!”

If that was the case, the information must have been leaked from an inside source. Kang Chan quickly turned around and looked behind. The enemy was approaching them from afar. They were being surrounded, as though they were fish dragged in by a net.

“Listen up!” Kang Chan always spoke in Korean at times like these.

“Kill on sight!” Kang Chan glanced at his comrades. “Retreat to Alpha Kilo! Do-you-copy? Retreat to Alpha Kilo!”

It was a safe location Kang Chan had designated before their departure. Kang Chan had been doing this ever since he was appointed as captain, so naturally, the headquarters didn’t know about the place. They were just mercenaries, and if they missed their opportunity to retreat, then no one would rescue them.

Hence, Kang Chan always designated a separate place and waited there, before joining his men separately. That was the reason why he was still only a captain of a unit even after all his great contributions, as well as the reason why his unit listened to his orders, even if that meant risking their lives.

“Channy!”

When Kang Chan turned his head around, he saw Dayeru’s eyes glistening with a murderous look.

“Nokay, today?”

“Kill them all!”

Dayeru opened his mouth wide, baring his white teeth. It meant that he understood why Kang Chan would go to such lengths.

Kang Chan quickly looked away. They were so close to the enemy that all it took was ten more steps for them to be able to distinguish the enemy's faces. They were Sunnites without a doubt, as they covered their faces with a headscarf and wrapped the end of their turban around their chin from left to right.

"Mont!"

Kang Chan put two of his fingers together and pointed towards his 11 o'clock as he yelled. The Frenchman's name was too long to be called out in full during combat; hence, Kang Chan called him 'Mont' for short. As soon as he pointed at the enemy carrying an anti-tank RPG, their excellent sniper, Montechelle, aimed his rifle perfectly.

Taaahng!

"Hey! Can't you shoot properly!"

"Je suis desolé!"

Clank. Taahng!

As dust rose in the air, the enemy holding the grenade launcher was sprawled out on the ground. At the same time, dirt splattered from under Kang Chan's feet. Kang Chan quickly picked up his gun and pulled the trigger.

Taahng!

The familiar smell of gunpowder penetrated his nose and his target immediately collapsed to the ground.

Tatatatatatahng!

All kinds of gunshots sounded off at the same time, making his ears go numb.

'500 people.'

Taahng!

Every time he pulled the trigger, enemies would collapse one by one.

'We have enough bullets.'

Kang Chan rolled over onto his back and raised only his upper body.

"Mont!"

He raised his left index finger and wrapped it around three fingers on his right hand. The tactic was ridiculously simple—the three of them would cover and protect the sniper, Montechelle. If somebody were to die, they'd put his gun down, prop the body up, and use it as a cover.

Rolling back onto his stomach, Kang Chan continuously pulled the trigger.

Taahng! Taahng! Taahng!

The gunshots in this damned land sounded like crap.

Kang Chan pulled the trigger as fast as possible. His heart was still pounding hard, something felt off.

“Fuck!”

An instant later, he heard Smithen's yell. Right now, however, there was no time for him to turn around to take a look. His job was to watch over his comrade next to him. Each had to kill even one more person before all their enemies got to the ground and took cover.

Monteschelle aimed for the heads of those with heavy firearms and those lying prone, while the other members of their unit killed those that came close.

70m.

Taahng! Taaahng! Taaahng!

Kang Chan heard some chatter on the other side, then the enemy laid prone and ceased advancing. Kang Chan finally let his gun's muzzle down and crawled over to Smithen, staying as close to the ground as possible.

“Shit! Does it hurt?”

Smithen gasped for breath and looked at Kang Chan. The other Algerian, Absala, was pressing hard against the right side of Smithen's abdomen, but red blood was oozing out through the spaces between his fingers.

“Do you need morphine?”

“No morphine, Channy. *Huff huff.*”

If the entrance wound in his abdomen was that bad, then the exit wound had to be the size of a palm, which meant the bullet had basically ripped out his internal organs.

Kang Chan looked at their surroundings once again, thinking about how he had to find a way to stop Smithen from bleeding out.

“Channy.”

When Kang Chan turned his head around, Smithen looked at him with an utterly naive gaze, trying his best to cling to a small sliver of hope.

“Am I okay?”

“You fool. Who am I? Smithen. Who. Am. I?!”

Smithen smiled widely.

“God. Of. *Huff huff!*? Blackfield. *Huff! Hu...*” He barely finished his words before taking a deep breath.

Absala looked up at Kang Chan.

I know. He doesn't have much time left.?

Krrrrrrreung!!!

At that moment, a loud mechanical roar resounded in their vicinity.

'They even have a tank?'

But his heart was still pounding hard. In other words, more danger lurked around the corner. It was now time for him to make a decision.

'We'll charge straight ahead.'

Kang Chan was ready to go to the enemy's base, where their leader was hiding. As he was about to explain the situation to his men...

Thud!

A dull sound was heard, and the entire world turned white.

'Shit...'

It hurt so much that it felt as though his head and neck were being ripped apart.

A bright light pierced his eyes.

The back of his head and neck hurt as if they had been broken, and he had lost all his strength as if a vacuum cleaner had sucked it out of his entire body.

'I'm not dead?'

He tried to open his eyes, but he couldn't even lift a finger.

'Water...water.'

He was thirsty. His throat was so dry, like a dried-up rice paddy during a drought, that he couldn't speak properly.

"Doctor, over here!"

'I'm asking for water...'

Beep. Beep. Beep. Beep.

The machine started beeping. He could feel somebody pulling his eyelids open, but all he could see was white light.

'I'm asking for water.'

"Can you hear me? Blink if you can hear me."

'You dumb ass. I can only blink if you don't let go of your hand.'

This time around, he felt somebody grabbing his hand.

"Try clenching your hand."

Kang Chan wanted to drink water so badly that he tried his best to move his hand.

"Good! Very good!"

He could hear people constantly talking about something being good, but nobody actually gave him any water.

'Waaater.'

As though he was falling asleep once again, Kang Chan lost consciousness.

1. The actual word used here is ???, meaning "unconditionally", but it doesn't quite work in this context in English, so we used an equivalent

2. Rocket-propelled grenade, a shoulder-launched missile most commonly used against armored vehicles

3. 'I'm sorry' in French.