

Blackfield 111

Chapter 111: Where is He Right Now? (2)

“Can you make me a passport that matches the ID you gave me a while ago?” Kang Chan asked.

The room’s atmosphere was heavy.

Kang Chan didn’t look away from Kim Hyung-Jung even as he was wiping his hand with the tissue that Seok Kang-Ho had handed to him.

“You’re drawing international attention because of this event, and there’s also intel that you’re a secret agent that Ambassador Lanok and South Korea have raised, so the United States will be on high alert and closely monitor you the moment you enter their country.” Kim Hyung-Jung sighed deeply, then continued, “The people responsible for the attack are National Assembly Chairman Huh Ha-Soo, Chairperson Huh Sang-Soo, assistant Kwak Do-Young, and Yang Jin-Woo. Yang Jin-Woo is in the United States, and the other three are in China. I’ll create a plan that would make them all go to South Korea.”

“What about Lee Ji-Yeon’s killer? I heard that two of Yang Jin-Woo’s private organizations are still around,” Kang Chan asked again.

Kim Hyung-Jung picked up a cigarette. “That’s currently under investigation.”

Kang Chan calmed down a little bit, but his eyes still glinted.

“We will give Lee Ji-Yeon’s hospitalized mother the full support that the country can provide her, so let’s suppress our anger a little until we can drag Yang Jin-Woo and Huh Ha-Soo here,” Kim Hyung-Jung said.

“Have you thought of a way?”

“We’re still looking into it from multiple angles.”

Having seen Kim Hyung-Jung’s will, Kang Chan didn’t complain. They were in a difficult situation, after all.

“Right! I left my phone in the hotel, but I came here because of the accident,” Kang Chan said.

“It will be there as you left it because the guest rooms are being restricted to preserve evidence. We’ll bring it over to you as soon as possible. Mr. Seok Kang-Ho’s phone will be there as well, right?”

“Yes.”

Kim Hyung-Jung looked at Kang Chan after exhaling smoke. “The Director and the Chief Officer of Security are also waiting for a chance to catch them. The problem is the diplomatic pressure from China and the United States, but we’re also determined to cope with that.”

“Why would China and the United States pressure us?” Seok Kang-Ho suddenly butted in.

“Yang Jin-Woo has American nationality, and Huh Sang-Soo is Chinese. South Korean citizenship always automatically disappears if people acquire citizenship from a foreign country, but we believe China gave him citizenship secretly.”

“So you’re saying that one of the National Assembly members is Chinese?” Seok Kang-Ho asked again.

“That’s correct.”

Seok Kang-Ho’s expression crumpled. “The man who has American citizenship despite earning all of his salary in South Korea is already a problem, but now we also have to worry about a politician fucker with Chinese citizenship.”

“They acquire South Korean nationality if they win in the election. Checking if they have another nationality is difficult since they don’t report it and revealing it would cause problems every time a legislative bill is passed, so we have just been leaving it alone and moving on while pretending not to notice.”

“I’ve noticed that these fuckers are patriots loyal to the United States and China,” Seok Kang-Ho commented.

Kang Chan laughed in a silly way, but he didn’t have anything else to say.

“If needed, we’re considering making them go to Southeast Asia. That would make it easier to do an operation because the influences of China and the United States aren’t immediately effective over there,” Kim Hyung-Jung added.

“Please have the section chief take care of that,” Kang Chan said.

“Alright.”

At lunch, the three ordered galbi-tang, but it tasted mediocre.

After eating, Kim Hyung-Jung soon stood up and left.

“What did you tell your family?” Kang Chan asked Seok Kang-Ho.

“I said that I’m on a business trip.”

“They believe that a teacher goes on business trips?”

“I’m usually very well-behaved, and the National Intelligence Service is paying me close to ten million won as my salary, so they repeatedly told me to take care of myself. Phuhu.”

Lanok’s assistant entered the room and urgently approached the desk. “We heard that the DGSE has killed two Serpent Venimeux underbosses.”

Lanok covered the document he was looking at and sat up straight. “We won’t compromise until they give us the information that I want. Kill their leader quickly as well. We have to use this opportunity to make the Serpent Venimeux bow down to us.”

“I’ll tell them that.”

“How’s Louis?” Lanok asked.

“I heard he’ll be discharged in a week, but...”

“Is Anne with him?”

“That’s correct.”

“That’s not a bad thing.” Lanok smiled a bit as he put his pen on top of the desk, disappointment flashing across his face.

“Track down WooYang Jeon-Woo[1], Huh Ha-Soo, and Huh Sang-Soo. Afterward, report to me about the movements of China, the United States, and the U.K. or whenever a Serpent Venimeux is killed.”

“Understood.”

When the assistant left the room, Lanok exhaled loudly.

“I introduced a tiger, but you got your heart stolen by a wolf[2],” Lanok spoke to himself. He shook his head slightly, then laid out the document again.

Rattle.

While Kang Chan was having small talk with Seok Kang-Ho, four men in black suits entered the room.

Although they were Asians, they looked like Europeans. They also had a tattoo on their left thumb.

After Kang Chan broke the arm of a man in the Namsan Hotel a while ago, the man told him that a total of five people came into the country. The other four men were now in front of him.

Kang Chan, who was sitting on the chair in front of the bed with Seok Kang-Ho, smirked. In response, the man standing at the front raised his hands and showed his palms.

“We don’t want any misunderstandings,” the man spoke in Korean.

“Tell me what you want,” Kang Chan said.

“Is it alright if we take a seat?”

Kang Chan nodded, and the man brought over a chair and sat across from Kang Chan.

The other three men stood with their hands clasped in front of them in front of the door.

“I’m Xavier. Can we smoke here?”

“Tell those men behind you to make coffee so we can all have a cup,” Kang Chan said.

When Xavier turned his head and issued an order, one of them immediately walked toward the water heater. However, he hesitated.

“Pour out all of the coffee bits in the bag into the cup,” Kang Chan told him in French, and the man finally started to make coffee properly.

The three men bit on a cigarette that Seok Kang-Ho had handed over.

“We have a favor to ask you,” Xavier said.

One of the subordinates awkwardly put the coffee down, then walked toward the door.

Ask me a favor? Are these fuckers out of their minds?

Kang Chan stole a glance at Xavier and the three men standing at the back.

“Lanok has ordered his men to kill all of the heads of the Serpent Venimeux. They have taken down two underbosses and five regional executives already. Our leader hopes that the God of Blackfield will arbitrate this issue,” Xavier continued.

This was Kang Chan’s first time hearing this.

“At this rate, we will also lay everything in our organization on the line and start assassinating Lanok and those around him,” Xavier added.

After sipping on his coffee, Kang Chan smirked. “Xavier, I have neither the power nor the desire to tell Lanok what to do, so drink your coffee and leave.”

However, Xavier, who was looking at the paper cup that Kang Chan had put down, didn’t back off.

“There will be a reward for arbitrating this. Please say what the God of Blackfield wants.”

“I don’t want anything. Your relationship with me ended with you doing business with Yang Jin-Woo.”

“What if we catch Yang Jin-Woo for you?”

What’s he saying?

Kang Chan blankly stared at Xavier due to the unexpected offer.

“One of Yang Jin-Woo’s sons is in France, and his daughter and his other sons are in the United States. We’ll kill them, their spouses, and their children, and we’ll catch Yang Jin-Woo. How does that sound?” Xavier continued.

It was a shocking condition, but it was difficult to willingly accept it.

Kang Chan took out another cigarette.

“Yang Jin-Woo also fooled us. If we kill his children and spread rumors, Yang Jin-Woo will inevitably run away to South Korea. When he does, we’ll catch him. However, in return, we ask that you arbitrate so we can establish friendly relations with Lanok.”

Chk chk.

Kang Chan thought about it while lighting up his cigarette.

Lanok wasn’t simple-minded. He even ordered his men to kill all of the Serpent Venimeux executives just because they sold weapons.

“Why is Lanok attacking you guys?” Kang Chan asked.

“We don’t exactly know why either. It would be best to meet Lanok and find out what he wants.”

The fucker had great Korean pronunciation, but the way he spoke was so awkward.

Kang Chan suddenly thought of the man whose arm he broke. “Why are you still in South Korea? Were you the ones who killed Lee Ji-Yeon?”

The moment Kang Chan’s eyes glinted, Seok Kang-Ho straightened his back and frowned.

“That wasn’t us. We’re still here to...” Xavier urgently responded to Kang Chan, “Receive the data that Yang Jin-Woo was supposed to give us.”

Xavier hesitated for a moment when the look in Kang Chan’s eyes didn’t change. “Huh Sang-Soo is a member of the National Assembly that’s in charge of national defense, so Yang Jin-Woo was supposed to get information about the arrangement of the South Korean military from Huh Sang-Soo and relay it to us.”

“Is that what Yang Jin-Woo deceived you all about?”

“That’s the biggest matter.”

“Sons of bitches,” Seok Kang-Ho took out a cigarette while swearing.

“How do I contact you?” Kang Chan asked again.

“We’ll give you our phone number before we go.”

“Alright. Now leave.”

“We ask that you take care of this quickly.”

When Kang Chan glared at him sharply, Xavier quickly placed his business card on the table and stood up.

Tsk!

“Ugh! Why did those fuckers work with those kinds of gangsters? Didn’t they have anyone else to work with? Is it possible for the National Intelligence Service to not know about this?” Seok Kang-Ho asked.

“Tell me about it.”

“Manager Kim said he’s coming later, so let’s ask him then. Unfortunately, of all things, both of us left our phones at the hotel.”

Things were a bit chaotic, but Kang Chan didn’t want to butt into this kind of fight.

Having left the hospital, Xavier called someone while getting in the car.

“I have just finished meeting with Kang Chan. I don’t know how it’ll go since it seems like he doesn’t like us very much.”

- You have to hurry. Lanok is already full of spite, and our organization is faltering because of that crazy fucker Yang Jin-Woo. Lanok ordering the DGSE to kill us is surprising, but nobody complaining about his order is even more so. He has some kind of power that we’re not aware of. Anyway, we’ll start by hanging the necks of Yang Jin-Woo’s son, his wife, and his child at the apartment back in France. Use that in the negotiation.

“Understood.”

- Don’t go against the God of Blackfield. He’s the key. Don’t forget about the meaning behind the smile Lanok showed on TV and the time that his daughter started to act when she met the God of Blackfield. Hurry.

“I won’t let my guard down.”

- You know why I’m insisting on sending you, my adopted son, to South Korea right?

“That’s right.”

After Xavier ended the call, he put his phone in his inner chest pocket.

“Where is that stupid fucker Philip?” Xavier asked someone.

“We have him in a hotel on the outskirts of Seoul.”

“He’s no better than trash. His arm broke as soon as he came to South Korea, and he couldn’t even fulfill one mission. Slit his neck open today and bury him near the hotel.”

“Understood.”

Xavier tightly gritted his teeth, then looked outside the window.

Rattle.

Seok Kang-Ho and Kang Chan stiffened in surprise when the door opened.

“Mr. Seok Kang-Ho!”

It was Kim Mi-Young.

Shouldn’t she still be in class?

Fortunately, Kang Chan wasn't smoking right now.

"What brings you here?" Seok Kang-Ho asked.

"I came here to see Channy. Why are you wearing a hospital gown?"

Kim Mi-Young's eyes weren't as swollen now, but they were still pretty bad.

"I got a bit injured when I went to the countryside. Anyway, don't you have classes?"

"School ended early because we had mock exams today."

"I see."

Kim Mi-Young approached them and looked surprised upon seeing the paper cup on the table. "Was it you who smoked, Mr. Seok Kang-Ho?"

"Huh? Huh?" Seok Kang-Ho discretely picked up the cigarettes and lighter on the table. "I'm in pain, so I'll go back to my room now. I'll see you later."

As Kang Chan sighed quietly, Seok Kang-Ho awkwardly went out.

"Mr. Seok Kang-Ho is too much."

Kim Mi-Young stacked the paper cups and threw them away in the trash can. She then tried hard to open the window a bit more.

"Leave it—that's the best that we could do. Did you do well on your test?" Kang Chan asked.

Kim Mi-Young nodded, smiling brightly.

She was commendable.

"Good job."

If her grades dropped because she came to the hospital crying and screaming yesterday... Kang Chan suddenly remembered the cold expression of Kim Mi-Young's mother.

"Um, my father asked me a lot of questions after we went home yesterday," Kim Mi-Young said.

"About what?"

"He asked me if I liked you."

Kang Chan couldn't even guess what she could have said.

"You're curious, right?" Kim Mi-Young asked.

"Yeah."

“So I told him everything—that I was planning on studying abroad with you, and that we decided to go to a university in Seoul again.”

‘I’m going to go crazy.’

Kang Chan couldn’t help but laugh.

“Why are you laughing?” Kim Mi-Young asked again.

“It’s nothing—I was just happy that you were honest with him.”

“Really? My dad was also happy.”

He was happy with that stern face? Kang Chan listened to what Kim Mi-Young was saying while trying hard to not show his expression.

Was it because of the gap between her mental age and her body?

Kim Mi-Young looked so much more mature since the break ended.

She had dark eyebrows and long eyelashes. Her eyes had always been large, so that wasn’t new. However, now that her baby fat had disappeared, she looked more mature. Since she always had large breasts and a good body shape, people could mistake her to be older than a high schooler at first glance.

Chatter chatter.

Kang Chan, who was annoyed because of Yang Jin-Woo, Huh Ha-Soo, and Xavier, slowly calmed down while listening to Kim Mi-Young talk.

The first time this happened was when she held his hand at the student cafeteria even though he was full of spite.

“Why are you looking at me like that?” Kim Mi-Young asked, perplexed, when she noticed Kang Chan staring at her.

“Just because. Looking at you makes me happy.”

“Huhuhuhu.”

This laugh also seemed to be a part of her charm perhaps because he had gotten used to it now.

Rattle.

At some point, the door opened, and Eun So-Yeon walked inside. Stopping in her tracks, her gaze alternated between Kang Chan and Kim Mi-Young.

“Come in.”

Kang Chan looked behind her, but it seemed Eun So-Yeon came alone since she immediately closed the door.

Kim Mi-Young stood up from her seat and greeted Eun So-Yeon, “Hello.”

“Hello,” Eun So-Yeon said.

After exchanging awkward greetings, Eun So-Yeon placed fruits on the table next to the coffee cups.

Kim Mi-Young had clearly seen Eun So-Yeon on TV.

“Aren’t you busy?” Kang Chan asked Eun So-Yeon.

“I’m free until the afternoon. I dropped by on my way to the company because Director Michelle said that you were here yesterday.”

“Have a seat. Right! This is my friend, Kim Mi-Young. Kim Mi-Young, this is Eun So-Yeon,” Kang Chan introduced them.

The two awkwardly and slowly nodded.

“I saw you on TV. This is fascinating,” Kim Mi-Young commented.

Eun So-Yeon smiled pleasantly at Kim Mi-Young.

Her aura had changed a lot, and she seemed a lot more sophisticated than before. Kang Chan also thought that her eyes became somewhat deeper. It was weird to compare, but Kang Chan thought it wouldn’t be wrong to say that her aura was similar to Gerard’s.

“Have a seat,” Kang Chan told Eun So-Yeon.

“Please sit, unnie.”

When Eun So-Yeon was about to sit down, Kim Mi-Young quickly went to the water heater and made coffee.

“I’ll do it,” Eun So-Yeon offered.

“It’s okay, unnie. Let me do it. I already started.”

Eun So-Yeon hesitantly sat down, then examined Kang Chan. “Are you feeling okay?”

“Yeah. It’s not like I’m severely wounded. How’s the drama going? Is it doable?”

“Even now, I still can’t believe that I’m in it. I’m also feeling anxious and having trouble sleeping perhaps because it’s going to premiere next week. All of the actors feel this way.”

“Why do you all feel that way? You guys worked hard.”

“It’s all thanks to you.”

Kim Mi-Young brought over two cups of coffee, then placed them in front of Kang Chan and Eun So-Yeon.

“You’re not drinking coffee, Ms. Mi-Young?” Eun So-Yeon asked.

“I can’t handle coffee that well—I tried a couple of times, but I ended up being unable to sleep properly.”

“You’re pretty.”

Kim Mi-Young timidly smiled and blushed in response.

Smiling brightly, which she hadn't done in a long time, Eun So-Yeon looked at Kim Mi-Young.

"But you appear on TV. I'm really jealous. Ugh, just thinking about it makes me nervous," Kim Mi-Young commented.

"I also get nervous."

"You do? The last time I saw you, you weren't nervous at all."

"That's not it—I get really nervous in the bathroom before I shoot something like that. There are times when I can't even go outside because my hands are shaking too much."

"But how do you appear like you're completely fine on TV?"

"I also find that weird. When the time to shoot comes and the camera lights come on, my nervousness just completely disappears."

"Wow! That's fascinating."

"Right? I think so as well."

Kang Chan just watched the two for a moment, finding the sight of them talking to each other quite fun.

After about five minutes had passed...

"I'll get going now," Eun So-Yeon stood up, seemingly disappointed.

Kim Mi-Young also looked as if she felt the same way.

"Ms. Mi-Young, let's see each other again next time," Eun So-Yeon said.

"Sure, unnie. I've actually always wished to have an unnie like you and brag to my friends about her. Everyone's going to stare if I go out with you."

"I'll go and see you whenever. Just call me."

"Really?"

The two even exchanged numbers.

For some reason, Kang Chan felt as if he was being swept into something complicated.

Chapter 112.1: Absurd Events Unfold (1)

When Kim Mi-Young left for hagwon, Kang Chan headed to Seok Kang-Ho's room.

"I should've stayed in this room earlier," Kang Chan commented.

"Tell me about it. What would you have done if Mi-Young came in while we were smoking?"

Just thinking about it already felt like a hassle.

“Someone else visited you, right?” Seok Kang-Ho asked.

“An actor dropped by. Phew, I should see how things go tomorrow and get discharged.”

“You should stay here with me for one more day.”

Kang Chan couldn't help but burst into laughter because Seok Kang-Ho spoke as if he was recommending something good.

Soon, they heard the door to Kang Chan's room being opened.

“It seems like someone's here,” Seok Kang-Ho said.

“Who could it be?”

As Kang Chan forcibly raised himself up, Kim Hyung-Jung opened the door and entered.

“You're early,” Kang Chan commented.

“It's 5 pm. I told everyone that I'm returning your phones to you two as an excuse to leave work. I bought three samgye-tang^[1] as take-out from the restaurant in front of our office in case you two were hungry. Anyway, here's your phone, Mr. Kang Chan, and this one is Mr. Seok Kang-Ho's.”

Kang Chan shook his head upon receiving his phone. His phone was so full of missed calls and text messages that it felt heavy in his hands.

Without checking any of them, Kang Chan immediately erased the calls and text messages. The three then sat around the table and ate samgye-tang.

It was certainly tastier than the food delivered to them from this neighborhood.

“Phew! I'll become a pig if I stay at Manager Kim's office,” Seok Kang-Ho said afterward.

“If you do come, I'll immediately empty out a room for you.”

“Phuhu, I don't know what I'd do if you make me sit at a desk all day.”

They ate to their heart's content for the first time in so long.

Since he was the one in the best condition, Kim Hyung-Jung made coffee. Meanwhile, Kang Chan and Seok Kang-Ho cleaned up a bit and threw the trash in the trash can.

Once they were all sitting around the table again, Kang Chan told them what the Serpent Venimeux had told them earlier.

“Ambassador Lanok was the first to make a move, after all,” Kim Hyung-Jung commented.

“Do you have any guesses why he's doing this?” Kang Chan asked Kim Hyung-Jung.

“I don’t, but he clearly wants something. Isn’t there a saying along the lines of, ‘Give me what I want willingly or else I’ll kill all of you until I get it?’”

“But the ones Lanok is killing don’t know what he wants.”

Kim Hyung-Jung smiled, seemingly finding Kang Chan funny. “Lanok is thinking of killing them by using this matter as an excuse. Doing so hits two birds with one stone—it warns them, and it also allows him to take revenge. Lanok will probably make his demands once his anger subsides to a certain extent. At that point, the Serpent Venimeux will likely give him what he wants without hesitation. But if something similar happens again, I’m not sure. They probably won’t ever be able to sell weapons to anything or anyone related to Ambassador Lanok.”

Having heard that, Kang Chan realized Kim Hyung-Jung could be right.

“Ha! That gentleman is scary,” Seok Kang-Ho commented.

“I agree,” Kang Chan also agreed.

“Yang Jin-Woo’s son is indeed in France. He’s managing funds held in offshore accounts, but we still haven’t figured out how much he currently has,” Kim Hyung-Jung explained.

“I was told that he also has sons in the United States,” Kang Chan replied.

“Yang Jin-Woo has six sons.”

“Does he have any daughters?”

“Just one. She’s also in the United States. Oh, his children came from five different mothers.”

At any rate, Yang Jin-Woo was a fucker Kang Chan couldn’t understand at all.

“Anyway, I have passed on your intentions to the director and applied for your passport to be made. We’ll also likely find a way to force Yang Jin-Woo to return to the country soon,” Kim Hyung-Jung added.

“I’m thinking of meeting Lanok sometime tomorrow,” Kang Chan said.

“You’re already being discharged?”

“Yes.”

Seok Kang-Ho looked upset, and Kim Hyung-Jung looked surprised.

In any case, Kang Chan didn’t want to stay at the hospital now that he could already move around.

After talking for about an hour, Kang Chan quickly stood up. He heard someone looking for him from his room.

When he opened the door and went out, he saw the back of Yoo Hye-Sook, who was heading to the nurse’s office.

“Mother!”

“Channy! I was about to go looking for you because you weren’t in your room. Where were you?”

“I was in the room next door because I was bored. You’re here early.”

“I was worried. Anyway, I brought sushi. Your dad bought it from a delicious restaurant. Let’s go inside.”

“Sure.”

Afraid that she would see Seok Kang-Ho’s name on the door beside Kang Chan’s room, Kang Chan quickly looked after Yoo Hye-Sook.

“Look! Doesn’t it look delicious, Channy?” Yoo Hye-Sook asked.

Kang Chan felt as if his stomach was about to burst.

“Quick, take a bite,” Yoo Hye-Sook urged.

“Alright. You should eat as well.”

Kang Chan held up the chopsticks and had a piece of sushi. It was good, but that didn’t mean it would make him hungry.

“What’s wrong? Are you not feeling well?” Looking worried, Yoo Hye-Sook was about to put down her chopsticks.

“That’s not it. I just thought of Father since it tastes amazing.”

“If we eat this, he said he’ll buy chicken when he comes here.”

“What?”

“You should eat a lot especially when you’re not feeling good. Your dad is treating us—which he hadn’t done in a long time—so don’t worry and just eat as much as you want.”

How could Kang Chan refuse anything she was cajoling with that kind of expression? Didn’t Kang Dae-Kyung say that she was so worried when the incident happened that she even fainted in front of the TV?

Fine! This will make my mother happy! Since I’m going to eat it anyway, I might as well enjoy it!

Kang Chan thought about confessing that he had samgye-tang, but with a sense of duty, he relentlessly ate sushi. He just kept thinking about Yoo Hye-Sook, who would’ve been disappointed otherwise.

“Wow! This is really good,” Kang Chan commented.

“Since you like it this much, I’ll start buying it for you every now and then.”

Her response instinctively made him shake his head, but he forcibly smiled at her.

It wasn't like his stomach would explode just because he had a lot of food. If eating with Yoo Hye-Sook would make her that happy, then it would be worth coping with it just this once.

Kang Chan secretly controlled his breathing.

Rattle.

The door soon opened, and Michelle entered the room with a bright expression.

“Welcome, Michelle!” Yoo Hye-Sook greeted.

“Hello, Mother!”

Kang Chan's heart sank when he noticed the box that Michelle was holding.

“Mother, please have some of this,” Michelle said.

“What's this?”

“It's cake and sandwiches.”

“Oh my, that's very nice of you. It seems like you haven't had dinner yet... What should we do? We just ate. We would've waited for you had we known that you were coming.”

“Yes, mother.” Michelle looked at Kang Chan, pretending that she couldn't understand Yoo Hye-Sook when Yoo Hye-Sook said many things at once.

“Aren't you busy?” Kang Chan interrupted very briefly.

Flustered, Yoo Hye-Sook looked at Kang Chan as well...

“Mother, I'll have a sandwich. You should eat cake,” Michelle suggested.

“You must be smart. How can your Korean improve so fast?”

“Thank you.”

She's not clever! She's cunning!

Just as Kang Chan thought, ‘Oh shoot,’ Michelle opened the box.

They made coffee and put cake and sandwiches in front of him.

“Here you go, Channy!”

Kang Chan ate the cake that Yoo Hye-Sook scooped up for him, then sat far away from them using the excuse that he was full.

As if she was proving how many things she could express with short sentences, Michelle talked to Yoo Hye-Sook while eating a sandwich.

He listened to Kim Mi-Young and Eun So-Yeon talk to each other earlier today. This evening, he did the same to Yoo Hye-Sook and Michelle.

“The clothes in Dongdaemun are really nice,” Michelle commented.

“I’ve heard people say that, but I also heard that you can get scammed if you go there without knowing how things work.”

“Let’s buy the company’s clothes sponsored by the magazine company.”

“Would there be clothes that fit me, Michelle?”

“Of course, mother.”

From the very beginning, it felt as if this situation was becoming more and more complicated. Kim Mi-Young and Eun So-Yeon had exchanged numbers, and now Yoo Hye-Sook and Michelle were doing the same.

As Kang Chan sighed with a profound expression, Kang Dae-Kyung came inside.

When Kang Chan smelled the yangnyeom chicken[2], he made up his mind to get discharged tomorrow no matter what.

The three stayed with Kang Chan until 8 pm. When the nurse injected him with medication, they stood up and left.

Left alone, he went to the counter where the nurses were to get digestive medicine, but as soon as he reached it, he flinched. The nurses offered him bossam, which they were enjoying.

Kang Chan got startled, but he didn’t forget to ask them for digestive medicine. As soon as he was given some, he visited Seok Kang-Ho to avoid the smell of food.

Having taken digestive medicine, Kang Chan thought he would feel much better if he smoked a cigarette.

Rattle.

Kang Chan opened the door to Seok Kang-Ho’s room only to stop in his tracks for a moment.

Sitting together, Kim Tae-Jin, Kim Hyung-Jung, and Seok Kang-Ho greeted Kang Chan. They were eating jokbal[3] and bossam.

“You weren’t answering your phone, so I decided to come here unannounced. Welcome. I gave plenty of food to the nurses’ office and the security office, and I also brought plenty of food for you. Why do you look so upset? Is it because we ate first? We tried to wait for you and made sure not to even open your food,” Kim Tae-Jin explained.

“This one’s yours. Come eat quickly,” Seok Kang-Ho added.

Kang Chan almost kicked the table, but he suppressed the urge with a superhuman will. Instead, he avoided them by going to another room for a bit.

“Whoo.”

Kang Chan lit up and smoked a cigarette. Thinking that Kang Dae-Kyung or Yoo Hye-Sook wasn't going to come and see him made his stomach feel a little comfortable.

Chapter 112.2: Absurd Events Unfold (1)

“That’s why your expression was like that a moment ago!” Kim Tae-Jin smiled as if he now understood. “I was so worried while I was watching the TV. I immediately ran over because I couldn’t contact Kim Hyung-Jung either, but I at least got to talk to him a little today. Let’s keep each other informed, okay? Mr. Seok Kang-Ho, you shouldn’t keep things to yourself either.”

“I’ll do that.”

Kang Chan nodded because there was sincerity in Kim Tae-Jin’s words.

“Oh Gwang-Taek called me about ten times as well. It should be on the list of your missed calls, so give him a call later,” Kim Tae-Jin added.

“There were too many notifications, so I erased all of them as soon as I got my phone. I’ll call him later after I see how things go.”

“Alright. No matter how busy we are, we should update each other every now and then,” Kim Tae-Jin said. He then leaned back against the chair and looked at Kang Chan. “I saw Section Chief Jeon today. He talked about you.”

“About me?”

“Yeah. He suddenly called me and asked what I thought about you. He also told me that we needed a lot of people like you in the future and that we can’t lose you to France no matter what.”

Shaking his head, Kim Tae-Jin, “How come that gentleman hasn’t changed at all despite having grown older? Kim Hyung-Jung, I heard that you said that Kang Chan and I are close?”

“The section chief told me to tell him about what happened since I met Mr. Kang Chan, so I also told him that I asked you to introduce me to Mr. Kang Chan. When I did, he asked if you and Mr. Kang Chan are close, and I replied, ‘Yes.’”

Kim Tae-Jin glanced at Kim Hyung-Jung and ended up laughing.

Being alive was quite a good thing—especially if he was with good people.

Kang Dae-Kyung and Yoo Hye-Sook dropped by the hospital the next morning, then headed to work. Kang Chan then told Yoo Hun-Woo that he was going to be discharged.

“Will you be okay? Moving around is still uncomfortable for you.” Yoo Hun-Woo said.

“Yes. It would be better to be at home instead if I’d just be lying down anyway.”

“Alright. But if you get dizzy or if you feel like vomiting, then we need to hospitalize you immediately.”

“I’ll do that.”

Yoo Hun-Woo looked at Kang Chan as if he was joking. “You looked much cooler on TV. I had a hard time avoiding the reporters the day after the announcement. It’s been quiet since then though, perhaps because the people involved with the announcement kept them at bay for me. Anyway! You did something huge. I feel proud that I treated you.”

“You know that what you just said doesn’t suit you, right?”

Yoo Hun-Woo smiled slightly and jokingly tapped Kang Chan’s forearm. He then left the room.

Kang Chan couldn’t get discharged right away, however, because he didn’t have clothes to change into.

As Kang Chan was thinking of what to do, Seok Kang-Ho opened the door and came in.

“I also decided to be discharged,” Seok Kang-Ho said.

“Will you be okay?”

“What would I do by myself here once you leave? Staying at home and telling them I’m just having body aches is much better. Let’s go to Misari and have a cup of tea this evening.”

“Alright. That’s certainly better. We can’t even smoke a cigarette in peace here since we don’t know who will be visiting and when.”

However, despite having reached a conclusion, they still didn’t have clothes to change into.

In the end, Choi Jong-Il bought clothes and shoes for both of them.

When Kang Chan returned home, he felt as if everything was coming to an end.

He saw the familiar building, elevator, entrance, living room, and his room.

Kang Chan went into his room and sat at his desk.

South Korea had become part of the Eurasian Rail, and the announcement had been made.

It was as if he had just woken up from a long dream and sat on his bed.

Why would he feel that way?

His surroundings were so quiet that it seemed everything had calmed down. However, Lee Ji-Yeon came across Kang Chan’s mind.

He remembered her hand trembling as she put down a teacup and her tired and frightened eyes when he called out and stopped her.

She held up a sign to protest and ask people to reveal her unnie's unjust death while looking around blankly like a child.

However, before she could unearth her unnie's unjust death, she hanged herself to death.

How scared and wronged could she have felt?

Kang Chan slowly inhaled, then exhaled.

No matter how much money or power a person had, there were things that they should and should never do.

Not only did Yang Jin-Woo attack Kang Dae-Kyung and try to go for Yoo Hye-Sook, but he also killed two young and pitiful women like bugs even though they were dreaming of earning as much as they could and being happy with their widowed mother for the first time since all of their hardships had ended.

"Yang Jin-Woo," Kang Chan said as if Yang Jin-Woo was inside his monitor.

"You messed with the wrong person, you son of a bitch."

Glaring at his monitor and tightly gritting his teeth, Kang Chan continued with a smirk, "Just you wait, motherfucker."

Kang Chan had fought countless battles, but this was his first time hating someone as much as Yang Jin-Woo.

Kang Chan decided to start again from the beginning.

He would do things perfectly one at a time.

Although he had always done that, he thought of finishing things especially perfectly this time.

After replacing the battery on his phone, Kang Chan pressed the call button.

- Mr. Kang Chan.

"Mr. Ambassador, how do you feel?"

- Refreshed, thanks to you. As a matter of fact, I was thinking about visiting you at the hospital this afternoon or tomorrow morning.

"I've been discharged."

- You never cease to surpass my expectations.

"Mr. Ambassador, I'd like to meet with you for a moment if that's okay with you."

- Of course. Where should we meet?

"Anywhere you're comfortable."

- It would be difficult to meet at the hotel since you're too well known right now, so let's just meet at my office.

"Sounds good. What time would be comfortable for you?"

- Would you like to have lunch together?

“Alright. I’ll be there by 12 pm.”

Kang Chan hung up, then went out to the living room and slowly warmed up.

There was already a scab on the stab wounds the fragments inflicted, but the area where he was hit by a big chunk of cement was so stiff it was as if he got badly beaten up.

‘Ugh.’

Nevertheless, he continued warming up.

For as long as his bones weren’t broken and his muscles hadn’t been ripped apart, nothing could warm him up as much as stretching.

Kang Chan was straining himself. He should probably rest, but they were lacking too much time for him to just be lying around.

Kang Chan warmed up for about thirty minutes, got changed, and left the apartment.

His body was screaming at him, but as usual, he ignored it.

‘Ugh, you were given to the wrong owner.’

Kang Chan held out his hand toward the taxi.

“Mr. Kang Chan!”

Kang Chan smiled when he saw Lanok.

They hugged and exchanged noisy cheek kisses like Frenchmen, an odd sense of comradeship flowing between them.

“Have a seat. We should have a light cup of tea before we eat,” Lanok suggested.

When Lanok pointed to the table with his long arm, the assistant poured out black tea.

After asking each other how they were doing, Kang Chan confessed everything to Lanok about Xavier visiting him.

“Xavier is the adopted son of Fabrix, the Serpent Venimeux leader. He’s also the only successor crueler than Fabrix,” Lanok said afterward.

“He has a lot of successors?”

Lanok nodded. “Having a lot of successors is insurance for Fabrix. He gets to keep living because of them. With his adopted sons and subordinates keeping each other in check, nobody can mess with Fabrix. He’s the most cunning, cruel, and vicious Serpent Venimeux leader in history.”

Kang Chan drank tea while nodding.

That kind of man begged Lanok for his life. How cunning, cruel, and vicious was this sly and wily fox?

“I just want one piece of information from Fabrix,” Lanok said.

What kind of information was it that Lanok couldn't get from even the DGSE? Sincerely curious, Kang Chan waited for Lanok to continue.

“I just want to know where the Serpent Venimeux bought the C4 and the Iglas from.”

Kang Chan cocked his head. “Can't you just get that information from the Intelligence Bureau or the DGSE?”

“That's true.”

Kang Chan slowly inhaled.

Protecting the seller was the first rule in arms dealing. Revealing who they got their weapons from would result in a punishment incomparable to drug dealing.

Like Kim Hyung-Jung had said, this sly and wily fox planned to perfectly beat up the Serpent Venimeux and proceed with what he wanted.

“But if that happens, then the Serpent Venimeux will have to fight a war with the seller,” Kang Chan commented.

“That's their problem to choose, not mine. However, I will firmly punish them for selling those commodities to use for an event that I'm attending to avoid something like this from happening again.”

When Kang Chan laughed out loud, Lanok continued with a faint smile. “We have different ways of fighting, but that's what scares me every now and then. If you start fighting in the same way I do, I will be no match for you.”

“I'd rather not fight you at all.”

“I feel the same way.”

For the first time in his life, Kang Chan felt sorry for the Serpent Venimeux. They were even willing to kill Yang Jin-Woo's children to save themselves, but revealing the identity of their arms dealer would be far more humiliating than erasing their tattoo, which was what they had been doing until now.

“Mr. Kang Chan,” Lanok called after he put down the teacup. “Will you arbitrate this issue with the Serpent Venimeux?”

“If I was their leader, I wouldn't reveal our arms dealer.”

“They wouldn't either.”

What's Lanok thinking this time?

“Please tell them that I'll hold in my anger around here if they make Xavier the leader.”

“Mr. Ambassador, may I ask the reason behind that decision?”

“Xavier is an agent of the United States’ Intelligence Bureau. The United States has worked hard for so long to put him in France.”

Why was Lanok living such a complicated life? Kang Chan smirked and laughed feebly.

“If so, then wouldn’t it be bad if he becomes the leader?” Kang Chan asked.

Lanok smiled meaningfully. “He will pass over the military intel that he received from Huh Sang-Soo to the United States. After all, what the United States wants is the list of names of the weapons brokers, the transactional information, and the military secrets of other countries. We’ll instigate a fight between Japan and China.”

It was a great answer.

Kang Chan thought that Lanok was just getting revenge on and warning the Serpent Venimeux because he was angry and to avoid something like this from happening again. However, Lanok had actually secretly calculated something like this as well.

Kang Chan wanted to learn how to use people in a cool way instead of just being able to kill his enemies.

Damn!

Kang Chan never imagined that he would become jealous of the sly and wily Lanok.

Chapter 113.1: Absurd Events Unfold (2)

Kang Chan and Lanok headed to another place, and as soon as they got seated, the employees served their meal. The employees left right after.

During French meal courses, food had to be served continuously, so they usually didn’t excuse themselves after serving all of the food on the table. If they weren't saying that they should mix the salad and steak together, someone had clearly ordered them to leave.

“Mr. Kang Chan, China and Japan will attack us using any means necessary,” Lanok sliced the steak. “Please pay special attention to Japan. Unlike China, they don’t have anyone to depend on or anywhere to retreat to.”

“Rather than me, that seems like something that the government should interfere with.”

“That’s true.”

Lanok wiped his mouth with a napkin, then had a sip of the wine. “We’re about to engage in a desperate espionage warfare. It would be best for you to keep this in mind as well.”

“Mr. Ambassador, is there anything else you want to tell me?”

“Not right now, no.”

Smiling meaningfully, Lanok held up his knife and fork again.

Why did he take a break in the middle of their meal? A meal should be eaten in one go, but they spent 2 hours alternating between eating and taking a break

On the second floor of a luxurious mansion in Las Vegas...

Ondol was laid out under the hanji paper door, which was unusual in the United States. A luxurious table was in the middle of the room.

Yang Jin-Woo was sitting across from a man.

“Chairman Yang, we’re planning on continuing the construction of the suspended underwater tunnel project,” the man said.

“No wonder. I thought it was strange for Japan to say they’re building a highway and a railroad under the sea. It seems like Japan has been aware that the Eurasian Rail would be established since then.” Yang Jin-Woo didn’t appear to be particularly interested.

“The underwater tunnel will cost a hundred trillion won. Japan will bear the full amount.”

“Hmph, so now you’re saying that you’ll take the transported goods that will be flocking to South Korea to Japan? If that’s the case, then South Korea will just become a transit stop that the goods will just pass through. Yang Jin-Woo exhaled loudly while pursing his lips...

“We’ll entrust all of the construction of the underwater tunnel to you, Chairman Yang.”

“Will the South Korean government accept that?”

The proposal was amazing enough to make people go crazy, but Yang Jin-Woo just seemed to snort at it.

“They naturally wouldn’t approve of it easily. However, doesn’t the opposition party have the majority?”

“That’s not true, Mr. Kanemaru. Even though the opposition party has the majority, Moon Jae-Hyun is receiving an enormous amount of support from the citizens.”

“There’s no future for the Eurasian Rail right now. Meanwhile, the underwater tunnel is something that all South Korean construction companies can immediately work on. We just have to make the South Korean public demand for the tunnel to be constructed.”

Looking as if he was pacifying Yang Jin-Woo, Kanemaru continued, “Japan will internationally and extensively announce that they have become South Korea’s economic subordinate country through my country’s broadcasts and press. They will then criticize all of the economic effects that the underwater tunnel could cause for being taken away by South Korea. Japan will be able to fully satisfy and excite South Korea by doing all of that.”

Kanemaru didn't miss Yang Jin-Woo's small smile.

"We'll say that you obtained the rights to construct the tunnel. If a first-class construction company from South Korea forms the consortium, then even better. Moreover, if the majority of the Assembly members demand for the construction to push through, then even the current regime won't be able to stop it. We'll provide ten trillion won for the groundwork."

"Ahem."

"Chairman Yang, the Prime Minister has also put out an extreme proposal to deposit two trillion won to the Bahamas as a way of recognizing your hard work."

Yang Jin-Woo looked outside the window as if he wasn't interested.

A moment of silence passed...

"This matter will let you turn the tables around in South Korea. Moreover, Japan's Intelligence Bureau will take care of everything that would block your way, regardless of what they are," Kanemaru continued.

Yang Jin-Woo inhaled softly. "I have always felt that South Korea would have difficulties matching Japan's comprehensive plans and decisions, no matter how much it tries."

"But at least you're part of South Korea, right? Japan still finds it unfortunate that you weren't born in Japan."

Kanemaru lightly smiled. He then clapped once as he turned around.

Rattle.

The door opened, and ten men in suits entered. Assuming a triangle formation, they bowed.

"Kotaro," Kanemaru called.

"Yes![1]" The man at the very front answered as he lowered his head to the ground.

"This is your new owner. You'll be serving him from now on."

"Yes! Pleased to meet you!"[2]

"He's the best agent Japan's Intelligence Bureau has ever seen in the past hundred years. He'll accomplish everything that you want, no matter what it is," Kanemaru explained.

Yang Jin-Woo nodded as he looked at the man bowing to them. Yang Jin-Woo seemed satisfied.

After parting ways with Lanok, Kang Chan called Oh Gwang-Taek.

- Hello? Kang Chan! Where are you?

“I’m at the Seodaemun[3]. I lost my phone and just found it recently.”

- Anyway! Hey! Don’t go home yet—let’s meet up!

“Sure. Where do you want to meet?”

- The Namsan Hotel?

“Going there is currently uncomfortable for me. Can’t we go somewhere quiet?”

- Somewhere quiet? Let’s just get a room in the hotel instead. There’s hardly any other place where we can quietly drink coffee nowadays.

Strangely, Kang Chan couldn’t escape from the Namsan Hotel.

“Fine. I’m leaving right now, so I’ll be there in thirty minutes.”

- Alright, alright. For as long as you get here.

Kang Chan laughed quietly. Oh Gwang-Taek laughed with him, then hung up.

Kang Chan hailed a taxi and soon reached the hotel. Joo Chul-Bum, who had been waiting at the entrance, bowed deeply toward Kang Chan.

“What are you doing? Get inside quickly,” Kang Chan said.

“Yes, hyung-nim.”

Kang Chan hurriedly entered the hotel. However, he couldn’t help but stop walking for a bit in front of the lobby when he saw a new employee busily working.

“Would you like to have a cup of tea before going up to the room?” Joo Chul-Bum asked.

“It’s fine, let’s go.”

“Alright, Hyung-nim.”

Joo Chul-Bum headed to the elevator, his expression showing deep respect for Kang Chan.

Upon reaching room 1701, Joo Chul-Bum took out a card key and opened the door.

“Hey!” Oh Gwang-Taek stood up from the sofa and approached Kang Chan.

“How are you doing? You’re fine, right?”

Oh Gwang-Taek appeared to be sincerely worried, which Kang Chan found burdensome.

“Son of a bitch! If you were going to appear on TV, you should’ve taken me with you.”

The two sat on the sofa, and Joo Chul-Bum courteously poured them coffee.

Meanwhile, Kang Chan bit on a cigarette.

“I’ll be downstairs,” Joo Chul-Bum said.

“Okay, sure,” Oh Gwang-Taek answered. Joo Chul-Bum courteously said his goodbyes and left the room.

“We still haven’t figured out who caused the fight in Bundang,” Kang Chan said.

“I know! Did you even have the time for that, considering how busy you were? Either way, it’s fine. All that matters is you survived that mess.”

Strangely, Oh Gwang-Taek seemed to be having a hard time.

“What’s going on?” Kang Chan asked.

“About what?”

Kang Chan noticed Gwang-Taek’s eyes widening in shock.

When Kang Chan extinguished the cigarette and stared at him, Oh Gwang-Taek rubbed his face first in frustration. “I couldn’t say this to my subordinates, but…”

Oh Gwang-Taek stopped mid-sentence, then took out and bit on a cigarette again. “I’ve been feeling strangely anxious. It’s as if every person I run into on the street is hiding a knife. I’m anxious even when I’m at home and at the hotel. Phew! I can’t talk to my people, though, since I feel embarrassed about it.”

Kang Chan didn’t think a gangster would have such a side. This gang leader was feeling the same fear that captains felt whenever they lost crew members in combat.

“Why are you looking at me like that? I told you this because of who you are. Even if I’m like this, I’m still confident that I won’t lose to anyone,” Oh Gwang-Taek added.

Kang Chan smirked.

Getting results from things like this was only a matter of time. Oh Gwang-Taek would either overcome this and rise above the situation or collapse.

Buzz— Buzz—Buzz—. Buzz— Buzz—Buzz—. Buzz— Buzz—Buzz—.

Amid their conversation, Kang Chan’s phone rang. The call was from an unknown number.

“Hello?”

- It’s Xavier.

Did this fucker call because he knew that Kang Chan had met Lanok? Kang Chan instinctively frowned, thinking they were following him.

- I have something to tell you. We have taken care of the three family members of Yang Jin-Woo’s son, who’s in France.

They did what to whom? The family of Yang Jin-Woo’s son?

“Didn’t you say that Yang Jin-Woo’s son had a child? Who ordered you to do that?”

- The leader did. It’s his way of showing his sincerity. We beheaded all of them.

“Hey! You son of a bitch!”

Oh Gwang-Taek suddenly raised his head. Xavier grew silent.

“You said that they’re still kids! Their old man and the father had committed crimes and sins, but what did the kid do wrong, you son of a bitch?!”

- Although we did ask you to arbitrate this issue, it still isn’t right for you to talk in that manner.

Was this fucker really an agent of the United States’ Intelligence Bureau?

Oh Gwang-Taek looked strangely at Kang Chan, who was exhaling deeply.

- We already gave the order to our people that are in the United States as well. They will be cutting their necks by now.

Kang Chan laughed feebly. Why was Lanok trying to make this kind of fucker the leader of the Serpent Venimeux?

“Xavier, call them right now and tell them to stop. I’ll arbitrate this matter then.”

- I’ll do that now.

Kang Chan’s energy drained out of him when he heard Xavier’s cold voice.

Chapter 113.2: Absurd Events Unfold (2)

Hating Yang Jin-Woo and killing kids were completely different things.

This wasn’t a war between African tribes. Beheading innocent children wasn’t something that Kang Chan could accept, regardless of what the purpose was.

Kang Chan held up a cigarette. The situation strangely kept becoming messier and messier.

“What’s going on? What got you so mad?” Oh Gwang-Taek asked.

“Don’t even get me started—all kinds of thugs butted into the Eurasian Rail. Phew! Let’s leave it at that.”

Oh Gwang-Taek took out and bit on another cigarette, deciding not to pry further.

Buzz— Buzz—Buzz—. Buzz— Buzz—Buzz—.

Kang Chan quickly held up his phone.

- It’s Xavier. I heard that they have already finished beheading them.

“They beheaded all of Yang Jin-Woo’s family members that are in the United States?”

- They started with his two sons, followed by his daughter and her husband and three children. They killed seven people in total.

Crazy sons of bitches.

Kang Chan was well aware of the Serpent Venimeux’s cruelty, but this was his first time actually witnessing it for himself.

He was so dumbfounded that all he could do was smirk.

- That's all for now. I'll let you know immediately once we've figured out Yang Jin-Woo's plans.

“Phew!”

Something so nonsensical just happened.

Kang Chan had stiffened, and he felt grim.

After flatly refusing the people who called him to request an interview, Kang Chan held up his phone and passed on what he had talked about with the Serpent Venimeux a moment ago to Lanok.

- Things are getting so messed up and complicated.

Did this sly and wily fox really not expect this to happen?

- For now, let's see what will happen.

“Okay. However, I don't want to arbitrate this issue anymore.”

- Alright. I'll take care of this myself.

Kang Chan put down his phone and leaned back against the sofa.

Messing with family left him with no other choice but to become needlessly cruel. Now that things had come to this, killing Yang Jin-Woo as soon as possible and ending this fight was the wise thing to do.

Nothing unusual happened since Kang Chan had parted ways with Oh Gwang-Taek and headed home. However, his phone was a problem.

Not only Kang Dae-Kyung and Yoo Hye-Sook's phones but even Kang Chan's phone unexpectedly rang nonstop, making it difficult for them to talk on the phone to other people.

All of the phone calls were from people requesting an interview or asking Kang Chan to appear on TV, but he obviously had no reason to accept those requests.

Yoo Hye-Sook in particular received a lot of phone calls from her friends, who knew a reporter, asking for an interview just this once for their sake.

The next day, Kang Chan started doing his morning workouts.

For the past two days, the National Intelligence Service had been trying hard to figure out the identities of the terrorists by directing all of their strengths into it. They also made a complaint and requested cooperation from China but didn't achieve anything special.

Diplomacy was funny.

China prepared the North Korean military in secret only for all of them to die, and, pretending not to know anything about it, South Korea made a complaint and requested cooperation.

“Phew.”

Kang Chan soon felt refreshed and more comfortable.

Since then, he hadn't received a phone call from Xavier.

Kang Chan had no reason to insist on contacting someone who kills children, so he decided to just forget about him.

If Xavier suddenly appeared in front of Kang Chan again, Kang Chan might just twist his neck.

“Wash up quickly, Channy. Let’s eat,” Yoo Hye-Sook said.

“Is it okay for you to be working out already?” Kang Dae-Kyung asked.

“Yes. I’m feeling better now.” Kang Chan answered. He then had a refreshing shower and went out to the kitchen.

As the three ate, they all put their phones on silent.

Kang Chan was about to become curious about what the people requesting an interview with him since before they even had breakfast looked like.

After their meal, Kang Dae-Kyung and Yoo Hye-Sook went to work, and Kang Chan got a text message.

[Is something going on? Answer the phone.]

When did this fucker call me?

Kang Chan called Seok Kang-Ho.

- Hello? Is everything alright?

“I just put my phone on silent because so many people are calling me to request an interview. Why did you call?”

- Let’s have a cup of coffee if you don’t have something special going on. I feel strangely frustrated as well.

“Alright. How long will it take you to get here?”

- Let’s see each other in an hour.

“Got it.”

Kang Chan slowly got ready to meet Seok Kang-Ho.

His phone continued to light up because of incoming calls. Every time he checked who was calling, he just found an unknown number.

This was nuts. Unfortunately, he couldn’t change his phone number right now.

Kang Chan met Seok Kang-Ho in front of the apartment, then headed to Misari together. Since it was still early in the morning, it seemed they were the coffee shop’s first customers today.

While looking at the river that stretched as far as the eye could see, Kang Chan had a sip of the coffee he had ordered. He felt relieved.

Kang Chan first told Seok Kang-Ho that the Serpent Venimeux had murdered Yang Jin-Woo's sons and daughter.

"Damn it. The kids didn't do anything wrong. Aren't you going to get implicated in vain?" Seok Kang-Ho asked afterward.

"I'm not sure. Considering what that fucker Yang Jin-Woo is capable of, it wouldn't take long for him to find out who did it, so wouldn't he try to look for an opportunity to kill the Serpent Venimeux?"

"I know he has a lot of money, but do you think it'll be easy for him to fight them? Lanok can go against the Serpent Venimeux because he's Lanok. If Yang Jin-Woo tries to fight the Serpent Venimeux with money, my neck would be slit first before he could win."

"That's true."

Still drinking coffee, Kang Chan then told Seok Kang-Ho about his meeting with Oh Gwang-Taek and lunch with Lanok.

"What will you do now?" Seok Kang-Ho asked again.

"Tsk! I do feel uncomfortable because innocent kids got swept into this mess, but I'm still determined to end Yang Jin-Woo once and for all."

"Why are innocent kids the ones dying when Yang Jin-Woo is the one who did something wrong? Damn it!"

"Tell me about it. However, if we just leave Yang Jin-Woo alone, that fucker will likely look for opportunities again to try and kill my parents. That makes it difficult to just leave him be. Not to mention there are also those women who died pitifully."

"Will Yang Jin-Woo even return to the country?" Seok Kang-Ho took out and bit on a cigarette. He then draped both of his arms across the table as if to wrap himself around it.

"We should see how things go. According to Xavier, they think Yang Jin-Woo will return to the country if they kill his family, and manager Kim also said that he's looking for ways to bring him back here, so there will probably be a way."

"Whoo. So I heard Lanok say that Xavier is an agent of the United States' Intelligence Bureau."

"Exactly. It seems like there's an organization similar to France's DGSE in the United States."

Frowning, Kang Chan stroked his head. Instead of complicatedly getting entangled, it was a hundred times better to just meet up and duke it out.

“What will you do starting tomorrow?” Seok Kang-Ho asked.

“I don’t have anything special to do. Going to school isn’t a good idea either, so I’ll just look for somewhere I can work out nearby.”

“Look at this—we should’ve just bought that land last time.”

Kang Chan couldn’t help but smirk. It seemed Seok Kang-Ho still couldn’t give up that land.

Kang Chan’s phone continued to ring as they drank coffee. Every time it did, he checked the called ID just in case it was someone he knew.

“Just seeing that makes me feel like I’m going to go crazy,” Seok Kang-Ho commented.

“How do you think I would feel as the one actually getting these calls?” After Kang Chan grumbled, he got a call again. This time, it was Kim Hyung-Jung.

“Look at this,” Kang Chan quickly held up his phone and answered.

“Hello?”

- Mr. Kang Chan, it’s Kim Hyung-Jung. Where are you?

“I’m at Misari with Seok Kang-Ho.”

- I heard that Yang Jin-Woo is returning to South Korea. If you two are planning to stay at Misari for a bit longer, I’ll come over.

“Sounds good. We were thinking of having lunch here, so please join us.”

When Kang Chan put down his phone, Seok Kang-Ho asked, “Did he say that he’s coming here?”

“He said that Yang Jin-Woo is returning to South Korea.”

“What?”

Kang Chan wordlessly took out a cigarette.

Why did he feel so uncomfortable despite having heard that Yang Jin-Woo was returning to South Korea? Was it because Kang Chan gained sympathy for him now that he had lost his children and grandchildren?

Kang Chan looked at the river as he exhaled cigarette smoke.

I have to do this. I’ll take care of this one step at a time.

He had to take care of Yang Jin-Woo and the espionage war.

Kang Chan worked on this issue just to help South Korea get connected to the Eurasian Rail. Since then, he had come so far.

He had already accomplished so much and had even made the Eurasian Rail announcement event happen ahead of schedule. Now, all he had to do to live in comfort was put an end to this by taking down Yang Jin-Woo.

“Son of a bitch. Once he returns to South Korea, then let’s do whatever it takes to end him. We’ll live in comfort afterward,” Seok Kang-Ho said.

Seok Kang-Ho’s husky voice woke Kang Chan up from his thoughts.

Kim Hyung-Jung arrived just as the coffee shop employees served them the second order of coffee they had placed.

“That gentleman seems so busy that his feet almost never touch the ground,,” Kang Chan commented.

Kim Hyung-Jung ordered coffee first before going to their table.

“How are you feeling?” Kim Hyung-Jung asked.

“We’re okay—we both got discharged. Please sit,” Kang Chan said.

With all three of them now seated, Kim Hyung-Jung looked around their surroundings. “Let’s wait for the coffee to be served before we start.”

“I don’t see why not,” Kang Chan replied.

In the last several days, Kim Hyung-Jung lost more weight.

“You must be very tired,” Kang Chan said.

“Honestly, I’m dying because I’m up to my neck in reports. We have to figure out the identities of the dead terrorists, how the weapons used in the terrorist attack got into South Korea, and a bunch of other things like their port of entry into the country. I also have to organize the data we’ve gathered according to the information that you’ve given me. Phew! This is crazy.”

Kim Hyung-Jung opened his hand and stroked his face as if he was washing it. He took a sip of the coffee when it arrived. After examining their surroundings again, he continued, “Yang Jin-Woo is returning to the country. The flight he booked will land in South Korea tomorrow afternoon, but we have intel that he’s accompanied by an agent from Japan’s Intelligence Bureau.”

“That fucker is still doing all sorts of things to survive despite all of the bullshit he has done. He’s an American citizen, and he’s also involved with Japan’s National Intelligence Service? Give me a break,” Seok Kang-Ho complained.

“We still don’t have evidence that Yang Jin-Woo directly intervened in the attack. Are you aware that Yang Jin-Woo’s children in France and the United States have been murdered?” Kim Hyung-Jung asked.

“I heard that even his grandchildren were murdered.”

“That’s correct. If Yang Jin-Woo is still planning to come into the country with Japan’s Intelligence Bureau despite everything that has happened, then that means someone is backing him up or that he has a failproof plan.”

Kang Chan just listened to Kim Hyung-Jung. Regardless of what he said and believed, the fact that he was going to die didn't change.

Kang Chan decided to think of that and that alone.

Chapter 114.1: I'll Follow Your Orders (1)

With the strong feelings caused by the Eurasian Rail announcement now subsiding, the request for the underwater tunnel's construction immediately caught public attention.

As a result, the requests to interview Kang Chan basically disappeared. However, since Yang Jin-Woo rapidly became the center of attention, it was difficult to do anything to him right now.

Around Lunch on Saturday, Kang Chan and Seok Kang-Ho visited Kim Hyung-Jung's office at Samseong-dong.

"Let's order tangsuyuk today as well."

"Sure."

Kim Hyung-Jung happily accepted Seok Kang-Ho's request.

After their meal, Kim Hyung-Jung prepared tea and cigarettes for them, then handed over a report to Kang Chan. "That's the data that the National Intelligence Service has analyzed. As Yang Jin-Woo said, if the highway and the rail that will be using the underwater tunnel get connected, then almost all of the profits from the Eurasian Rail will go to Japan."

"Can't we show things like this on TV or in the press?" Kang Chan asked.

"It's difficult to do that right now." Kim Hyung-Jung sighed as he extinguished the cigarette on the ashtray as if he was stabbing it. "Japan has already reported on TV that they lost to South Korea. Moreover, the public has heard that Yang Jin-Woo's children were murdered because their lives were used to blackmail him into canceling the underwater tunnel. As a result, Yang Jin-Woo has been receiving a lot of sympathy. We describe situations like this like the wind. No matter how much objective data we show, there wouldn't be any no point if it's windy. This strategy has been proven to be effective for election campaigns."

"What if South Korea doesn't give them permission to connect the highway and the rail?"

"Japan will still proceed with the construction of the tunnel, and we will have to face civil resistance whenever their progress gets reported on the news. What's worse is that there's also the National Assembly elections next year, so if we make the wrong move, we won't even be able to protect the Eurasian Rail."

"This fucker is a powerful enemy," Seok Kang-Ho's comment seemed to be the most appropriate description of Yang Jin-Woo.

“Taking any measure right now is also difficult. If Yang Jin-Woo suddenly dies, we have no idea what the public sentiment will turn into,” Kim Hyung-Jung glanced at Kang Chan.

“Mr. Manager,” Kang Chan said.

“Yes?”

“Don’t you find this too stupid?”

Seok Kang-Ho glanced at Kim Hyung-Jung, perhaps because he felt that Kang Chan was coming off strong.

“We have the President and many government institutions, including the National Intelligence Service, yet you’re saying that we’ll still just stand by and watch something like this happen?”

“That’s our current reality.”

Smirking, Kang Chan shook his head. “That’s funny. Not only is there no evidence that Yang Jin-Woo blatantly tried to kill the President and the Prime Minister but you’re also telling me that we can’t stop him from trying to sell the profits of the Eurasian Rail to Japan because you’re scared of public sentiment.”

Kim Hyung-Jung tightly gritted his teeth as he glared at the cigarette.

“Is my criminal immunity still valid?” Kang Chan asked again.

“Mr. Kang Chan.”

“Can’t I use it against Yang Jin-Woo?”

“Mr. Kang Chan! We shouldn’t deal with this using our emotions.”

“Then how do you plan to deal with this without using our emotions?”

Kim Hyung-Jung didn’t answer.

“He blatantly attacked my father, hired a foreign hitman to kill my mother, and killed two pitiful sisters. Please don’t say that I don’t have any evidence.”

Kang Chan knew that Kim Hyung-Jung wasn’t the decision-maker, but it was difficult for him to accept that they just kept being stupidly attacked.

“What should I do? Get naturalized in France with my parents because my parents’ lives are in danger here and I can’t even do anything about it because my opponent has a lot of money and power? Do you really think they’ll be okay just because close to twenty National Intelligence Service agents are protecting them?” Kang Chan asked.

“Hmm.”

Kang Chan took out a cigarette and bit on it. "If there really isn't a way, then I'll take care of Yang Jin-Woo myself and go to France."

Chk chk.

"Whoop, this is the best that I can do. What happens to the Eurasian Rail after that is completely up to the South Korean government. Had I known that we wouldn't be able to find a way to fight back against a plot this obvious, I never would have started this," Kang Chan added.

"Understood. I'll pass on your thoughts to the Director."

The atmosphere was heavy.

"Mr. Kang Chan," Kim Hyung-Jung called.

Kang Chan just looked at him in response.

"The Intelligence Bureaus of France and the United States both commit assassinations only during emergencies. We're not staying put because we can't do that. Rather, we're worried that methods like this could be used to maintain the regime in the future." Kim Hyung-Jung deeply exhaled cigarette smoke. "That's what Russia is like right now. They commit political manipulation and assassinations. Our President is not afraid of the public sentiment's estrangement. He's simply worried about developing the country and settling democracy."

Kang Chan saw enthusiasm in Kim Hyung-Jung's eyes.

Kim Hyung-Jung went to Mongolia to willingly sacrifice his life for his country, and despite enduring horrible pain, he refused to disclose his identity and the country he belonged to.

"I'm sorry if I spoke harshly," Kang Chan apologized.

"Don't be. Honestly, I will use you as an excuse to outright tell the Director what I have in my mind."

Kim Hyung-Jung spread out his hand and stroked his face. Kang Chan could clearly see his frustration about the reality that he couldn't have his way.

"Can we stop the underwater tunnel if Yang Jin-Woo dies?" Kang Chan asked.

"Yang Jin-Woo has ten security guards with them. Based on how they move, they clearly received special training."

Now the situation had really become difficult.

"We should be able to momentarily stop the underwater tunnel project. I also thought about breaking up the Suh Jeong group, but if things go wrong and Japan sends in funds and acquires the Suh Jeong group, then there will no longer be any way to stop the tunnel. Another problem that we have is that the

opposition party that holds the majority of the National Assembly is supporting Yang Jin-Woo,” Kim Tae-Jin explained.

“What about Yang Jin-Woo’s movements?”

“He only goes to and from his house and company. He also strictly moves within the range of CCTVs, so covering up his death as an accident will prove difficult.”

“Tsk!”

Shooting Yang Jin-Woo and killing him was impractical in South Korea. It would be very difficult to clean up the mess because the nation’s attention was focused on him.

“How much time do we have until the construction of the underwater tunnel officially starts?” Kang Chan asked again.

“If our government doesn’t approve of it, then it’ll be absolutely difficult to connect it. However, if we take everything into consideration, including the opposition party impeaching the President and the public sentiment backing them up, then we probably have about a month to spare.”

The situation was so absurd that Kang Chan couldn’t help but laugh. To think that this time, they had to stop the people that did everything they could to stop the Eurasian Rail.

This wasn’t a soccer or baseball game, but they now had to switch places between defense and offense.

“Killing Yang Jin-Woo could lead to the President’s impeachment, which is the worst thing that can happen. The opposition party will put forward the reason that we failed to protect a citizen. If that happens, the underwater tunnel’s construction will proceed again,” Kim Hyung-Jung said.

“What’s with the people who are supposed to be National Assembly members?” Seok Kang-Ho expressed his anger while complaining.

“To get this matter approved, Japan will release an enormous amount of funds even if it would require mobilizing all of the economic power they currently possess,” Kim Hyung-Jung added.

“Making Japan pull out of this matter is ultimately the best way to stop this from happening, then,” Kang Chan commented.

“If that actually happens, I’ll take care of Yang Jin-Woo myself,” Kim Hyung-Jung said.

Kang Chan and Seok Kang-Ho couldn’t help but dejectedly laugh when they felt Kim Hyung-Jung’s desperation to stop the underwater tunnel.

“Let’s put some more thought into this,” Kang Chan said.

They wouldn't be able to find an answer right now anyway, so they ended their discussion there.

Kang Chan and Seok Kang-Ho left Kim Hyung-Jung's office and headed to the specialty coffee shop at the intersection in front of their houses.

As soon as they arrived, Seok Kang-Ho went to the counter to order their drinks.

Buzz— Buzz—Buzz—. Buzz— Buzz—Buzz—. Buzz— Buzz—Buzz—.

Kang Chan held up his phone when it rang. The call was from an unknown number. He wasn't getting that many calls requesting an interview anymore, so he answered it.

“Hello?”

- It's me.

Kang Chan had heard this voice somewhere before.

- It's me, Eun-Sil.

Ha! Is something about to happen again?

Kang Chan looked around his surroundings before answering.

“Why did you call me?”

- Can we meet for a bit?

“What's going on? Just tell me on the phone.”

- We have to talk in person. It doesn't matter where—just give me a location and I'll meet you there.

To Kang Chan, it was as if she just said, 'It doesn't matter where you are. I'll bring trouble to you.'

Thinking Heo Eun-Sil wouldn't just back down, Kang Chan told her where they were and to come here in an hour.

“Who was that?” Seok Kang-Ho asked. Despite having voraciously eaten all of the tangsuyuk by himself earlier, he still brought over patbingsu that was as big as a washbowl again.

“Eun-Sil. She told me she has something to say, so I told her to come here in an hour.”

“Eun-Sil? You mean Heo Eun-Sil?”

“Yeah.”

“What's up with her this time?” Seok Kang-Ho ate a spoonful of patbingsu as he cocked his head. “There's nothing to worry about. Let's take care of the problems in our way.”

“If I could, I would have already organized mercenaries and gone to Japan.”

“That’s also a good idea—urgh!” Seok Kang-Ho hit his head. “Wow! I’m getting brain freeze! I ate way too much patbingsu in one go.”

Spending time with Seok Kang-Ho was worth it since Kang Chan got to laugh whenever they were together.

Chapter 114.2: I’ll Follow Your Orders (1)

Heo Eun-Sil entered the specialty coffee shop around ten minutes since Seok Kang-Ho left.

She was wearing a tight t-shirt and short shorts that barely covered her underwear. Plus since she only applied red lipstick, it looked as if she had the words ‘I have fun a lot’ written all over her body.

After she looked at Kang Chan, she immediately headed to the counter after saying “What do you want to drink?”

“You looked cool on TV.” Heo Eun-Sil sat across from Kang Chan, and she talked to him while taking off the plastic from the straw.

“What’s going on?”

“I called you because of the festival.”

“The festival?”

Kang Chan waited for a moment because she had the straw in her mouth.

“Our school has a fall festival. It’s done in two high schools along with Shimdeok, and they’re going all out by gathering the parents as well. So help us.”

After she put down the drink, Heo Eun-Sil looked at Kang Chan as if she was asking him for something that she entrusted to him. “I’m the operation committee member of the festival.”

Kang Chan couldn’t help but smirk.

“We don’t want to lose to Shimdeok Highschool this time, so all the athletics club members decided to become operations committee members. This will be my last festival since I won’t be able to go to college.”

“What do we have to do to win?” Kang Chan asked.

“We need a lot of residents to come to the school festival for the performance on the last day.”

“Are you asking me to call people to the festival?”

Heo Eun-Sil looked at Kang Chan with eyes that asked why he was pretending to not know what she was saying. “I heard that the father of one of the students there runs an entertainment agency, so Shimdeok is inviting So Yoo-Ran[1] and AMP. Don’t you know AMP? It’s an up-and-coming girl group.”

Phew, what did I expect from meeting this bitch? In the end, she was asking me to call celebrities to the school festival.

“I heard that our high school has had inquiries from students looking to transfer since we have gotten rid of bullying. For the first time, I find it fun to go to school nowadays, so I wanted to make my last festival cool.”

Shouldn't she say things like this seriously for it to be convincing? However, she was just perversely sitting back against the chair and swinging her crossed leg.

“I'll buy clothes today. Accompany me,” Heo Eun-Sil continued.

Does this bitch have something on me that even I am not aware of or has she gone crazy because she can't act like a delinquent anymore?

“I only have clothes like this. I'm also trying to wear normal-looking clothes like the other kids, but I really don't know what to wear at all, so pick them for me,” Heo Eun-Sil explained.

“You can go with Ho-Jun for things like that.”

“How can I trust him? He's just like me.”

Kang Chan didn't know anything else, but he had to at least acknowledge this bitch's guts.

“I also didn't put on makeup because you told me not to,” Heo Eun-Sil added.

Kang Chan was about to get annoyed. He already had a lot of things he had to pay attention to, and here she was thinking of him as a pushover...

“Come with me just for today. I won't ask you for this kind of favor ever again. I really just want to live an honest life.”

She thought she looked and sounded cute.

‘Ha!’

Kang Chan looked at Heo Eun-Sil with a profound expression. There was no way for him to know what this bitch was thinking.

He would rather look into a math textbook.

“I can't even choose my own clothes,” Kang Chan said.

“That just means you'll be choosing clothes worn by simpletons, right?”

Kang Chan genuinely laughed this time.

Fine. Since she claims she wants to live a normal life now that she has quit bullying, why shouldn't I go with her and help her buy clothes just this once?

“Where do they sell the clothes that you want?” Kang Chan asked.

“Tron Square.”

Kang Chan was as tired of that place as he was of the Namsan Hotel.

“Alright. Let’s go.”

When Kang Chan stood up, Heo Eun-Sil readily followed him.

They hailed a taxi, and Kang Chan sat on the passenger’s seat.

“Tron Square, please,” Kang Chan told the driver.

No one said anything on the way.

Kang Chan thought he knew what the driver was thinking just by looking at his expression—in the back seat, Heo Eun-Sil was sitting perversely and swinging her crossed legs.

It was Saturday, so Tron Square was extremely crowded.

Clothing stores were lined up on the second and third floors, which were connected to a department store. However, they were all expensive.

“There are cheap clothes inside over there,” Heo Eun-Sil said.

It was hard to compare her to Michelle, but Heo Eun-Sil also attracted people’s attention.

She looked cheap and like a delinquent.

It would be difficult to clearly display those two things as this bitch did.

Unlike his worries, barely anyone recognized Kang Chan.

Heo Eun-Sil went into a store that was quite large even for Tron Square standards. The products were cheap, and there were quite a lot of young people inside.

Behind Heo Eun-Sil, who was choosing clothes, Kang Chan stood blankly.

Unlike when he went to the department store to buy Yoo Hye-Sook’s clothes with Kang Dae-Kyung, Kang Chan felt so suffocated it was as if a rope was tied around his neck.

“How’s this?” Heo Eun-Sil asked.

“Is that for babies? It’s the same as what you’re wearing right now.”

Clang.

Heo Eun-Sil roughly put down the clothes that she had picked out, then asked, “What about this one?”

“Are you doing this on purpose?”

“Doing what?”

“That’s shorter than what you’re wearing right now.”

“This is short?”

Heo Eun-Sil quickly turned around when she saw that the look in Kang Chan’s eyes had changed.

“Heo Eun-Sil?”

Even though Kang Chan was calling her, Heo Eun-Sil pretended not to know him.

“Hey.”

This wasn't right at all. He just wasted his time.

Kang Chan accompanied her because he remembered the look in the new member's eyes when he asked Kang Chan for his hat and bandana and because Heo Eun-Sil said that she would live an honest life for once. However, enduring this any longer was difficult.

Kang Chan was about to turn around and leave.

Whoosh!

Heo Eun-Sil suddenly turned around. “I don't know! I really don't! That's why I asked you to help me! I don't know what to wear because you aren't choosing clothes for me first! What kind of clothes do you like? What will make me look like a normal kid?!”

Everyone nearby looked at them.

The look in Heo Eun-Sil's eyes and her expression seemed to show that she found this situation unfair. She wanted to pick the right clothes, but she was failing at it. Even though Kang Chan didn't know why this bitch was trying this hard, he could at least clearly tell that she wanted to make this work.

“Leave,” Kang Chan said.

Heo Eun-Sil reflexively looked at Kang Chan's right hand, afraid that he would hit her.

“Get out of the store.”

When Kang Chan took Heo Eun-Sil out of the store, she looked very disappointed.

On the hallway, they found a bench without a backrest.

“Sit,” Kang Chan ordered.

Heo Eun-Sil sat down loudly with a plop, then crossed her legs. She looked as if she felt mistreated as she glanced at Kang Chan, who was calling someone.

“Hello?”

- Channy! Where are you?

“I'm at Tron Square. Michelle, I'm sorry to ask this of you, but can you send a wardrobe stylist over?”

- You're buying clothes, Channy? I'll go!

“That's not it—there's this female student who wants to wear normal clothes but can't choose what to buy. Just let me know if there's a wardrobe stylist available since it'll be uncomfortable if you come here.”

- Is it your new woman, by any chance?

“Don’t say unnecessary things.” Kang Chan replied flatly, making Michelle quickly change her tone.

- Sorry, Channy. There’s an outdoor shoot at Yeouido and Nonhyeon-dong, so hmm, they’ll get to Tron Square in twenty minutes. Where exactly are you?

“I’m at the hallway on the second floor.”

- I’ll tell the employee to leave right now. Are you free today? Let’s have dinner together.

Kang Chan had shown her that he was free.

“Alright. I’ll call you once I’ve taken care of this.”

- Okay, Channy.

When he ended the call, Heo Eun-Sil was still sitting with her legs crossed. Her shorts were so short it actually looked as if she wasn’t wearing any bottoms.

They had to wait twenty minutes.

“I’m going to go smoke a cigarette. Do you want to stay here?” Kang Chan asked.

“I’ll come with you.” Heo Eun-Sil stood up.

They went down the stairs from the second floor and headed to the flower bed where Kang Chan beat up the kids last time.

Kang Chan took out a cigarette, then sighed. “Do you want to smoke?”

“Yeah.”

How could the same “yeah” sound so different as an answer? Now that he thought about it, he had never bought Kim Mi-Young a single T-shirt.

While they were smoking, some people carefully bowed to Kang Chan as they passed by.

When Kang Chan glanced at them, Heo Eun-Sil kindly explained who they were. “They’re the bullies from Shimdeok Highschool.”

They returned to the second floor, and after ten minutes of waiting, the wardrobe stylist arrived.

“Hello!” The employee greeted Kang Chan.

“I’m sorry for calling you on a Saturday.”

“Not at all. I don’t ever feel like I’m having a hard time whenever I’m at work, Mr. President!”

The wardrobe stylist looked more excited than Heo Eun-Sil, who was the one that was going to buy clothes.

“Since our company is producing a drama that has our actors playing both the lead and supporting roles, the production company will become even more

powerful for as long as the wardrobe and the makeup employees remain responsible for the lead actors. Not only me, but all the employees have so much energy nowadays that it's as if we ate mountain ginseng[2]!" the employee exclaimed.

This was surprising.

Kang Chan looked for an opportunity to introduce Heo Eun-Sil to the employee, then asked the employee to look for clothes that Heo Eun-Sil could wear regularly.

"How much are you thinking of spending?" the employee asked.

Kang Chan looked at Heo Eun-Sil, but for the first time, he felt her hesitating. It was just for a really short moment, but Kang Chan remembered what he felt when he was parting ways with the kids that said that they should eat pork cutlets, which was very absurd.

"I'll pay for it, so if it's not something very expensive, then you don't have to worry about money," Kang Chan said.

"Understood, Mr. President."

Heo Eun-Sil didn't look at Kang Chan to the end.

The wardrobe stylist looked around their surroundings with an expression that was hard to tell if she didn't know or if she was pretending to not know anything about Kang Chan and Heo Eun-Sil's relationship. Soon after, she went into a store.

She did the work of many people by herself very quickly and without problems.

The wardrobe stylist, who had gone around four stores, instantly made Heo Eun-Sil look normal.

She didn't look tacky at all.

The employee told Heo Eun-Sil how to wear the clothes and which ones to pair together among those that they had bought. The employee also advised her about the different styles she could go with.

For some reason, Heo Eun-Sil didn't say unnecessary things and just put on the clothes that the female employee told her to wear and accepted the clothes that the employee picked for her.

The female wardrobe stylist left in less than an hour.

Honestly, Heo Eun-Sil looked like a different person.

'I should also buy proper clothes.'

Kang Chan didn't know that clothes could make a person look this different.

"Are you satisfied?" Kang Chan asked.

Heo Eun-Sil didn't answer.

"Let's smoke before we leave," Kang Chan continued.

Shopping around was very tiring.

Kang Chan went in front of the flower bed again, took out cigarettes, and lit them up with Heo Eun-Sil.

In any case, they were finally done.

As Kang Chan thoughtlessly looked around his surroundings, he suddenly had a weird feeling. Glancing to his side, he found Heo Eun-Sil crying.

She's crying with just a few clothes? Did the wardrobe stylist's expertise touch her?

Kang Chan shook his head.

This bitch tires people out...

"This is the first time," Heo Eun-Sil said, wiping the back of her hand that she used to rub her nose on her butt. "This is the first time someone didn't request anything after buying clothes for me."

This crazy bitch—you should wipe your tears. Why are you only wiping your nose?

"I hated losing more than dying, but there was nothing that I could do. Every time I tried to do a good job, nobody helped... me. Urgh." Heo Eun-Sil sniffled. She should stand up straight when talking.

"Give me another cigarette," Heo Eun-Sil said.

Kang Chan just quickly gave her one.

"I want to finish the festival nicely. I'll show the sperm bitches and the bullies from Shimdeok that even I can do a good job. I'll also try to become a wardrobe stylist."

Kang Chan didn't know who she would be working with, but that actor would be the best in the universe when it came to wearing clothes that made them look vulgar.

"Give me that unnie's phone number so I can ask questions and about hagwons that I can go to. Urgh!" Heo Eun-Sil said.

This bitch tired him out so much.

Chapter 115.1: I'll Follow Your Orders (2)

Not calling Michelle after Kang Chan sent Heo Eun-Sil home wasn't polite. He obviously called her, and Michelle also appeared at Tron Square in twenty minutes while attracting a lot of attention.

"Channy!"

The moment Michelle went into his arms, it felt as if a lot of people were looking at him. It seemed some of the people were thinking, 'Is that the guy that I saw on TV?' so he quickly went somewhere else.

"I brought my car. Let's go get dinner," Michelle said.

For as long as he could get out of Tron Square, it was all the same to Kang Chan.

Michelle had parked the car in the basement parking lot, so they immediately headed to Bang bae-dong.

“There's a restaurant frequented mostly by French people,” Michelle continued. She was definitely quick-witted.

On the way to the restaurant, Kang Chan was told that the drama would premiere this coming Tuesday and that they were expecting good responses from the viewers.

“It's this place,” Michelle said.

They headed deep into the alley in Bangbae-dong, seemingly burrowing into it. Eventually, they reached a small restaurant that was small enough to make Kang Chan wonder if it was a snack bar. If they didn't have their menu by the entrance, people would've had trouble figuring out that it was a restaurant.

Heading inside, they found about ten tables. But the layout was simple enough for there to be seven tables for two people.

They didn't make a reservation, but since it was still too early to have dinner, they got a seat at the innermost, quiet part of the restaurant.

The food unexpectedly tasted quite good.

They had an early dinner while drinking the wine that they ordered.

“I'm thinking of inviting your mother to this restaurant,” Michelle said.

Kang Chan looked at Michelle, who was smiling. He wanted to settle something one more time.

“Michelle, let me be honest. I already like someone. So-Yeon even met her when she came to the hospital.”

“So-Yeon went to the hospital? When?” Michelle showed interest in what he said about Eun So-Yeon, who wasn't really important to the conversation.

“No wonder! She's certainly different since she's an actress,” Michelle said afterward.

“What's different about her?”

Michelle gave Kang Chan a sly glance. “Channy, you do know that So-Yeon also likes you, right?”

“Are you sure you're not ill?”

Bursting out with laughter just as she was drinking wine, Michelle urgently took a napkin and wiped her mouth.

“You're really charming when you're like this,” Michelle said.

A Frenchman and a Frenchwoman sat down at the table next to them, but Kang Chan and Michelle could still comfortably converse since they didn't know Korean.

“She's not the only one. The wardrobe employees and several actors are probably having a hard time because of you.”

“Stop it. Even if they did like me when they saw me on TV, I’m not interested at all. I don’t like them,” Kang Chan said.

“You’re always like that, but that only makes the people who like you even more frustrated.”

Michelle seemed to feel indifferent.

“Compared to So-Yeon, I think I’m happy. I’ve dated a lot of men in the past, so you should also date a lot of people if you can. However, I’ll only give up completely if you end up marrying some other woman,” Michelle added. She looked as if she found this situation funny.

“Phew!”

Kang Chan wanted to smoke and have coffee.

“There’s a bar behind this place that has a similar atmosphere. Would you like to go there and smoke?” Michelle asked. Her tactfulness was amazing.

After paying for their meal, Kang Chan followed Michelle and went to the wine bar that was right behind the restaurant.

Kang Chan thought the two establishments should’ve just been one restaurant.

They went into the narrow alley beside the restaurant, finding a table in a yard that was as small as his palm. They could smoke there without worry.

Kang Chan didn’t know that there was this kind of place in Bangbae-dong. It was somewhere that Yoo Hye-Sook would really like.

They ordered coffee, then took out a cigarette.

Yeah, I should take my time enjoying myself just for today.

Kang Chan became more generous.

“While I was watching TV, I thought about which one would give me more happiness: not being able to see you ever again, or still getting to meet you but in this situation,” Michelle said. She had turned weird since they started filming a drama.

“Don’t look at me like that,” Michelle added.

Why was she acting cute? She was very pretty, too.

“Just allow me to live like this,” Michelle continued.

“Forget about it. I get what you’re saying, so let’s stop here.”

The female employee who brought over their coffee looked at Michelle and Kang Chan strangely, then quickly headed into the bar.

Michelle was wearing a suit. Clothes like this really suited her well.

“Right, Channy. If you’re available tomorrow, then let’s buy some clothes. You looked really good in the suit you wore when you were on TV.”

“Should we do that?”

Even if she didn’t ask, he already thought of buying clothes. He didn’t know which ones would look good on him, though, so Michelle’s suggestion wasn’t bad.

When the skies darkened, the lights in the yard turned on.

“Channy, don’t you have desires?” Michelle asked.

“Desires for what?”

“Like making a lot of money or becoming famous. Things like that. Isn’t there something that you really want to do?”

“I’m not sure.”

Right now, he wanted to kill Yang Jin-Woo.

Kang Chan suddenly realized he was living in quite a different world from Michelle. This was going to be difficult for Yoo Hye-Sook, Kang Dae-Kyung, and Kim Mi-Young to accept.

He once again felt surprised that he didn’t have a hard time thinking of killing someone.

“What’s wrong?” Michelle asked.

“It’s nothing. I was just thinking about what I want to do.”

“I know you’re not an ordinary person. You are acquainted with Ambassador Lanok, abruptly appeared on TV, have amazing personal connections, and have lots of money that I sometimes get to see.”

Looking serious, Michelle continued, “However, when I looked at you, you didn’t look happy accomplishing any of those things. But did you know that your eyes smile whenever you’re with your mother, when you were eating with your parents at the Namsan Hotel, and when you were at the hospital? While I was looking at you smiling, I thought I really didn’t want to let you slip through my fingers.”

In the end, her conclusion went to that topic...

“Channy, find work that will make you happy. One that can make you smile the same way you do when you’re looking at your mother. I heard that the money you entrusted to Cecile wasn’t little, so at least use some of it. Look for what will really make you happy.”

Her big eyes were filled with truth and desperation.

“Are you satisfied with what you’re doing right now?” Kang Chan asked.

“Yes, except for one thing.”

“What’s that? Wait! Don’t answer.”

When he saw the look in her eyes become coquettish, Kang Chan thought he already knew the answer. He felt as if the gender roles had changed.

“Can I drink wine?” Michelle asked.

“Sure.”

Since Kang Chan had already made time for her, he didn’t want to upset her.

While they were drinking more wine, Kang Chan couldn’t stop thinking, ‘What do I really want to do?’

Thirty minutes later, French people had occupied a handful of tables.

The oil candles on the tables were lit, and quiet jazz music played in the background.

The atmosphere wasn’t bad.

Michelle stood up and approached Kang Chan, then sat on top of his leg, seemingly climbing on top of him.

French people didn’t even bat an eyelash at things like this.

“You’re heavy,” Kang Chan complained.

Michelle mischievously wrinkled her nose, then briefly kissed Kang Chan’s nose. “This is my reward for making me worry while you were at the hospital.”

Michelle stretched out her arms and tightly hugged Kang Chan.

The smell of her skin, the feeling of her chest on his face, the heat from her body, and even her breath that brushed past his hair...

It would be dangerous if they kept this up.

“Hug me. I was really scared because I thought something would go wrong for you,” Michelle said.

Remembering Michelle crying in the hospital, Kang Chan hugged her.

“I won’t request for more if we can keep living like this. I’d like it if you stop doing dangerous things like that, though. I’ll even make money for us if I have to and if you’re okay with it,” Michelle added.

Michelle raised her head and looked into Kang Chan with her big blue eyes.

“I’m tired.”

“Channy, I get really turned on when you act like this.” Michelle gave him a mischievous look, kissed his nose one more time, then stood up.

Chapter 115.2: I’ll Follow Your Orders (2)

Kang Chan woke up to a calm Sunday, which hadn't happened in a long time.

Thanks to Yang Jin-Woo using the underwater tunnel to stir the whole country, Kang Chan rarely got phone calls. Of course, it was a slightly different story for Yoo Hye-Sook.

They had toast, milk, omelets, coffee, and tea for breakfast.

Yoo Hye-Sook looked happy as she ate the breakfast that Kang Dae-Kyung and Kang Chan prepared.

The Chiffre was selling well, and work for the Foundation was also making great progress.

"What are your plans for today, Channy?" Yoo Hye-Sook asked.

"I'm thinking of buying clothes with Michelle later."

"Clothes?"

"Yes. Ones that are comfortable. I'll also buy a suit since I keep having to go to stern formal events."

"I see! You definitely need those. Do you have money? Should I give you some?"

"I'm fine. I get a salary from D.I."

"I see."

Yoo Hye-Sook drank tea as she nodded in response to Kang Chan's excuse that he had just made up...

"Mother, what would you like me to do in the future?"

Kang Dae-Kyung and Yoo Hye-Sook looked at him with perplexed eyes, perhaps because the question came out of nowhere.

"Honestly I'm not really sure what I like to do and what I should do for a living in the future," Kang Chan added.

"Did you think of that just now?" Kang Dae-Kyung asked.

"Michelle asked me about it yesterday, and I couldn't answer. Now I'm curious about what you two think about it."

When Kang Dae-Kyung received a look from Yoo Hye-Sook, he smiled widely. "I forget that you're a high schooler when I look at you sometimes, but now that you've said something like that, you finally seem like one."

Seeing Kang Chan smiling softly, Kang Dae-Kyung continued with a gentle expression. "If you don't know what you want to do in the future yet, then just focus on the present. What are you so worried about? You're still young. Figuring out what you really want to do and who you want to spend the rest of your life with takes time."

"You should go to university first," Yoo Hye-Sook said.

Kang Dae-Kyung smiled as if he knew that she would say something like that. “So take your time thinking about it so you’ll end up doing something that you really want to do and marry someone you really love.”

“Is what you’re doing right now something that you wanted to do?” Kang Chan blurted out, not really having any specific purpose. He didn’t even intend to ask the question.

“After being discharged from the military, making your mom happy was what I wanted to do the most.”

Kang Chan didn’t expect such an answer.

“For me, it didn’t matter what I did for a living. I would be happy for as long as I got to start and protect a family with your mom. That’s why there’s only really one thing that made me think, ‘I should really do that.’”

“What was that?” Kang Chan asked.

“Marrying your mom.”

Kang Chan couldn’t believe that he could say something like that so seriously.

Kang Chan looked to the side, finding Yoo Hye-Sook looking awkward but touched at the same time.

“Regardless of what kind of woman you date, if it’s someone you love, then your mom and I are satisfied. The same goes for your job as well. However, we do wish that you don’t do something or date someone who will make us worry. You understand, right?”

“Yes.”

Kang Chan was thankful that he could talk about something like this with his father. He also thought that he wanted to be like Kang Dae-Kyung as a father.

“Let’s clean this up,” Kang Dae-Kyung told Kang Chan.

“I’ll handle this,” Yoo Hye-Sook offered.

“Hey! We’re just cleaning up after a meal on Sunday. Don’t take away the joy that I get from doing this with our son.”

“Honey!”

Kang Chan quickly stood up and cleaned up the plates because he thought that he would cringe because of the look in their eyes and the way they talked.

After they finished cleaning up, Kang Chan got changed and went out to the living room.

“I’ll be back,” Kang Chan said.

“Okay, Channy. Have fun,” Yoo Hye-Sook said.

“Have fun,” Kang Dae-Kyung said.

“I will.”

Yoo Hye-Sook sent off Kang Chan and walked over to the living room. “Honey, our Channy grew up again, didn’t he?”

“You think so? I’ve been feeling as if Channy was about ten years older than his age lately, but now, for the first time in so long, I was reminded that he’s still a teenager.”

“Honey! If Channy is ten years older, wouldn’t that make him twenty-nine right now?”

“There’s been a lot of times when I felt that he was,” Kang Dae-Kyung continued, “So I doubt I would be that surprised even if he says that he’ll get married right this instant.”

“Who would he marry? He wouldn’t marry Michelle by any chance, would he? Honey?”

“What’s wrong with that lady?”

Yoo Hye-Sook, who was in front of Kang Dae-Kyung, looked worried. “She’s older, and she’s also a foreigner.”

“Oh dear, madam. Didn’t you see how Channy treats that lady? He totally treats her like a child. Let’s stop talking about who Channy likes. Even if he says he’s marrying Mi-Young, I think you’ll still worry.”

“Why would I be worried about her?”

“You didn’t look too happy talking to Mi-Young’s mom.”

“I was just worried that she would give Channy a hard time because she was putting on airs,” Yoo Hye-Sook explained.

“See? You already even thought about it,”

Kang Dae-Kyung smiled, and Yoo Hye-Sook playfully side-eyed him.

“Honey, how hard would it have been for us if my mother-in-law was against our relationship while you waited for me and when you gave up studying abroad because of me? Just as she did for us, let’s not get greedy and ask too much from our Channy. While we wait for him to return from the military, let’s practice becoming selfless and respecting his choices,” Kang Dae-Kyung added.

Kang Dae-Kyung then stroked Yoo Hye-Sook’s back, who looked upset.

Kang Chan met up with Michelle and headed to the department store to buy things such as clothes, shoes, and sneakers. He started with suits from so-called luxury brands, then bought comfortable clothes that would be okay for him to wear when he met Lanok, but the prices for those were beyond imagination.

Honestly, Kang Chan wondered if it was right to spend this much on clothes.

“You can mix and match the clothes that you’ve been wearing until now with the clothes you bought today,” Michelle said, so Kang Chan didn’t say anything about it.

Two hours later, Kang Chan was completely exhausted. It was as if he ran nonstop for about half the day.

“Let’s buy some clothes for your mother this time, Channy,” Michelle suggested.

“For my mother?”

“She’ll be upset if you just go home on this kind of day. You should also buy a tie for your father.”

Was that true? It was something that he never thought about, but he was honestly thankful that she was being considerate.

“Channy, I’ll buy the clothes for your parents.”

“Let’s not do that—you already chose clothes for me.”

“Treat me to lunch in return, then.”

Kang Chan found it difficult to stop her since she said that it was to show her sincerity.

The long shopping spree ended there.

Kang Chan wanted to eat Korean food because he had been eating Western food since breakfast. However, since he was treating her to lunch, he decided to just eat what Michelle wanted to have.

Michelle parked the car near Hannam-dong[1].

“The Yukgaejang here is good,” Michelle commented.

Kang Chan smirked, thinking she read his mind.

They enjoyed their delicious lunch, then had tea at a nearby cafe. The sunlight during the leisurely Sunday afternoon wasn’t bad.

“Let’s go now,” Kang Chan said afterward.

Michelle obediently stood up from her seat. Even though Kang Chan thought that she was being clingy, she treated him comfortably at times like this.

“Hug me right now because I won’t be able to hug you in front of your house,” Michelle said.

She wasn't suffering from a lack of love, but when he reached out and hugged her, Michelle buried her face in his chest.

"You won't do something that will make me worried again, will you?" Michelle asked.

"Why would I do something like that?"

"Don't get hurt, Channy." Michelle gently pushed herself away from Kang Chan, then held his hand.

It didn't take long for them to arrive in front of Kang Chan's house.

"Let's talk later, Channy."

"Sure."

Kang Chan got out of the car with the clothes and immediately went up to his house.

"I'm back," Kang Chan said.

Yoo Hye-Sook, who was watching TV, greeted Kang Chan at the entrance.

"Did you have fun? Are those what you bought today?" Yoo Hye-Sook asked.

"Yes."

Kang Chan put down the shopping bag in front of the entrance, then looked for the clothes he bought for Kang Dae-Kyung and Yoo Hye-Sook.

"What else did you buy?"

Kang Chan found and handed over the clothes he bought for them to Yoo Hye-Sook.

"Michelle bought these for you two. She said that this is for father, and this is for mother."

"Michelle did?"

The unexpected present seemed to have caught Kang Dae-Kyung and Yoo Hye-Sook by surprise.

Kang Chan left his clothes in his room and headed back out, finding his parents unwrapping their clothes.

"Oh my! This is really pretty! What do you think, honey?" Yoo Hye-Sook asked Kang Dae-Kyung.

"It suits you!"

The blouse that Yoo Hye-Sook was holding looked sophisticated, even to Kang Chan.

"Yours is a tie? Michelle has great taste. I should really go to Dongdaemun with her next time," Yoo Hye-Sook commented.

This was what Michelle was talking about.

While looking at his parents, who appeared to be satisfied with what they got, he thought that he should've bought some more for them.

“Channy, would you like to have some fruits?” Yoo Hye-Sook asked afterward.

“Should I?”

Kang Chan thought it wouldn't be bad to enjoy the leisurely Sunday afternoon with his family as well, which he hadn't done in a long time.

“What's that?” Kang Chan asked.

“It seems like there has been a massive earthquake in the deep waters of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. Due to the tsunami watch, the beaches across Hawaii and Europe are in an uproar,” Kang Dae-Kyung explained.

As Yoo Hye-Sook brought over fruits and peeled them, Kang Dae-Kyung explained the news that was being reported on TV.

If something was on the news nowadays, then it broke the record.

“According to the news, there has never been an earthquake as wide and strong as this one, and two earthquakes have never occurred at the same time in two seas. Since the entire tectonic plates could shake if things go wrong, they report that places like Los Angeles and Hawaii and some small islands are worried that they might cease to exist,” Kang Dae-Kyung added.

No matter how bad it was, it wouldn't be as dangerous as Yang Jin-Woo.

Kang Chan handed the oriental melon to Kang Dae-Kyung and ate a slice.

If not for the massive tsunami, he wished an earthquake like that to happen between South Korea and Japan as well.

Chapter 116: It begins now (1)

Monday.

After Kang Dae-Kyung and Yoo Hye-Sook went to work, Kang Chan sat in the living room and suddenly felt a sense of being detached from the rest of the world.

“I should get some work done.”

Kang Chan had just decided to take care of Yang Jin-Woo when he received a call from Kim Hyung-Jung.

“Hello?”

-Mr. Kang Chan, if it's all right with you, can we meet in my office?

“Sure. I'm on my way.”

Their conversation ended without the typical formalities.

Assuming Kim Hyung-Jung had something important to say, Kang Chan immediately changed clothes. He then left the apartment complex, got into the back of a taxi, and watched the passing view outside.

The streets were peaceful.

Project Unicorn, terrorist attacks, the underwater tunnel, earthquakes, and tsunamis—the monotony of daily life swallowed these significant events discussed on the news, creating a blissful ignorance.

Special agents suffered wretched deaths in Mongolia to create and protect the country's peace. However, Huh Ha-Soo betrayed his nation, and bastards like Yang Jin-Woo killed the powerless while enjoying wealthy and lavish lifestyles.

Was he born again to protect the common citizens from those sons of bitches?

Kang Chan smirked.

“How grand,” he said without realizing it.

“Pardon?” the driver asked.

“I was just talking to myself about the nice weather.”

“Sure is. I can smell autumn in the mornings and evenings now.”

The elderly driver glanced at Kang Chan through the rearview mirror.

“Suits like that must be expensive, huh?”

“This?”

Kang Chan couldn't reply right away. This attire, which he had bought with Michelle, definitely wasn't cheap even according to his standards.

“My son was recently employed. I want to get him a suit, but it's not easy. He's short and chubby like me. The least I can do is dress him up well, but goodness, it's hard with my paycheck.”

The driver's expression was filled with pride, yet it was also filled with regret for not being able to give his son an expensive outfit.

“Your son must have gotten a nice job.”

“Samjeong,” the driver replied and peeked back.

Kang Chan wasn't aware of how nice a job like that was, but it was harder to pretend not to notice the driver's expectant eyes.

“That's amazing.”

“Everyone says that, but we'll have to see. Huhuhu.”

He looked happy.

The driver praised his son a few times more before they arrived at Samseong-Dong.

“Thank you. Have a good day.”

“You too, sir.”

Kang Chan paid the fare, thinking the driver was ten million times better than Yang Jin-Woo as a father.

Sure enough, the door opened the moment he stepped on the fifth floor.

“Welcome, Mr. Kang Chan.”

“I’m sure you’re not waiting around to see when I arrive, so how do you open the door for me every time?”

“We have an employee whose job is to monitor the building,” Kim Hyung-Jung replied as he led Kang Chan in.

That made sense.

After closing the door, Kim Hyung-Jung brought over coffee and sat across from Kang Chan.

“Let’s smoke first.”

They lit the tips of their cigarettes.

“To be honest, I was planning to submit a letter of resignation. I would rather quit and take care of Yang Jin-Woo myself than lose you,” he said with intense resolve in his eyes. Kang Chan didn’t know if the man was obstinate or just simple-minded.

Kim Hyung-Jung reciprocated Kang Chan’s light smile.

“I already told the Director of the National Intelligence Service. I used your name and said ‘that’s what Mr. Kang Chan wanted me to deliver,’ so you have to explain this properly.”

“Why are you beating around the bush?”

“There’s this thing called the Grand Circle.”

“Grand Circle?”

“It’s an organization of chaebols and politicians that collude with each other. Depending on their motives, they would even use methods like marriage to establish relationships with each other.”

What bullshit. Did they think they were living in the Middle Ages?

“For those with endless greed for power and wealth, entering the Grand Circle means getting to enjoy generational wealth.”

“Whew! Don’t chaebols and politicians already live in comfort? I don’t understand why they still have to do such a thing.”

“Probably to protect their riches. I presume they wish to eternally benefit from their fortune amid new political powers and citizens becoming more conscious.”

“So that’s why the opposition party objected to the Eurasian Rail so profusely.”

Frowning, Kang Chan took a sip of his coffee.

“Yang Jin-Woo stands at the top of the Grand Circle. His recently deceased daughters-in-law and son-in-law were children from the top chaebol families, and one was the daughter of the former prime minister.

Kang Chan felt apologetic to the dead, but that was fucked up.

“That’s part of why eliminating Yang Jin-Woo can’t be done rashly. If something goes wrong, you may have to fight against everyone with vested interests. Currently, it would be difficult to handle them if they temporarily move their businesses and fortunes overseas and pose political challenges as well.”

“Can businesses be moved in that manner?”

“Yes, and they can even sell the vendor companies that are essential for our everyday life abroad.”

Kang Chan couldn’t quite understand what Kim Hyung-Jung was saying.

“If they sell the companies that are necessary for our daily lives overseas, costs will inflate.”

“Is that possible?”

“The private companies that purchased patents from the government during past political eras can do that because they have a monopoly. Gas, for example.”

“That’s ridiculous.”

“They’ll collaborate to set up a company abroad and attempt to control things from overseas. Meanwhile, within Korea, they’ll find a reason to impeach the president.”

“Whew!”

Kang Chan lifted his cigarette, finding the topic frustrating to listen to.

“What I’m about to tell you is something that neither the President nor the Prime Minister knows. It’s an independent action on the Director’s part.” Kim Hyung-Jung took a deep breath, then continued with a rigid expression. “He has decided to form a special team that’s positioned above the law to eliminate people who support terrorist attacks within the Grand Circle, like Yang Jin-Woo, and politicians who sell our military’s secrets like Huh Ha-Soo.”

Not even the cigarette could make Kim Hyung-Jung’s expression relax.

“I will take responsibility. If any scandals arise as a result of this decision, it will be due to my independent judgment. The Director agreed to take responsibility as well. We three are the only ones who know about this.”

Kang Chan let out a low sigh.

“If things go awry, you’ll be wrongly framed as a murderer and might still be criticized even after death.”

“I recall you being just as determined when you said you’d kill Yang Jin-Woo and leave for France.”

Society and the taxi driver who drove Kang Chan here wouldn’t know that people like them existed.

“Your strength is undoubtedly required for this task. Will you assist us?”

Kang Chan smiled wryly, and Kim Hyung-Jung smiled similarly in response.

“The thought of being able to create the country that I dream about excites me. I despise how the citizens suffer over expensive electricity bills while businesses rake in trillions of won. I resent how a select few fill their wallets by controlling services that should be run by the government. If it means our citizens get to live in a country where the bare necessities of medical care are guaranteed and no one takes their life because it’s too taxing, I’ll willingly walk the path to hell now.”

It was a fine aspiration, but it all sounded too grand to Kang Chan.

“I will definitely connect the Eurasian Rail to create a South Korea where citizens are happy and grateful to be born.”

The tension on Kim Hyung-Jung’s face didn’t ease up.

“Surely you’ll help me?”

He wanted to hear Kang Chan’s answer and gain certainty.

“I just wanted to kill Yang Jin-Woo, so how did it get blown out of proportion like this?”

“Even if we kill him, others will spring up like mushrooms and clash with you.”

This matter wouldn’t end so easily. It would require getting their hands dirty with blood again and again. Moreover, initiating it meant Kang Chan would have to say goodbye to his dream of living a normal life.

He didn’t know what he was going to do with his future, but at the very least, he wanted to become the pillar of his own family, just like Kang Dae-Kyung.

Would Kang Dae-Kyung, Yoo Hye-Sook, and Kim Mi-Young understand and accept this decision? It could mean making them live with fingers pointed at them for the rest of their lives. What if he lost the battle against those with vested interests?

Kang Dae-Kyung and Yoo Hye-Sook would face a more miserable death than the sisters Yang Jin-Woo killed.

Kang Chan looked at Kim Hyung-Jung.

Could he ignore the determination of a man with eyes like that? With Kim Hyung-Jung now having brought a solution to the table, could Kang Chan still back out after he had condemned the man for acting like a coward a few days ago in this exact office?

If this was his fate, and this was the reason why some of the people he had met died in battle... then the answer was yes. He would confidently stand against them.

“Can you include Seok Kang-Ho?”

“I’m the person in charge, aren’t I? I didn’t report this to the Director either.”

“Starting today, that bastard Yang Jin-Woo will be having a hard time sleeping.”

“Thank you, Mr. Kang Chan.”

Kim Hyung-Jung held out his hand.

Although it made Kang Chan feel awkward, he still grabbed it and shook hands with him. It wasn’t like he could refuse.

After that, they discussed their strategy.

Their immediate financial necessities would be covered by the ten billion won allocated for the Unicorn Project, and Kim Hyung-Jung would procure the necessary weapons and tools through unofficial channels.

Kim Hyung-Jung informed Kang Chan of a few other matters before spreading out pictures and documents from a yellow folder.

“The French Information Bureau provided these materials. This one is the data on the ten guards that Yang Jin-Woo has around him.”

Kang Chan flipped through the documents.

The guards received commissioned education in Russia, and a few of them had been dispatched as agents to the Arabian Peninsula before, among other locations.

“It won’t be easy.”

“I was surprised as well when I saw their experience. Right, also, Yang Jin-Woo’s remaining three sons all have divorce suits going.”

What was this now?

As he watched Kang Chan down the rest of his coffee, Kim Hyung-Jung explained the situation.

“They probably realized something was wrong, considering chaebols all have their own sources of information as well. They’re probably trying to show that this is irrelevant to them. It’s along the lines of ‘we’ll cut off ties, so don’t touch us.’”

Those motherfuckers.

Kang Chan smiled dryly.

Yang Jin-Woo was looking out the window with puffed-out cheeks reminiscent of a pouting toad.

Beep!

The intercom in his office rang.

Click.

He pressed a button.

-Assemblyman Huh Sang-Soo, Chairperson Huh Ha-Soo, and their assistant Kwak Do-Young aren't picking up. The only thing the assemblyman's office told me is that he's absent.

The short report was delivered in a careful tone.

Yang Jin-Woo lifted his hand from the intercom without bothering to reply.

“Do they think the underwater tunnel isn't going to cut it?”

His hands and feet were being tied up.

Even if he had a lobbying fund of ten trillion won at his disposal, it was only useful if someone was willing to take it. On top of that, his children's spouses had them in court for divorce.

“I can't believe I have to suffer this humiliation because of Moon Jae-Hyun, that lowly punk. Ha, hahaha.”

In contrast with the sound of his laughter, Yang Jin-Woo's eyes glinted sharply.

Click. He pressed the intercom button again.

-Yes, Chairman Yang.

“Assemble a meeting with the directors. Every single one.”

-Yes, sir.

Releasing the button, Yang Jin-Woo palmed his forehead and looked in front of the door.

“Tell Mr. Kanemaru to proceed as planned.”

“Hai![1]” Kotaro replied with a bow.

Yang Jin-Woo continued, “Now that things have come to this point, eliminate that boy and his parents immediately. I trust you can do it?”

“He's only a high-schooler, sir.”

“The security detail around him isn't ordinary. Never let your guard down.”

“I'll show you what an elite agent is capable of.”

Yang Jin-Woo nodded.

Seok Kang-Ho stepped into the coffee shop at the intersection, then nodded and headed straight for the counter. The terrace was teeming because it was already evening, making it difficult to speak of critical matters.

“We won’t get to talk properly here. It’s too noisy,” Seok Kang-Ho grumbled, bringing over iced coffee.

He wasn’t exaggerating. They could hear the words being spoken at the table next to them quite clearly.

“It’s fine. Let’s just wait for now and grab dinner when he arrives.”

“Sounds good.”

Seok Kang-Ho glanced at Kang Chan.

“Captain, do you have about a billion won?”

Why was this punk talking about money?

“I’ve given up on the land we tried to buy, but I want to buy a nice little building.”

“A building?”

“Let’s spend the money we have right now to buy a building together. It will eliminate the need for us to travel around to coffee shops like this, and we can also use the rent we get as pocket money.”

It was an enticing suggestion.

“No need to use your money then. I still have mine.”

“What do you think, though? We can put together a gym, and if we set up an office, we’ll also be able to take care of everything there without having to go around places.”

“Are there any you’ve been looking at?”

“I’ll look into it.”

“Don’t rush and lose the money like last time.”

“Hey! Please forget about that.”

Seok Kang-Ho sipped his iced coffee looking abashed. Soon after, Smithen entered, attracting the attention of everyone inside.

“Captain!”

“Sit.”

“Let me just get some coffee first.”

His Korean pronunciation was awkward, but he could now clearly deliver what he was trying to say.

A while later, Smithen sat down with a cup of coffee.

“There’s no news about Yang Jin-Woo coming.”

“He’s probably not in the mood right now.”

“I heard he still comes once or twice a year.”

Seok Kang-Ho looked surprised at Smithen’s response.

“Your Korean has improved a ton.”

“I’m smarter than you,” Smithen replied smugly.

“What did you just say, you son of a bitch?”

“I said cursing is bad.”

“Enough.” Kang Chan cut them off.

A Caucasian man and a sturdy-looking Korean man exchanging profanities definitely caught the eyes of the people around.

“You haven’t had dinner yet, have you?”

“I certainly have not.”

Smithen’s reply was a little strange, but he got the point across.

“Let’s go eat. What do you want?”

“Pork galbi.”

What has this bastard been going around doing? As Kang Chan looked at him curiously, Smithen stood up.

They headed to a restaurant that had a selection of pork galbi, Smithen’s choice.

The blonde, blue-eyed American wrapped pieces of meat in lettuce and stuffed them in his mouth, then washed them down with Bomb shots.

“Ajumma, some spicy peppers and gochujang please.”

People looked at him again as he raised his hand to order.

“Your Korean’s great.”

“Thank you, pretty ajumma.”

“You talk so kindly too. Do you need anything else?”

“Will you give us soybean paste soup later, ma’am?”

Smithen continued chattering. Kang Chan deeply sighed as he looked at him.

“I feel like I’ve seen you somewhere. Are you a celebrity?”

“I must resemble someone. Another beer, please.”

Kang Chan put in another order to divert the waitress’ attention elsewhere.

“Smithen.”

“Yes, Mr. Captain,” Smithen responded with yet another weird phrase after stuffing more meat into his mouth.

“You don’t have to associate with Yang Jin-Woo’s women anymore.”

Smithen swallowed his food with a troubled face.

“Captain, I would like to spend two months or so cutting them off slowly rather than doing it instantly. I hope that would be alright”

“You take care of it.”

“My, that is a relief, sir.”

His speech sounded somewhat feminine, likely due to having learned from a woman.

“Daye, my glass is empty.”

Seok Kang-Ho scowled, then carefully observed Kang Chan’s mood while pouring him some alcohol.

“Captain, please, I would like to know.”

“What?”

“Please, what do you plan to do now?”

That rough voice speaking in such a feminine manner started to get on Kang Chan’s nerves.

“I’m thinking of calling it off,” he said.

“Call it off?”

“I’m quitting,” Kang Chan clarified.

“I see...”

Seok Kang-Ho seemed surprised, and Smithen seemed to doubt Kang Chan.

“Let’s take things easy. All this is bothersome.”

He was feeling full and wanted to leave the restaurant, but Smithen stood up only after scarfing down some rice mixed with soybean paste soup.

“Let’s go.”

“Yeah. Take it easy and tie loose ends properly.”

“I will, sir.”

Smithen left with a regretful expression. Meanwhile, Kang Chan and Seok Kang-Ho headed back to the coffee shop. It was a lot quieter than before.

“You’re not really thinking of taking your hands off Yang Jin-Woo, are you?”

Seok Kang-Ho brought two drinks over and slid closer to Kang Chan.

“I just said that because Smithen was around. Actually...”

Kang Chan told him what he had discussed with Kim Hyung-Jung.

“That’s a total elite squad. Mr. Kim has guts I wasn’t aware of.”

“The plan is to eliminate Yang Jin-Woo as soon as we find a way to do it. I have also been getting a bad feeling, so be careful for the time being.”

“Gotcha.” Seok Kang-Ho grinned in satisfaction.

“Daye.”

“Yes.”

Seok Kang-Ho’s smile instantly disappeared at Kang Chan’s low voice.

“I have a bad feeling. Stay alert and be wary of your surroundings.”

“That bad?”

“I’ve been feeling it since this afternoon. Something’s off.”

“I’ll be careful, so don’t worry. Let’s finish him off quickly.”

“Definitely.”

Seok Kang-Ho glanced around.

Chapter 117: It begins now (2)

Tuesday.

Waking up at dawn, Kang Chan left the house, much like he always did. The brisk air of morning break was already hinting at autumn.

“Whew.”

He stretched his muscles, which had stiffened overnight. While pulling his right arm with his left and pretending to twist his body, he scanned his surroundings.

Someone was observing him.

He only saw a few people heading to work early, but no one seemed particularly suspicious.

‘I can’t even exercise comfortably because of this son of a bitch.’

He didn’t want to skip his workout, though.

After examining his surroundings a few more times, he warily left the apartment complex. However, the unpleasant feeling made it difficult to focus on running.

Running defenselessly despite knowing someone was out for you was as foolish as jogging in the middle of a battlefield.

Kang Chan slowed down to a walk after running a kilometer.

Choi Jong-Il was somewhere out there, but agents could eliminate him in one strike. Moreover, in this situation, ground-to-air missiles were already being brought into play. His gut feeling meant shit if the game were to end with a single bullet.

He frowned and let out a deep breath. That was enough of his workout for now.

‘I’m using the sidewalk, so I probably won’t get hit by a car.’

However, just as he turned toward the apartment complex’s entrance... Vrrrrrrroom. He whipped around at the harsh engine noise, finding a motorcycle sweeping past him.

‘So that’s the punk.’

It was all his gut.

These kinds of things took place during combat too. Enemies opened fire without any specific target, but their purpose wasn’t to kill the opponent. Rather, it was to keep them tense and wear them out.

Only one bastard would do this.

“This is how you’re coming at me?”

He chuckled and went up home.

Kang Dae-Kyung and Yoo Hye-Sook weren’t up yet. He quietly entered his room and called Seok Kang-Ho first.

The call rang for a bit before Seok Kang-Ho finally picked up.

-What’s wrong?

He seemed to have woken up just now, considering he frantically answered and he still sounded hoarse.

“I think Yang Jin-Woo is after me. Since you participated in the security that day and we meet often, they probably know about you as well.”

-They’re making their move this early?

He sounded so hoarse Kang Chan wanted to make him drink some water.

“Some guy passed by me on a motorcycle, and I think it’s them. Be careful when you’re on the streets. It’s the end of both of us if we get into a car accident or get sent to prison.”

-That son of a—! Ahem, got it. Anything else?

“Who is it?” someone sleepily asked over at Seok Kang-Ho’s side.

“Nothing, aside from the fact that I didn’t get to work out.”

-Okay. Let’s talk later.

Kang Chan hung up and shook off his bad mood. Afterward, he started to exercise in his room. He would shower earlier than normal today.

When he came out into the living room, Yoo Hye-Sook was coming out of the bedroom.

“Son!”

She looked at the clock in the living room, her face flustered.

“I just worked out in my room today.”

“Why? Are you not feeling well?”

“No. I just wanted to take a break for a day.”

He smiled at her, then headed inside the bathroom.

‘I’ll do what you want.’

Since the Yang Jin-Woo still had the Japanese agents and two other organizations like Yoon Bong-Sup’s at his disposal, he probably wanted to exert some power.

Yang Jin-Woo wouldn’t be willing to back out or yield, considering he knew of a method that could provide greater peace of mind. Once this kind of battle began, nothing good would arise from dragging things out.

If he was being targeted, then that meant Kang Dae-Gyung and Yoo Hye-Sook were as well.

After showering, he helped Yoo Hye-Sook prepare breakfast. Afterward, he ate together with Yoo Hye-Sook and Kang Dae-Kyung.

“Have a good day.”

“Bye, son.”

“See you in the evening.”

When the two left for work, he immediately dialed Kim Hyung-Jung and informed him that he would be going to the office in Samseong-Dong.

Kang Chan explained the events that transpired earlier that morning to Kim Hyung-Jung, who brought over some coffee.

“Hmm, since you’re the one saying that, you’re probably right.”

Knowing what happened at the international hotel, Kim Hyung-Jung nodded in agreement.

“You know Yang Jin-Woo has two other organizations like Yoon Bong-Sup’s, don’t you, Mr. Kim?”

“That information was in the materials I showed you during your last visit.”

“Let’s attack them today,” declared Kang Chan.

Kim Hyung-Jung abruptly looked up from his coffee cup.

“The fact that they’re targeting me means they’re prepared and ready. We’ll lose if we spend too much time thinking about this.

Kim Hyung-Jung couldn’t reply.

“How many times have you lost already? Let’s do things my way.”

“Hmm,” mused Kim Hyung-Jung.

Kang Chan pulled out a cigarette. Looking stiff, Kim Hyung-Jung did the same as well.

“They have a lot more men.”

“As long as we have you, Seok Kang-Ho, and me, an organization like Yoon Bong-Sup’s doesn’t stand a chance.”

“What about the aftermath?”

The conversation paused. Kim Hyung-Jung flicked the lighter on.

“You said it doesn’t matter if we’re not inside the boundaries of the law. Why else would they not be able to report the incident with Cho Il-Kwon and Yoon Bong-Sup? I plan on making the agents come here, so let’s beat the evidence out of them.”

“All ten of them?” Kim Hyung-Jung asked, “Do you think you can take on that many?”

“It’s easily worth a try.”

Even though Kang Chan grinned, Kim Hyung-Jung’s expression remained solemn.

“Mr. Kang Chan, this could reveal how the surface-to-air missile was acquired. That will be the end of Yang Jin-Woo.”

“That’s done within the boundaries of the law.”

“You’re truly hard to predict, Mr. Kang Chan.” Kim Hyung-Jung sighed as if admitting his defeat. “Let’s call Choi Jong-II.”

Kang Chan tilted his head at the unexpected proposal.

“I heard he already provided assistance in dealing with Yoon Bong-Sup and Cho Il-Kwon.”

“I thought only you and the director were aware of this.”

“Doesn’t Mr. Seok know as well? That agent of ours went as far as submitting a resignation letter, so he’ll take part this time as well.”

Kim Hyung-Jung lifted his phone and looked at Kang Chan.

“If it makes you uncomfortable, I’ll tell him I was tasked with this business.”

“I’m just worried their futures will be ruined after getting involved with something they don’t have to.”

“Choi Jong-II has been my subordinate for a while now. If he knows I left him out of this mission, he’ll resent me quite a bit.”

“He might say no.”

“Mr. Kang Chan, Kim Tae-Jin and I went around slashing the throats of our enemies at the DMZ. Back then, for every neck I slit, I thought that our country was no longer looked down upon. It’s for our citizens who sent their precious sons to the military. That’s also why I entered the National Intelligence Service.”

Kim Hyung-Jung looked at Kang Chan with determined eyes.

“If there’s anything dirty that has to be cleaned for the benefit of our country, I’ll do it with my own hands.”

“I acknowledge your resolve.”

“I know Choi Jong-II. I practically taught him. What’s more, this task involves Japanese agents. Our agents will never fall short against them.”

The atmosphere was a little strange, but it wasn’t unpleasant.

“Go ahead and call them.”

Kim Hyung-Jung dialed a number with a satisfied look.

“Yeah. It’s me. All three of you come on up. Oh! You know that coffee shop out front? Grab some americanos. One for Mr. Kang Chan, too.”

Putting the phone down, Kim Hyung-Jung sipped his now-room-temperature coffee and took in a deep breath.

“This is embarrassing, Mr. Kang Chan, but I’ve been suffering from nightmares every day since I returned from Mongolia. It’s the same dream every time. The moment I step into the mountains, a countless number of wolves dash forward and tear me apart.”

Kim Hyung-Jung fiddled with the lighter.

“I wanted to apologize to the agents who are already gone and kill all the bastards connected to their deaths. If that wasn’t possible, I wanted to at least travel around brutal battlefields.”

He had wanted to die on the battlefield out of guilt. Kang Chan understood how he felt.

“But it seems like my job has embedded laws and regulations into me. I’m trapped inside those limits. If I had orders to assassinate someone from an enemy nation, I would’ve done it in a breath. However, my mind still perceives Yang Jin-woo as a citizen of South Korea who has to be protected according to the law.”

Rap rap rap.

Someone knocked on the door although Kang Chan didn’t hear anyone outside. The room’s soundproof walls were incredible.

Kim Hyung-Jung stood up.

“From now on, I will consider Yang Jin-woo as a spy dispatched by an enemy nation.”

Click.

Kim Hyung-Jung opened the door after he was done talking. Choi Jong-II, Woo Hee-Seung, and Lee Doo-Hee entered.

Lee Doo-Hee set five cups of coffee on the table.

Kang Chan grinned, feeling glad to see them.

“Sit.”

The three bowed and, at Kim Hyung-Jung’s order, sat around the table.

“I have a special mission.”

He got straight to the point.

“We’ll be assassinating a key figure, and the country and the National Intelligence Service will not acknowledge the mission as per usual. The figure is so influential that if we fail, the pain it could cause to our families is unimaginable. Make your choice.”

Choi Jong-II spoke without even a moment’s hesitation.

“Thank you for the opportunity to be of service to my country.”

Did they practice responses beforehand? Kang Chan just watched on.

“Who’s the target?”

“Why aren’t you guys saying anything?”

“We deemed it unnecessary because our team leader has spoken for us,” responded Woo Hee-Seung. Lee Doo-Hee just nodded.

“The target is Yang Jin-Woo.”

“Yes, sir.”

Choi Jong-Il looked satisfied.

“Ranks don’t matter anymore. Let’s speak more casually.”

With that, the mood instantly changed. The men sipped coffee and smoked cigarettes.

The smoke all five of them exhaled was sucked in by the ceiling’s ventilator like a whirlpool.

“Do you have a strategy already?”

“There are two more private organizations like Yoon Bong-Sup’s. We’ll attack them today, collect as much information as we can, and deal with the ten agents who came in from Japan.”

“Are we allowed to kill?”

“It’s not necessary when it comes to the gangsters, but that’s the plan for the Japanese agents.”

Kim Hyung-Jung strode to his desk and brought over a few documents.

“These are Yang Jin-Woo’s remaining organizations. There’s almost no information on them, likely because Yang Jin-Woo himself manages them.”

“They’re houses.”

In Kang Chan’s hand was a picture of a two-story house with a large garden.

“One’s in Seongnam, and the other is in Hannam-Dong. They’ll probably contact the other if one’s attacked.”

“Good.”

Kang Chan’s statement made the others in the room look at him.

“Let’s attack Hannam-Dong first. The Japanese agents will probably join the frontlines when we head to Seongnam. They outnumber us, and they also have pride as agents.”

“That’s not a bad idea.”

Having fully made his decision Kim Hyung-Jung didn’t back out.

“Why did you leave them alone when you’ve already investigated this much?”

“Yang Jin-Woo would gladly fly to the US and throw a fit from there if we take them by surprise and fail to find anything. If we tried to get him with something small, then he would spout bullshit about how he’s being framed or that it’s a trap, so we were trying to find decisive evidence.”

That made sense. People would question why a chaebol would do such a thing when he already had everything.

Kang Chan nodded and wrapped up the conversation with that.

“We’ll use a van for transportation.”

Kim Hyung-Jung was fast when he put his mind to something.

“Guns and bayonets should be enough for weapons, right?”

Guns too? Well, it was better safe than sorry since they didn’t know what the Japanese agents were going to bring.

Kang Chan nodded. All they had to do now was execute the plan and one other thing.

After a moment of contemplating what to do about Seok Kang-Ho, Kang Chan picked up his phone.

That damned promise!

The license plate of the van parked in the underground garage was changed. On one side of the parking lot were tools needed to change plates along with 20 extra plates.

Contrary to the battlefields in Africa, espionage warfare had a different kind of subtlety to it.

The parking lot was spacious compared to the size of the building.

Three vans, two large and two small passenger vehicles, and one Mercedes Benz and BMW.

“Here, Mr. Kang Chan.”

Kim Hyung-Jung opened the inner section of the parking garage with a key and handed him a revolver and a bayonet.

“What is it?”

“I was just thinking I should loot this place someday.”

“You’ll be shot immediately if you sneak in.”

Really? He looked around but didn’t see any place for security to watch from.

“There are only two entrances to this garage. Anyone who wants to come inside has to send a notification beforehand. Behind the channels, machine guns are waiting in ambush.”

Kang Chan nodded in response. He holstered his bayonet at his ankle and attached his gun to his waist. He was most comfortable with it on his back, behind his right hip.

“Please prepare Seok Kang-Ho’s too.”

“Understood.”

As soon as they finished preparations, tension filled the lot.

“Let’s go.”

Kang Chan climbed into the car at Kim Hyung-Jung’s words.

Lee Doo-Hee, who had an elongated head, did the driving, while Woo Hee-Seung rode in the passenger seat.

Kang Chan and Kim Hyung-Jung rode in the middle, and Choi Jong-Il was at the back.

Kim Hyung-Jung pressed a few buttons on his phone. After the beep sound, they left.

“This place doesn’t seem fit for emergency dispatches.”

“Emergency dispatches aren’t relevant here because we specialize in strategic analysis, agent placement, and special missions.”

There was an exit to the side of the building. It was past the channel from the parking garage.

If it wasn’t for Seok Kang-Ho, they would have eaten some delicious jjamppong before leaving.

Kang Chan pulled out his phone and pressed call.

-Are you on your way?

“Yes. We’ll arrive in about fifteen minutes.”

-Whew. I left work early.

This bastard probably ate nervousness for lunch.

“Come out to the main road.”

-I’m in front of the snack bar. Should I buy some kimbap?

“Hey! Let’s at least eat properly.”

-Okay.

Kim Hyung-Jung made a knowing smile when Kang Chan hung up.

Traffic wasn’t too heavy, so Seok Kang-Ho joined them soon.

While the car zoomed down the road, Seok Kang-Ho exchanged greetings with Choi Jong-Il, Woo Hee-Seung, and Lee Doo-Hee, and was given weapons.

Seok Kang-Ho’s eyes were already teary from anxiety.

They didn’t know when this battle would end. Some people could ask, “Wouldn’t it be alright to skip a meal since it’s an important fight?” However, those were the ones who didn’t know the feeling of strength leaving your body in the middle of an intense battle.

Rookies couldn’t eat properly because of how nervous they were, and they fell first. They learned the hard way why soldiers stuffed their throats with food during the short breaks they got in front of their dead enemies or corpses of their allies—why they forced food down before an operation or a battle.

There was a possibility that they would have to skip dinner if a fight was drawn out, so to survive, it was wise to eat a good meal when they could.

Lee Doo-Hee turned right after crossing the Hannam Bridge and parked the car in front of a restaurant near the road.

It was a little early for lunch, so it wasn't bustling yet.

They ordered bibimbap.

The restaurant owner hesitantly brought out their food. It wasn't common for six men to quietly sit around waiting for the food after pouring their water cups and setting their cutlery.

They finished their meal in five minutes. After paying for the food, they bought coffee at the shop right next to the restaurant, then drank it in front of the van.

At least twenty minutes were required.

Gangsters wouldn't be able to kill any of them, but the agents from Japan were a problem. Ten against six wasn't a bad fight.

“The coffee tastes especially delicious when I think of how I'll beat up those motherfuckers.” Seok Kang-Ho chuckled with glinting eyes.

Chapter 118: Do You Have Any More To Pull Out? (1)

The group had already crossed the Hannam Bridge and eaten lunch, and Kang Chan had finished smoking his cigarette and drinking coffee as well. They were ten minutes away from their destination.

It was time to go.

However, when Lee Doo-Hee threw away Kang Chan's empty coffee cup into the trash, Kang Chan's heart suddenly started to thump faster.

Badump. Badump.

‘Damn it.’

They couldn't have planted mines at the house, could they?

Kang Chan turned to look at the others.

“What is it?” Seok Kang-Ho asked. He covered his cigarette with a hand as he lit it.

“I have a bad feeling. It's significant enough for me to stop an operation that's already underway.”

“That bad?”

After Kang Chan nodded, Seok Kang-Ho glanced around.

“What is it, Mr. Kang Chan?”

The bad feelings he got were a pain in the ass to explain—no, it was virtually impossible to explain them.

“Mr. Kim Hyung-Jung, please just trust me on this. Let's go over the conditions again. I'm getting the same bad feeling that I had back at the event.”

“Then let's head to a quiet place for now.”

Having observed the entire situation during the day of the event, Kim Hyung-Jung didn't raise any doubts and just followed Kang Chan's wishes.

They all climbed into the car and entered an alley.

Badump. Badump.

It was ridiculous.

He had no means of being certain about the specifics every time this happened. Nevertheless, even though he didn't have the slightest idea of what dangers they would face and when they would appear, his heart continued to beat faster.

Kang Chan glared outside through the windshield.

'What is it? What did I leave out?'

He did say they should attack first, but before the mission even started, he suddenly got an ominous feeling.

It wasn't as if they were here under someone's orders. The people who were aware of this operation were all here.

"Mr. Kim Hyung-Jung, we're the only ones who know about this mission, correct?"

"I'm certain of it."

Choi Jong-Il, Woo Hee-Seung, and Lee Doo-Hee also had stiff expressions although they didn't understand what was happening.

Kang Chan took a slow, deep breath.

Buzz. Buzz. Buzz.

At that moment, his phone rang. He pulled his phone out of his pocket and saw the name 'Smithen' displayed on the screen.

"Cut to the chase."

At times like this, no other words were required.

-Captain, these people are trained. I closed the curtains and bolted through the door.

"How did you find them?"

-I was making love next to the window.

He was speaking rapid French.

Buzz. Buzz. Buzz.

Next to Kang Chan, Kim Hyung-Jung's phone vibrated.

"Hold on for now. I'll call you again once it's been taken care of."

-Yes, sir.

Smithen was under attack? Was this the reason he had a bad feeling?

Kang Chan turned around after dropping the call.

“All right. Hold on a minute.”

Kim Hyung-Jung looked frantic.

“I just got a report. People who seem to be enemy agents are currently in meetings with your father and mother.”

‘What?’

Kang Chan didn’t have time to think. He immediately put Kim Hyung-Jung’s phone against his ear.

“It’s Kang Chan. Explain the situation.”

-Two agents are speaking to your father regarding the mass purchase of his automobiles, and two more are discussing with your mother about making donations to the foundation. Our agents are behind them, but we have to be prepared for the worst-case scenario.

Those motherfuckers!

“Do our people have firearms?”

-The two team leaders do.

“If the situation deems it necessary, shoot to kill.”

-We need Manager Kim Hyung-Jung’s approval for opening fire.

Kang Chan handed the phone to Kim Hyung-Jung.

“He says they need your approval to open fire.”

The look in Kang Chan’s eyes was so vicious that Woo Hee-Seung, who had been looking back at them, quickly turned his gaze to Kim Hyung-Jung.

As soon as he got his phone back, Kim Hyung-Jung commanded, “Shoot if necessary.”

Seok Kang-Ho and the others grasped what was going on.

“Let’s head to Father’s office first.”

Kim Hyung-Jung nodded at what Kang Chan said.

“Did that son of a bitch Yang Jin-Woo make the first move?”

“Let me make a few more calls first before we talk.”

As the car’s engine started, Kang Chan pressed the call button and held his phone to his ear.

-Boss, I’m in the middle of a meeting. Can we talk later?

Even Michelle?

“Michelle, don’t talk and just listen. This is extremely important.”

Just in case, he spoke in French.

“If you’re with other people, say you like mountains. If you’re alone, say you like the beach. Don’t show anything on your face.”

-I prefer the beach.

Damn it!

“You’re at the office, right?”

-Yes, it’s official business.

“You could be in danger. Find a way to at least get a female employee to be with you. Leave if you can.”

-Got it, Boss.

“Explain to them that I’m not your boss.”

-I said I got it.

He hung up, feeling blindsided. He was a step too late.

The car had crossed over the Hannam Bridge and was waiting for the traffic signal.

Kang Chan made another call and looked at Kim Hyung-Jung.

“How many agents do you have that can be mobilized immediately?”

“Mobilizing them all will give away this operation.”

That was true.

As Kang Chan nodded, his call connected.

-What brings me the pleasure of your call at this time?

“Director, the entertainment company D.I., Smithen’s house, which you protected last time, and Seok Kang-Ho’s home are in danger. They could be agents from Japan’s Intelligence Bureau, and they could be carrying firearms. Can you dispatch some people?”

-We’ll cooperate with the police in those areas. Give me their addresses.

Kang Chan listed the locations and their phone numbers one by one. The call ended before he could say thanks.

“Manager, please oversee the situation from the car, and look into where Yang Jin-Woo is currently.”

He could now see Kang Dae-Kyung’s building from afar.

“Seok Kang-Ho, go with Woo Hee-Seung to my dad’s office.”

His eyes met with Seok Kang-Ho.

“If your gut tells you to, don’t hesitate to kill.”

“Got it. Leave it to me.”

The car rolled to a halt.

“Choi Jong-Il, do you know where my mother’s office is?”

“I do.”

The moment the van’s door slid open, Kang Chan immediately jumped out. There were quite a few people because it was an officetel.[1]

“Go up the stairs.”

Under Kang Chan’s command, Choi Jong-Il went through the entrance to the staircase, which was next to the elevator.

They ran up the flights by two or three stairs at a time.

Yoo Hye-Sook being surprised was a problem for later in the future. Saving her came first.

The knife at his ankle occasionally came into view, but Kang Chan didn’t hesitate. As they dashed up together in their suits, one woman they met on the way jumped in surprise and clung to the walls.

“Over here!”

Creak.

Choi Jong-Il opened the door, panting.

The moment they stepped into the hallway, a woman who appeared to be an agent quickly hastened over.

“They’re sitting facing each other on the office’s sofa. Two agents and the team leader are on standby behind Ms. Yoo.”

If not for the agents, Kang Dae-Kyung and Yoo Hye-Sook would’ve been dead already.

Kang Chan nodded and caught his breath in front of the office door.

Whew.

‘These motherfuckers dare target my mother?’

Choi Jong-Il followed right behind him.

Kang Chan flung open the door and went inside.

Three tense female agents were standing behind Yoo Hye-Sook, and sitting opposite them on the sofa were two men who had clearly received special training.

“Son!”

Yoo Hye-Sook looked both surprised and delighted, while the two men quickly moved their right hands behind them.

Kang Chan immediately threw himself at the man closest to him, elbowed his face, then kicked the other man’s shoulder.

Pow!

The fight transpired in a matter of moments.

However, the enemy blocked Kang Chan's elbow and jabbed him in the side.

Crash!

As Kang Chan fell on the table, Choi Jong-Il and two female agents raced toward the guy that was further away.

Pow pow! Pow! Pow! Pow pow pow!

Kang Chan got up and threw a punch.

As soon as they made eye contact, Kang Chan felt that the bastard in front of him had a lot of combat experience!

Pow!

Choi Jong-Il gripped his enemy's right wrist as he took a hit to his waist.

One female agent dragged Yoo Hye-Sook behind the desk.

Pow pow pow! Pow! Pow pow!

As Kang Chan consecutively traded punches and elbows in-between the table and sofa with the enemy, a female agent landed on the table, having been punched in the throat.

Pow!

The enemy struck aside Kang Chan's outstretched hand. At the same time, Kang Chan pushed his opponent's elbow away.

If given the chance, they would pull out their guns.

That was why Choi Jong-Il was tightly holding onto the right wrist of the man he was facing.

He didn't expect them to be this strong. They had wasted too much time already.

Kang Chan parried yet another elbow. The guy's left fist immediately followed, and Kang Chan voluntarily let the bastard hit him!

Pow!

'Kegh!'

The moment the enemy's left fist landed on Kang Chan's solar plexus, his own right fist made contact with the man's chin.

"Kegh!"

Shit!

The punch he took to the gut knocked the wind out of him.

Son of a bitch!

Kang Chan got the man in a chokehold and held it as tightly as he could.

Crack!

He had to move, but he couldn't budge because he couldn't breathe.

Thwack!

A female agent took a hit right on the face and fell back.

Kang Chan bit the inside of his cheek.

“Keghh!”

The horrific pain and metallic taste of blood instantly shot him back to reality. He could breathe again.

With Choi Jong-Il still holding onto the other guy's right hand, Kang Chan was given the perfect opportunity to attack.

Pow!

“Cough!”

The man wobbled as Kang Chan struck his neck.

Pow! Pow! Pow!

Kang Chan struck him in the neck three more times. The moment the enemy bent over, Kang Chan jabbed him in the throat with the knuckle of his middle finger.

Kang Chan grabbed the enemy's head. He had to finish the fight right here, right now.

Crack!

With the man's head now facing the wrong direction, Kang Chan had eliminated both of the enemies. The man he was holding collapsed in front of the sofa as soon as he let go.

Choi Jong-Il sat on the ground grabbing his chest. One female agent's face was covered in blood.

When Kang Chan turned around, he saw Yoo Hye-Sook's petrified eyes. As he walked forward, the agent who fell on the sofa got up just as Yoo Hye-Sook shook her head in surprise.

He stopped.

It seemed like Yoo Hye-Sook was having a hard time accepting that Kang Chan was a murderer.

Not many people could easily accept killing others—especially women. Yoo Hye-Sook would make those eyes even if she knew Kang Chan wasn't her real son.

“Father's in danger too,” Kang Chan said, blood dripping out of his mouth. He had bit his cheek so hard that his mouth was filled with blood.

“These women are special agents sent from the National Intelligence Service. Please follow them.”

The agent next to Yoo Hye-Sook answered her phone and talked briefly before nodding at Kang Chan. It meant Kang Dae-Kyung was safe.

Yoo Hye-Sook began to tremble.

Choi Jong-Il barely managed to stand up behind Kang Chan.

“Escort her to a safe place.”

“Yes, sir.”

When he turned around, he saw a female agent covering her bleeding nose and their two opponents who had collapsed into strange positions.

Kang Chan wiped his mouth with his palm.

Gulp.

Blood continued to spill from his cheek.

“I’ll take care of Father.”

He forced a smile.

His voice was a little strange because of the blood he had swallowed, but Yoo Hye-Sook remained silent. Her eyes still showed the same emotion as before.

This was how it had to be. It was supposed to be like this from the beginning, but he had been deceiving her all this time.

Kang Chan took a deep breath, then headed to the door.

“Kang... Chan.”

Just then, Yoo Hye-Sook’s shaking voice made him stop in his tracks.

When he turned around, Yoo Hye-Sook was already standing.

“You’re... okay, right?”

Kang Chan couldn’t say a word to his mother, even though she was clearly trying to overcome her fear and horror.

“You’re okay, right, Son?”

Yoo Hye-Sook pushed herself to approach Kang Chan, then lifted her poor, trembling hands to touch his cheek.

“I’m... fine. So you can’t get hurt either, okay?”

“I won’t.”

“I... I was just so surprised. But I—”

Yoo Hye-Sook stretched out her shaking arms.

“I love you. I love you, my son.”

She was trying to overcome and accept it.

Yoo Hye-Sook’s warm embrace felt like a luxury he couldn’t afford.

“Mother, go home with Father.”

Kang Chan signaled with his eyes, and a female agent approached Yoo Hye-Sook and held her shoulders.

Yoo Hye-Sook nodded, seemingly trying to tell him not to worry.

Kang Chan nodded back, then immediately left the office.

As he headed down the stairs, three male agents on the way up bowed to Choi Jong-Il.

“Mr. Kang is also fine.”

“Was anyone injured?”

“Three agents were hurt, but it’s not life-threatening.”

“Clean up the rest and escort Mr. Kang Dae-Kyung and Mrs. Yoo Hye-Sook home.”

“Yes, sir.”

Kang Chan immediately headed to the Kang Yoo Motors office with Choi Jong-Il.

“Father.”

Although his face was as pale as a sheet, Kang Dae-Kyung seemed to be in better shape than his wife.

“Mother is safe, but she seemed a little taken aback.”

“I’ll comfort her. You’re not hurt, are you?”

“No.”

He swallowed the blood in his mouth so it wouldn’t spill out. When he looked around, he saw the table in splinters and the area around the two bastards covered in blood.

“Please take care of Mother.”

“I will.”

Kang Dae-Kyung gritted his teeth and patted Kang Chan’s shoulders.

“I’ll be back.”

Kang Dae-Kyung looked directly into Kang Chan’s eyes and nodded.

Kang Chan turned around as Seok Kang-Ho, Choi Jong-Il, and Woo Hee-Seung followed him.

It was a relief that there were quite a few agents at Kang Yoo Motors.

Leaving the building, Kang Chan immediately hopped in the car. Kim Hyung-Jung appeared to already have received reports about the situation.

Drrrrk.

The van’s door shut.

“Manager Kim, I’ll lead the mission today.”

“I started with that in mind. You do everything you want to do, Mr. Kang Chan. It has been confirmed that Yang Jin-woo is currently at his Pyeongchang-Dong home. It appears we were misinformed about how many agents entered from Japan. There were at least twenty more in Pyeongchang-Dong.”

Kang Chan nodded and lifted his phone. It was answered on the third ring.

-Yeah! It’s me.

“Oh Gwang-Taek, we found the punks related to the Bundang incident from last time.”

-What? Really? Wait! Where are you? Kang Chan! Don’t go alone!

Oh Gwang-Taek sounded frantic.

“The bastards might have guns, so be careful. There are two places to hit, so split your guys into teams. I also have a request.”

-What is it? If you want me to stand back and watch, I’ll throw hands with you too.

Kang Chan chuckled before continuing, “I won’t be going to any of the two locations. I have to go to a different place, so I was going to ask you to kill all the people that are at the two locations. That’s the request.”

-I will. Do you think you can block off the police? If not, I have to prepare to take the blame.

“Wait.”

Kang Chan momentarily put down his phone.

“Can you hold the police off?”

“Yes.”

Everyone in the car, including Kim Hyung-Jung, had heard the phone conversation, so the car was brimming with tension.

“Oh Gwang-Taek, we can keep the police away. Don’t be too loud, and try not to make gunshot noises if possible.”

-Leave it to me. Also, Kang Chan—

Oh Gwang-Taek continued without giving Kang Chan time to reply.

-Thank you.

“Enough with that bullshit. Let’s grab some drinks together if we get out of this alive.”

-Got it.

The call ended.

Kang Chan breathed in deeply.

Considering their enemies' skills, their team of six fighting against twenty of those enemy agents would be a suicide mission.

“Please put in a call to Mr. Jeon Dae-Geuk for me.”

Kim Hyung-Jung had likely prepared himself for Kang Chan to lead the mission. As if he was Kang Chan's subordinate, he obediently pressed the call button as ordered and immediately handed over the phone.

-Jeon Dae-Geuk speaking. What is it?

“This is Kang Chan.”

-Kang Chan? Oh! Kang Chan! To what do I owe this honor?

“Mr. Jeon Dae-Geuk, we'll be launching an attack on the agents that came from Japan. As you might have already guessed, this is a covert operation. We need you and any subordinate you can trust.”

Was his explanation too short? Should he have said their opponent was a man about to carry out a terrorist attack or that the enemy was Yang Jin-Woo?

He heard Jeon Dae-Geuk breathe about two times before he replied.

-I and five others will go. How many are on their side?

“There are at least twenty. We will have twelve on our side if we include your people.”

-Where do we meet?

“Mr. Kim Hyung-Jung will tell you the location.”

Kang Chan handed the phone back to Kim Hyung-Jung. The latter answered a few questions and gave the name of a hotel as they made arrangements to meet in front of it.

Finally, Kang Chan called one last person.

-Hello? My people have all been dispatched, and the guys at D.I. were confirmed to be mere investors. Where are you?

Kang Chan thanked Kim Tae-Jin and gave him the same explanation that he had just given Jeon Dae-Geuk.

-Actually, I did think you and Kim Hyung-Jung seemed a bit strange these days. I'll take Sang-Hyun as well. Will that be all right with you?

“Let's do that. As for the meetup place...”

When Kang Chan glanced at Kim Hyung-Jung, Kim Hyung-Jung replied, “Oryun Hotel.”

“He says the meeting place is at Oryun Hotel.”

-I'll leave immediately.

Kang Chan hung up and turned back. Kim Hyung-Jung smirked as he spoke up.

“Yang Jin-Woo, that son of a bitch! Let’s do whatever it takes to end him.”

Kang Chan and Seok Kang-Ho smirked, and Choi Jong-Il and Woo Hee-Seung quickly looked ahead.

Chapter 119.1: Do You Have Any More To Pull Out? (2)

Having arrived at the Oryun Hotel first, Kim Tae-Jin told everyone to meet at an area behind the hotel. It was a parking garage that belonged to a massive building.

When they drove behind the building, they saw Kim Tae-Jin and Suh Sang-Hyun standing in a corner.

Drrrrk.

“Welcome.”

The members exchanged greetings as they stepped out of the car.

“Section Chief Jeon Dae-Geuk said it would take him around ten more minutes to arrive, so let’s sit down and talk for now.”

Kim Tae-Jin pointed to the cafe diagonally across the parking lot he had checked out earlier. They could occupy all three of the tables outside, and he especially liked that they could smoke comfortably.

They put the tables together and sat around them.

Woo Hee-Seung and Lee Doo-Hee took everyone’s orders.

“What’s going on?”

Kim Tae-Jin’s gaze alternated between Kang Chan and Kim Hyung-Jung.

There was no need for a complicated explanation. Kang Chan began to give an account of all the incidents related to Yang Jin-Woo.

Kim Tae-Jin nodded as he listened.

Finally, as their order was served, a black van arrived in the parking lot.

Seeing Jeon Dae-Geuk step out of the car, Kim Tae-Jin and Kim Hyung-Jung stood up like soldiers greeting their direct superior officer.

Suh Sang-Hyeon was visibly stiff from nervousness.

Everyone else, including Kang Chan, stood up as well to welcome Jeon Dae-Geuk, who was accompanied by five stocky employees.

“Mr. Kang Chan.”

Jeon Dae-Geuk shook Kang Chan’s hand, then Seok Kang-Ho’s. He only gave Kim Tae-Jin a glance.

“Let’s sit.”

“After you, sir.”

“Has the troublemaker finally grown up a little?” Jeon Dae-Geuk commented.

Kim Tae-Jin peeked at Kang Chan with slight embarrassment.

“Mr. Kang Chan, let’s sit down.”

After Jeon Dae-Geuk and Kang Chan got on their chairs, the rest also sat down.

“What would you like to drink?”

“Looks like everyone’s drinking coffee. I’ll have that as well.”

Lee Doo-Hee headed back inside the cafe to bring drinks for Jeon Dae-Geuk and his employees.

“Are you trying to eliminate Yang Jin-Woo?”

“That’s right.”

Jeon Dae-Geuk nodded upon hearing Kang Chan’s answer.

“I came here without informing the president. If any issues arise because of today’s incident, these five subordinates and I will no doubt be on the express track to prison. I don’t know about me, but these kids have bright futures ahead of them.”

Jeon Dae-Geuk suddenly turned to face Kim Tae-Jin.

“Look after them and take responsibility for their employment after they get out of jail.”

“Understood, sir.”

Jeon Dae-Geuk looked back at Kang Chan.

“I believe you said they’re agents from Japan, correct?”

Kang Chan briefed Jeon Dae-Geuk about what had just happened. When he turned to Kim Hyung-Jung in the middle of his explanation, Kim Hyung-Jung nodded in agreement and added that this operation was kept secret from the National Intelligence Service as well.

“Hmph, I suppose the National Intelligence Service’s Director is finally earning his keep.”

With a satisfied expression, Jeon Dae-Geuk looked at the people seated at the tables.

“You can’t avoid the rain just because you’re scared your feet will get wet. The fact that we have Mr. Kang Chan in times of danger like this is a blessing for people like us—a blessing! My only sorrow is that I didn’t meet you when I was your age.” Jeon Dae-Geuk kept a solemn face as he spoke these cringy words.

“No matter what the outcome is today, as former members of South Korea’s special forces, don’t leave space for an ounce of regret in your actions.”

“Yes, sir.”

The only ones who didn't respond were Kang Chan and Seok Kang-Ho.

“It doesn't make sense for us to just watch while our enemies run wild in our motherland. The Director of the National Intelligence Service finally seems to have regained his senses. Suh Sang-Hyun!”

“Yes, sir! Suh Sang-Hyun reporting for duty, sir!” Suh Sang-Hyun replied firmly as he stood upright with a dignified posture.

“What is our motto!”

“If I can protect the country with my blood, I am happy!”

“Good! As soldiers, we have lived on the fruits of our motherland. Now, thanks to Mr. Kang Chan, we have obtained the opportunity to repay that debt. Understood?”

“Yes, sir! Understood!”

Those who answered were filled with pride.

What in the world was this? The atmosphere was so different from the special forces of France's Foreign Legion that Kang Chan almost burst out laughing. But at the same time, their sense of duty impressed him to the point that he felt a lump in his chest.

“From now on, Mr. Kang Chan will be in command. For the sake of making things smoother, let's skip the formalities with each other.”

“Thank you, sir.”

When Kim Tae-Jin responded, everyone relaxed. Now it felt more like the atmosphere of the Foreign Legion during a mission. These people were quite impressive.

They drank coffee and smoked cigarettes, even Lee Doo-Hee. The atmosphere was completely different from what it had been.

“We initially estimated the number of agents who entered South Korea to be around ten. However, based on today's events, it's difficult to guess now. It has been confirmed that there are at least twenty Japanese agents at Yang Jin-Wo's house, but we couldn't determine their full effectives.”

After listening to Kim Hyung-Jung's explanation, Jeon Dae-Geuk glanced at Kang Chan.

“There is no strategy. The plan is to make our entrance and corner them until we kill Yang Jin-Woo.”

“That is the most foolish method I've ever heard of in any operation.”

“That may be true. However, Yang Jin-Woo dared pull what he did today because we continued to hold back despite all his provocations. I think the time has come to show him our resolve and strength.”

“Five of my men and me, plus Mr. Kang Chan, Mr. Seok Kang-Ho, two from Kim Tae-Jin, and four from Kim Hyung-Jung,” Jeon Dae-Geuk counted as he folded his fingers. He lifted his gaze as if confirming the numbers with Kang Chan.

“So, we are fourteen people against twenty Japanese agents?”

“That’s correct.”

“We can only call ourselves former members of South Korea’s special forces if we can handle that much.”

Jeon Dae-Geuk smiled mysteriously, then turned his head.

“Wouldn’t it be better for you to drop out of this operation since you have become slow?” he asked Kim Tae-Jin.

“I have never had a lazy day while running the security company. Also, I’ve already participated in two operations with Kang Chan.”

Kang Chan had done operations with Kim Tae-Jin?

“Even though Suh Sang-Hyeon was injured in the second operation, I was unharmed.”

It wasn’t until he heard that explanation that Kang Chan understood what Kim Tae-Jin meant. Catching the Neck Ghost and rescuing Seok Kang-Ho—those two could certainly be considered operations.

“What about the weapons, Mr. Kang Chan?”

“Guns and bayonets.”

Jeon Dae-Geuk nodded, then said, “Two of the employees I brought used to be snipers in the military. Just keep that in mind. I don’t have any further questions.”

Two employees bowed their heads as Jeon Dae-Geuk spoke.

“Mr. Jeon Dae-Geuk, there’s a high probability we’ll have to fight with knives.”

“You mentioned having guns during the attack on your parents?”

“I planned on aiming for a vulnerable spot when I had a chance, but I never intended to shoot from the beginning. If Yang Jin-Woo ends up opening fire, he’ll definitely have no room for excuses. We don’t need gunshot noise either, so the chances are high the fight will not involve firearms.”

“Hmm.”

“If one side becomes extremely disadvantaged, that side will have no choice but to draw out their guns. If possible, it would be best to make them use their guns first, which in turn would mean they’d attempt to shoot the National Intelligence Service manager and the section chief of the president’s security detail.”

Jeon Dae-Geuk expressed his admiration while Kim Hyung-Jung nodded in understanding.

“How do we get in? If they don’t open the door, there’s nothing we can do. The neighboring house might report us.”

Kang Chan hadn’t taken that situation into calculation, but Kim Hyung-Jung answered in his stead.

“Yang Jin-Woo’s estate is designed so others can’t look into the house from the neighboring houses. And we can climb over the walls to unlock the gate.”

“Phuhuhu, a National Intelligence Service manager and the section chief of the president’s guards are making plans to break in by jumping over fences.”

Jeon Dae-Geuk laughed like Seok Kang-Ho.

“I’ll ring the bell first. They’ll recognize me anyway, and they’ll probably open the door without worry if they see there are only a few people.”

“Whatever works. Well then, time for a smoke!”

Following Jeon Dae-Geuk’s words, everyone lit their cigarettes.

“You’re truly amazing, Mr. Kang Chan.”

“I think you’re even more amazing, Mr. Jeon Dae-Geuk.”

“Me?” Jeon Dae-Geuk looked at Kang Chan, curiosity in his eyes.

“It seems like you’re not considering what might happen if things go south.”

“Phu.”

Jeon Dae-Geuk snorted and shook his head.

“As I said before, most of us here have already received too much from the country. If tarnishing one’s name means the country can advance forward, I should obviously be the first in line.”

Jeon Dae-Geuk took another sip of his coffee upon seeing Kang Chan’s smile.

“Some of the top ten chaebols and a few members of the National Assembly may have noticed what Yang Jin-Woo is up to. If today’s event serves as a warning and prevents them from running around freely, I’ll be satisfied no matter what the outcome is.”

After Kang Chan put out his cigarette in the ashtray, Jeon Dae-Geuk got up, supporting himself by pressing down on his thighs.

“Shall we get started?”

Everyone, including Kang Chan, took a deep breath and left the cafe.

“Mr. Kang Chan.”

While they moved to the parking lot, Jeon Dae-Geuk stopped Kang Chan.

“No matter what happens, you must survive. The burden will be carried by old people like me, so someone like you, who has great abilities and a bright future, has to live and accomplish greater things.”

He was being completely sincere. Jeon Dae-Geuk wrapped an arm around Kang Chan and patted his back.

If only someone like Jeon Dae-Geuk had been his commander...

Kang Chan suddenly thought that it would have been nice to have served in the military under someone like Jeon Dae-Geuk.

They decided to take two vans. Kim Tae-Jin and Suh Sang-Hyeon boarded Jeon Dae-Geuk's van to get their guns.

The engine started.

“Dae, don't worry about the aftermath. If you get caught, just kill them.”

“Don't worry about me. Don't rush ahead alone.”

“Alright.”

The car turned and exited the parking lot.

Malice rose in Kang Chan's eyes. He had simply wanted to avenge the unjustly killed sisters and make sure Kang Dae-Gyung and Yoo Hye-Sook could never be targeted again, but things had become messier than expected.

Sharlan, that son of bitch. After him, every problem had blown out of proportion.

When the traffic light turned green, they turned onto the road next to the hotel and crossed to the other side.

As they continued up the road, tall, castle-like houses appeared on both sides. They increased in size as the team drove on.

Vrooom.

The van sped up and climbed the final hill, entering a narrow alley on the right flanked by tall walls. They soon reached a wrought iron gate that looked to be about four times the size of a standard school gate.

Ridiculous luxury like this probably made the average person seem like a beggar in the owner's eyes.

The van stopped in front of the main gate.

There were cameras above the front gate, and on the left wall was a small door for vehicle access. The space seemed to have been built by caving the wall in..

The van that Jeon Dae-Geuk was in stopped right next to them.

Kang Chan unboarded the car and glared at the cameras.

“Whew.”

What kind of lunch did they eat in houses like these?

“Yang Jin-Woo, did you stuff yourself well for lunch? I had bibimbap.”

There was really nothing special about living. Earning a lot of money, eating well, wearing expensive clothes, and living in a good house? That was all nice and something to be envious about.

Who would criticize anyone for living like that?

But why would anyone kill the unfortunate sisters, bring in weapons and foreign agents, and kill South Korea’s perfectly fine agents just to prevent the whole nation from living just as prosperously? What reason could there be for such bullshit?

Kang Chan smirked.

The measly right to sell automobiles that Kang Dae-Gyung received?

What did Yoo Hye-Sook do that was so wrong when all she did was be overjoyed that she could support a few orphanages?

Kang Chan stood at the front, while Jeon Dae-Geuk and Seok Kang-Ho backed him up from behind. He strode toward the main gate.

However, just before he pressed the bell, the entire door creaked. The right corner of the large gate opened as if it was detached from the rest of the gate.

Pft.

‘So, you really want to do this, huh?’

This was the beginning. There was no knowing what would happen or who would come out dead once they entered this door.

Chapter 119.2: Do You Have Any More To Pull Out? (2)

Kang Chan took a deep breath and stepped in through the door.

There were stairs in front of him. A space that was about five square meters was surrounded by stone walls as tall as a person, completely blocking the estate’s interior from view.

Even his house was ridiculous.

Kang Chan glared at the stone staircase ahead of him.

What if someone shot him while he climbed up? Should he draw his gun?

After a moment of contemplation, he simply went up the stairs. He trusted his instinct.

If someone had been waiting with a gun, his heart would have been racing by now.

As he clunked up the stairs, the upper levels gradually came into view. Soon, he stopped in front of a building that looked to him like a monster with its mouth wide open and seemingly about to devour the yard next to it.

The first floor had a porch and glass ceilings like an opera house, and above it, on a cement dome, were windows to the second and third floors.

He would only be exaggerating a little if he were to say the front yard was as massive as a school field. On top of that, it was decorated with natural grass, neatly trimmed trees, garden stones, and an artificial pond to the side.

Kang Chan glared at the building from the end of the garden. The man wouldn't shoot him after opening the door for him, especially since it was highly likely that Yang Jin-Woo knew Kang Chan and the identity of the people behind him.

'You tenacious bastard. Your end has come.'

He could try to squirm like a worm and make money even after becoming a ghost, but he wouldn't live past this day to harm anyone else.

"Hoo."

Kang Chan breathed in deeply and took another step. The grass was soft and well-groomed.

He was already halfway through when the left entrance opened and men began pouring out.

'Yang Jin-Woo?'

A dark gray suit jacket, dress shirt, and deep blue pants. The person walking out was undoubtedly Yang Jin-Woo.

What was he so confident about to pull this crap?

Kang Chan could only tilt his head in confusion.

Six Caucasian men were walking on either side of Yang Jin-Woo. Three of them clearly had the gait and posture of former agents.

Pft.

That wasn't all. After all the Caucasian men had gone out, Japanese agents stepped out into the clearing as well.

The glass doors closed just as Yang Jin-Woo stopped in front of Kang Chan. By this point, there were almost thirty Japanese agents behind him.

"I didn't know you would visit without any appointment, Mr. Jeon."

Why was this guy so confident? Did the Caucasians have some kind of abilities that Kang Chan didn't know about?

Yang Jin-Woo addressed Jeon Dae-Geuk and turned his gaze back to Kang Chan.

"So, you're the kid named Kang Chan."

"Yang Jin-Woo, pretending to be calm won't change the outcome."

Yang Jin-Woo let out a sigh.

“This is why people without principles won't cut it. You still haven't learned how the world works, and you've never experienced having it beneath you. Well, it's not so much your fault as it is the fault of your parents for raising you by just feeding you and thinking they have already fulfilled their responsibility. Because of you, your parents will inevitably pay the price.”

Yang Jin-woo chewed his cheek and looked at Jeok Dae-Geuk, who was behind Kang Chan.

“Ahem! Mr. Jeon, it was an unexpected visit, but I'll excuse myself as I have something to do.”

Just as Yang Jin-Woo was about to move...

“Cut the bullshit and stay still, Yang Jin-Woo. Otherwise, I'll put a hole through your forehead.”

“Tsk tsk tsk, you uneducated child.”

Yang Jin-woo turned to the Caucasian man standing next to him.

“Chairman Yang is a U.S. citizen,” the American spoke fluently in Korean. “We are from the embassy.”

The man took out an I.D. from his suit pocket and handed it to Kang Chan.

Kang Chan finally understood why Yang Jin-Woo was acting this way.

This son of a bitch had the prestige of the United States behind him and put on this show to brag about it. He wanted to demonstrate that no one in South Korea could touch him with force or the law by displaying the power of the Japanese agents and the U.S. Embassy.

“If there are any illegal assaults or acts that obstruct his passage, the U.S. government will not overlook them. You are currently threatening a U.S. citizen. I sternly warn you not to obstruct Chairman Yang any longer.”

When Kim Hyung-Jung and Jeon Dae-Geuk sighed from behind, Yang Jin-Woo had a smug expression.

“You worthless scum, welcome to the real world. A world your parents will never know even if they live a thousand years longer. Those without money are nothing more than servants and slaves. They breed offspring for their masters, rejoice in being able to have a meal, and die when they are told to! Slaves!”

“Shut up, you son of a bitch!”

Seeing Kang Chan's eyes, Yang Jin-Woo quickly looked at the American.

“This is a warning.”

“You shut up too, you fucking bastard. This isn't the States, so I'll kill you if you say one more word.”

“You...!”

Click!

Kang Chan pulled out his gun.

Seok Kang-Ho also immediately drew his gun and pointed it at the American.

The three American agents flinched but couldn't move a muscle when they saw who Seok Kang-Ho was aiming at.

For the first time since this meeting started, Yang Jin-Woo had a bewildered look in his eyes.

“Hey! A slave, motherfucker? A slave?”

Kang Chan smirked at Yang Jin-Woo.

“You think you're so strong? You think America will protect you? Fine. Let's see how long you'll be protected.”

Kang Chan turned his gaze to the flustered American.

“Call the French Embassy.”

“What are you talking about?”

Kang Chan moved the gun he was aiming at Yang Jin-Woo to the American's face.

“If you keep annoying me, I'll kill you first. Call the French Embassy and ask for Lanok. If you ask again, I'll blow your damn head off.”

Kang Chan actually intended to pull the trigger.

If he left this fucking bastard Yang Jin-Woo alive, it would only cause more problems. It didn't matter whether he started bullshit with Japan or America backing him. The outcome would be the same.

War? Bullshit.

The United States would wage war just because of Yang Jin-Woo's death? Bullshit.

Perhaps everyone here would receive life sentences, but war was out of the question.

The American carefully put his hand into his pocket, pulled out his phone, and made a puzzled expression. He didn't know the number.

Damn it. Kang Chan didn't know the number either.

Just then, Kim Hyung-Jung, who was behind Kang Chan, called the French Embassy.

Beep beep beep. Beep—

He put the phone to his ear.

“Is this the French Embassy?” he asked, then glanced briefly at Kang Chan. “Tell them that Kang Chan is asking for Ambassador Lanok.”

There was no response for about 30 seconds.

As Yang Jin-Woo's glance uncomfortably alternated between the Americans, Seok Kang-Ho shifted the muzzle of his gun whenever the Japanese agents tried to do anything suspicious.

"Hello. Lanok? This is Frank."

The man who introduced himself as Frank explained the situation in English while occasionally narrowing his eyes at Kang Chan.

"Just a moment."

He extended his arm and handed the phone over.

"Allô?"

-Mr. Kang Chan, are you trying to have me mediate the withdrawal of the U.S. Embassy?

Lanok was quick to catch on, perhaps because he was a sly fox.

"Well, it would be better if it ended well. I used your name, so I thought the consequences would be less severe."

As he spoke in French, Yang Jin-Woo glanced at Frank, seemingly curious about what was happening.

-Hmm, I see. I understand. This could make things difficult for you, though, Mr. Kang Chan.

"I'm willing to accept that, Ambassador."

From the other end of the phone came a deep sigh.

-Please give the phone to Frank.

"Thank you, Ambassador," Kang Chan replied, then handed the phone back.

"Hello?"

The conversation continued for about a minute. Most of what was said was answered by a simple "Yes!" in English that anyone could understand. Soon after, Frank looked at Kang Chan in surprise. When the call ended, he exhaled deeply, eyes still on Kang Chan.

"From this moment on, the United States will revoke Yang Jin-Woo's U.S. citizenship for breaching the conditions for dual citizenship and violating the law prohibiting support of terrorism."

"What?!"

Yang Jin-Woo whipped his head around.

"The United States government and the DIA appreciate your cooperation, Mr. Kang Chan."

Kang Chan was also taken aback by the situation.

“If it’s alright with you, the U.S. Embassy will now withdraw. If any legal or diplomatic issues arise, the U.S. Embassy will testify that you acted in self-defense.”

Frank’s gaze was serious, just as it had been when dealing with Yang Jin-Woo a moment ago. Something Kang Chan didn’t know about had taken place, but he couldn’t ask about it right now.

“Go.”

“Thank you, Mr. Kang Chan. Three of our agents can help you if needed.”

As Yang Jin-Woo tried to retreat, he froze in place upon seeing Kang Chan’s gun move. His eyes moved back and forth.

“We’re good.”

“Mr. Kang Chan, I sincerely respect your decision to cooperate for world peace.”

Had this man suddenly lost his mind? Was it necessary to suck up to Kang Chan and say killing Yang Jin-Woo was an act of cooperation for world peace?

Frank bowed curtly, then left with his team. Things had taken a strange turn, but at least that took care of Yang Jin-Woo.

“Oh no! What are you going to do? You’re not an American anymore.”

Kang Chan had pulled out his gun first, preventing the Japanese agents from doing anything.

Kang Chan decided to only kill Yang Jin-Woo and tidy up the situation. There was no need for the blood of thirty Japanese agents to spill.

He didn’t even need a gun to kill Yang Jin-Woo.

“Daye.”

“Yes, sir.”

Kang Chan put his gun in Seok Kang-Ho’s left hand. This way, he could fire at least 30 consecutive shots.

“If anyone moves, you’re allowed to open fire.”

“Understood.”

Seok Kang-Ho took two steps to the right.

“South Korea is a country under the rule of law! Section Chief Jeon! If you do this, you’re finished! The law states that I have the right to be protected—!”

Pow!

Kang Chan clenched his fist, with a protruding index knuckle supported by the thumb, and struck Yang Jin-Woo’s abdomen.

“Ugh!”

Yang Jin-Woo clutched his stomach as he bowed over like a gangster greeting their superior.

Thud.

Kang Chan grabbed Yang Jin-Woo's hair. Blood dripped down as Yang Jin-Woo's cheek trembled like in the comics.

Yang Jin-Woo dropped to his knees after being struck only five times. He was grabbing his head in a posture that made it seem like he was desperately praying to Kang Chan.

'Are you watching this? I'm sorry I couldn't protect you. I'll at least send this guy over to you today...'

This bastard was going straight to hell, though, so he probably wouldn't meet those kind kids.

Thwack!

'Anyway, I hope you can let go of your anger and move on to a better place now.'

Thwack!

Kang Chan lifted Yang Jin-Woo's head with his left hand. The man's left cheek was swollen, and vibrant red blood trickled down from his eyes, nose, and mouth.

"Motherfucker, I thought your blood would be gold, but look! It's just red."

"Uhuhu..."

Thwack!

The flesh on Yang Jin-Woo's cheek trembled uncontrollably. Blood splattered to the right.

"Yang Jin-Woo?"

"Uhuhu..."

Thwack!

"Khuhuhu!"

"Are you laughing now?"

Yang Jin-Woo frantically shook his head.

Thwack!

"Cough! Cough!"

"Yang Jin-Woo?"

Thwack!

After slapping Yang Jin-Woo's cheek hard, Kang Chan stayed still for a moment.

With the midday sun shining down, the garden looked stunning.

Thanks to Seok Kang-Ho's pointed guns, the Japanese agents could only grit their teeth, unable to move recklessly.

Both sides knew whether or not Seok Kang-Ho would pull the trigger or not and what his skills were like.

Yang Jin-Woo carefully looked up at Kang Chan.

Kang Chan smirked and lifted his right foot to stomp on Yang Jin-Woo's left thigh with all his might.

"Ugh! Ahhh!"

Kang Chan tilted his head.

"Is it because you stuffed yourself well? Why won't this break properly?"

Despite cracking noises filling the garden, no sounds came out of Yang Jin-Woo's wide-open mouth.

"AAAHHH!!!"

It was a little late, but Yang Jin-Woo eventually let out a scream that sounded as if it came from the depths of his lungs.

"Jeon-san!" one of the Japanese agents suddenly shouted.

Kang Chan raised his gaze.

"Fight proudly against the agents of Great Japan! If you want, we can match your numbers! No, we'll fight with only half!"

What were those idiots saying?

"If not, we'll draw our guns. Let's see who ends up dead!"

The glinting, venomous gaze spread among the Japanese agents like a contagion.

"You bastards! You attempted to kill powerless people, and you have the audacity to speak so boldly?"

"Jeon-san!"

The Japanese agent ignored Kang Chan and called Jeon Dae-Geuk out again.

"Daye."

"Yes, sir!"

"Shoot that son of a bitch."

"Yes—"

Before Seok Kang-Ho could pass down his sentence, Jeon Dae-Geuk placed his hand on Kang Chan's shoulder.

'Surely he wouldn't fall to such blatant provocation, would he?'

When Kang Chan turned around, however, he saw the mad look in Jeon Dae-Geuk's eyes.

“Let me request this of you.”

It was a blunt statement. He also spoke informally, which was something he'd never done before.

“Let me request this of you as a man who led an era of South Korea's special forces. Let us kill those bastards with our own hands.”

“Section Chief Jeon!” Kim Tae-Jin called, but Jeon Dae-Geuk's gaze remained on Kang Chan.

“You're not considering the consequences?”

“Would I have come here if I cared about something like that?”

Jeon Dae-Geuk's retort rendered Kang Chan speechless.

“Kang Chan, I entrusted the command to you. You make the decision. But I hope you allow these old soldiers to protect their pride. Look behind you.”

While Kim Tae-Jin and Kim Hyung-Jung had mixed expressions, everyone else looked furious.

“They will be the core of South Korea's agents from now on. Allow us to fight to protect our pride without the help of the United States or the interference of France.”

Kang Chan smirked.

‘Are you that confident?’

‘That's why you need to help.’

‘Why are you going this far?’

‘We're soldiers. Soldiers who have only lived on the battlefield.’

It was madness.

Jeon Dae-Geuk's absurd request struck Kang Chan's heart.

“We don't care if we die here. It will become a story that will forever protect the pride of the agents present—a lesson that no one can recklessly raise havoc in the Republic of Korea.”

Kang Chan turned to look at Yang Jin-Woo. The dirty bastard was sobbing, saliva flowing from his mouth.

Chapter 120: I'm Sick of This! (1)

Kang Chan briefly hesitated, caught in a dilemma between honoring Jeon Dae-Geuk's request and steering clear of a potentially perilous trap. After a moment's contemplation, he firmly grasped Yang Jin-Woo's head and confronted his adversaries head-on.

"Alright, fine. I'll give you what you want but only under some conditions. First, drop all your guns, and second, give me a moment to take care of this scoundrel."

The Japanese agent who had spewed nonsense earlier visibly flinched when Kang Chan treated them as if they were absolute imbeciles.

"So, all that high and mighty act was just an attempt to deceive us and rescue this scumbag? Just what does this fucker mean to you, anyway?" Kang Chan lowered his gaze, noticing a glimmer of hope in Yang Jin-Woo's eyes despite his pained moans.

Thwack!

Kang Chan kicked Yang Jin-Woo's abdomen.

"Trying to strain your brain out of this, you son of a bitch?"

"Ughh! Ughh!" Hunched over, Yang Jin-Woo trembled. He made a feeble attempt to straighten up, desperately seeking relief from the excruciating pain coming from his fractured thigh bones.

"You fucker!" Kang Chan growled.

Pow!

"Aghhhh!"

The scorching midday sun shone down on Yang Jin-Woo's disfigured, blood-soaked face.

"We will give you two trillion if you hand over Chairman Yang!" the agent urgently shouted.

"The Eurasian Rail will go up in smoke if I let go of this punk, yet all you're offering is a measly two trillion? You can keep it, you fucking moron!"

Pow!

"Cough! Cough!"

"Shut up, motherfucker! You acting like this makes me look like some kind of money-hungry hostage-taker!"

Kang Chan pretended to lift his foot, making Yang Jin-Woo involuntarily flinch.

Whack!

"Kuhuh! Kuhuhuh!"

Yang Jin-Woo's condition was rapidly deteriorating. His swollen face was covered in tears, snot, and blood, and he drooled with each pitiful cry.

"Yang Jin-Woo."

"Y-yes, sir?"

This pathetic man lost the will to fight more easily than Kang Chan expected.

Kang Chan tilted his head in annoyance and peered down at him.

“Don’t let me catch you doing something like this again.”

With his hair still clutched in Kang Chan’s hand, Yang Jin-Woo frantically nodded. It seemed he thought Kang Chan would spare him.

“Tell me what you want!” the Japanese agent shouted again.

Thud!

Tightening his grip on Yang Jin-Woo’s hair, Kang Chan slowly lifted his gaze.

“What I want? For this bastard to die!”

“No!”

Crack!

Kang Chan twisted Yang Jin-Woo's neck. Eerie silence devoured the surroundings, the world seemingly frozen over.

Taken aback, Jeon Dae-Geuk, Kim Tae-Jin, and even Kim Hyung-Jung blanked out.

Thud.

Yang Jin-Woo slumped lifelessly, coming to rest on Kang Chan’s left side.

"What's your plan now? If you still insist on safeguarding your precious pride, I'm more than willing to throw down with you."

“Bakayaro!” the agent spat out.

"Quit your nonsensical blabbering and make up your mind already."

“Yoroshii!”

Still glaring at Kang Chan, the agent cautiously retrieved his gun and tossed it aside. Taking that as a cue, the other agents around him followed suit, pulling out their firearms and piling them up on the ground near Seok Kang-Ho, who maintained his aim, ready to pull the trigger if anyone tried anything stupid.

“Mr. Jeon, tell the two snipers to keep their guns.”

“Got it,” Jeon Dae-Geuk responded.

“Choi Jong-Il, go and toss these guns in front of the main gate.”

Choi Jong-Il, Woo Hee-Seung, and Lee Doo-Hee threw all the guns down the stairs, all of them landing near the front gate. With a gesture from Kang Chan, Seok Kang-Ho picked up the enemy’s guns and tossed them near the gate as well.

Finally, Kang Chan turned to Jeon Dae-Geuk. The snipers had their guns pointed at the Japanese agents, which meant they could put an end to everything now and ensure everyone on their side would leave safely.

“This is sheer madness,” Kang Chan commented.

“I know, but this fight will go down in history as a source of pride for our agents. Whether we win or lose, this will forever be known as an act that symbolizes the dignity of South Korea’s agents. Thank you, Kang Chan.”

Kang Chan nodded slightly in acknowledgment—a subtle gesture of understanding. He pulled out the bayonet holstered at his ankle and held it tightly in a reverse grip.

Kashing.

The short blade gleamed sharply in the midday sunlight as it left its scabbard.

In response, their opponents also pulled out concealed weapons from their waists and ankles. The garden shimmered with flashes of sunlight reflected off the gleaming blades.

For every man on Kang Chan’s side, there were two enemies.

Though it seemed insignificant right now, that difference’s effects would become painfully apparent once the battle started. It would feel as if they were each contending with fifteen enemies at once.

There was also no knowing who the Japanese agents were going to attack first. They could opt to target the weak ones first to reduce the South Korean agents’ numbers, or they could prioritize taking down the stronger adversaries to gain an advantageous foothold in the fight.

Kang Chan took a deep breath and, with narrowed eyes, looked at the Japanese agents in front of them. As he mentioned earlier, this was, without a doubt, pure madness.

He gritted his teeth.

In exchange for Kim Tae-Jin and Jeon Dae-Geuk’s assistance in killing Yang Jin-Woo, he decided to lend them his aid in this battle against the Japanese agents.

“Daye, cover our right flank.”

“Copy that.” Seok Kang-Ho got into position.

“Choi Jong-II, left flank,” Kang Chan instructed again.

“Yes, sir.”

Yoo Hye-Sook momentarily flashed in Kang Chan's mind as Seok Kang-Ho and Choi Jong-II flanked him. She had looked... frightened. However, she disappeared from his mind as quickly as she had come.

Since he had already decided to join the fight anyway, he thought he might as well take down as many as he could and divert the attention away from his allies.

The first agent to face Kang Chan quickly swung his dagger. However, he was caught off guard when Kang Chan suddenly charged forward.

Kang Chan swung his bayonet multiple times, slitting the agent’s wrists and neck. blood spurted out of the deep wounds.

Without wasting a second, Kang Chan then deflected and forcefully struck down the next agent’s forearm and swiftly cut him three times.

Sounds of bodies dropping to the ground came from where Seok Kang-Ho and Choi Jong-Il were fighting, but Kang Chan had no time to glance back.

The enemies' blood splattered on his face. Kang Chan had fought so many dirty battles like this that he had become as familiar with this as he was with the back of his hand. This was nothing new.

Jeon Dae-Geuk, Kim Tae-Jin, and Kim Hyung-Jung also rushed in, joining him. They were followed closely by the other members who formed a protective circle around them to guard them.

“Kegh!”

The battle's first cry rang out.

Interestingly enough, Kang Chan could identify whether it was from an ally or an enemy. Just now, the shriek was from a Japanese agent.

Unflinchingly, Kang Chan swung his bayonet with mechanical precision, devoid of any emotion.

Pant. Pant.

With his acute senses, he could hear rapid breaths and also survey his surroundings with clarity.

Blood splattered across the battlefield. The new agent facing Kang Chan shifted his gaze downward, readying his dagger for an attack.

Kang Chan could see everything clearly.

In quick succession, he slashed the man's armpit and neck.

“Ack!”

It wasn't easy to hold back screams after being heavily wounded. No matter how well-trained anyone was, they would need one hell of a resolve to choke back their shouts when it really came down to it.

The enemy's eyes showed momentary confusion when Kang Chan abruptly lunged forward, grabbing his head. The move caught the agent by surprise. He didn't expect Kang Chan to suddenly target his head.

In this battle to the death, this fight where they could just cut a man's throat open, Kang Chan unwaveringly used every ounce of his strength to bring them down. Anyone surprised for having a fistful of their hair grabbed... was bound to get their necks slit.

With a swift motion from Kang Chan, blood spurted out of the agent's neck.

“Agh!”

As Kang Chan gashed the side of another man, Kang Chan's ears caught Choi Jong-Il's pained shout.

Fweeck! Fweeck!

When he turned to look, he saw Choi Jong-Il getting stabbed in the armpit, then near his heart.

Pow!

Kang Chan instinctively rammed into Choi Jong-Il with his shoulder, veering Choi Jong-Il away from the dagger aimed at his throat. It cut his face instead, but it was surely better than dying.

Shing!

‘Ack!’

In the heat of the battle, Kang Chan swiftly slashed the enemy’s armpit, but his left side was lacerated in the process.

The enemy’s speed was truly impressive. He easily deflected the relentless onslaught of Kang Chan’s elbow strikes and bayonet swings.

Kang Chan pushed away the agent’s attack with the ball of his palm.

Exploiting the opening Choi Jong-Il left in their formation, the enemy cut Kang Chan’s back and shoulders. However, Kang Chan just put the searing pain aside and focused on the man in front of him.

Fighting a battle of speed and precision, Kang Chan and the agent’s barrage of attacks collided in rapid succession.

It was a life-or-death situation. One mistake, and they could find themselves lying on the ground. However, if Kang Chan could just outpace his opponent, a chance to eliminate him would certainly arise.

Thwack! Pow! Pow! Pow!

“Agh!”

Just then, Choi Jong-Il, who was defending against the attacking agents to the left of Kang Chan, let out another grunt.

The noise momentarily diverted Kang Chan’s attention.

Seizing the opportunity, the enemy launched a sudden attack. Kang Chan instinctively pulled back his neck, but not before his collarbone and right side were viciously cut.

Sounds of bones being struck rang out as they exchanged a flurry of elbows, punches, and weapon swings. However, Kang Chan stood resolute, refusing to falter.

Crack!

Their gazes locked in a fierce confrontation as their elbows collided.

“Son of a bitch!”

“Bakayaro!”

Kang Chan was soon stabbed in the armpit, causing his arm to tremble slightly.

However, he simply further steeled his resolve. At this rate, there would be no end to their fight.

When the agent tried to stab him again, Kang Chan blocked it with his left hand, the blade piercing all the way through his palm. Kang Chan then closed his fingers and tightened his grip around the dagger’s cross-guard, preventing the enemy from using it.

The agent flinched in shock.

Wasn't expecting this, were you?

The agent hastily lifted his other arm, but Kang Chan had his bayonet ready.

Shing! Shing! Shing! Shing!

Elbow, shoulder, forearm, and armpit—he relentlessly targeted the agent's vulnerable points.

In a desperate attempt to get away, the agent twisted the dagger lodged in Kang Chan's palm.

'Agh!'

However, letting go was the last thing Kang Chan would consider doing. He thrust his bayonet into the agent's throat twice, leaving behind two deep holes.

Blood fountained out from the agent's injuries.

Until the very last moment of the agent's life draining out of his eyes, he glared at Kang Chan with hatred.

Shik!

Kang Chan's every single nerve tingled the moment he pulled out the dagger from his palm.

When he turned to look at Seok Kang-Ho, he saw his teammate also covered in blood.

Kang Chan had never imagined that he would be fighting to the death like this again. He never asked to be born into this world, nor did he want to reincarnate into another body.

Yet, for some reason, bloodshed and carnage relentlessly pursued him throughout both of his lives.

As he thrust his bayonet into an enemy's throat, Yoo Hye-Sook suddenly crossed his mind. What would she say if she saw him mercilessly killing these people?

It was already challenging enough for her to accept that her son had snapped another man's neck. What expression would she have if she saw him impaling a bayonet in an enemy's neck?

Fweeck!

Damn it!

Distracted by the thought, he had another near-death moment.

Shing! Shing! Shing!

None of these remaining bastards seemed as persistent as the opponents that he faced earlier. Unfortunately for them, Kang Chan decided to kill as many of them as possible. That was the only way to ensure the survival of his comrades.

Where do you think you're going?

He wrenched back the shoulder of an enemy advancing toward Choi Jong-II. Fueled by malice and adrenaline, Kang Chan no longer felt any pain in his left hand. It merely throbbed a little.

"Aghhh!"

His bayonet found its mark in the enemy's throat, causing a wretched scream to tear through the air and blood to spurt out of the injury. Finally catching a short break, Kang Chan scanned the chaos around him and soon spotted the enemy who had been gunning for Seok Kang-Ho.

Kang Chan had probably been stabbed in his left forearm, but it strangely didn't hurt at all.

Shing. Shing. Shing. Shing.

If this was the destiny he had to live, so be it. He would wholeheartedly embrace it.

He would survive until the end.

Even if Yoo Hye-Sook abandoned him, even if Kang Dae-Kyung turned his back on him, he would persevere.

He would survive and go to Gapyeong with Seok Kang-Ho to eat chicken legs if that was what he had to do.

Kang Chan relentlessly thrust his dagger, pouring all his frustration into each stab.

Why did fate have to be so merciless to him? Why couldn't he lead a normal life like everyone else? Why? Why!

Stab. Stab. Stab. Slit. Slit. Slit.

He kept going until someone grabbed onto him, making him flinch and breaking his rhythm.

“Captain!”

It was Dayeru.

Dayeru clutched Kang Chan with his blood-stained arms, holding on as tightly as he could.

“It's over.”

“Haah. Haah.”

This fool dared interrupt him?

“It's over, Captain. Everything's over.”

“Haah. Haah.”

Seok Kang-Ho looked directly into Kang Chan's eyes, then nodded in acknowledgment of what Kang Chan was experiencing.

Only then did terrible pain surge throughout Kang Chan.

“Do you have a cigarette?”

Grinning, Seok Kang-Ho released let go of Kang Chan, and, with a grunt, took out a cigarette. Seok Kang-Ho's upper body was drenched in blood and covered in deep wounds.

“Here.”

Kang Chan lit the cigarette and took a deep drag from it as he looked around.

There were only five people standing: Kim Hyung-Jung, Choi Jong-Il, and three agents he didn't know.

“Mr. Kang Chan.”

Kim Hyung-Jung approached Kang Chan with an exhausted expression.

“I’ve contacted the hospital.”

Kim Hyung-Jung collapsed to the ground as if gravity pushed him down. With a hand applying pressure on his right cheek, Choi Jong-Il walked toward them from behind Kim Hyung-Jung.

“Tenk you.”

His pronunciation was strange because of the blood caught in his throat.

“Want a smoke?”

“Yus.”

Seok Kang-Ho handed Choi Jong-Il a cigarette as Kang Chan chuckled.

Pale bodies littered the front yard and soaked it in blood. A few of them were still twitching in pain.

“Do you have a phone? Please call Bang Ji Hospital for me.”

Choi Jong-Il asked for a phone from the other agents and dialed the number for Kang Chan.

-Hello?

“Director, it’s Kang Chan.”

-Mr. Kang Chan, if you called me to brag about getting a new number, I’m going to get mad.

“Director, Seok Kang-Ho and I have suffered severe wounds. We can’t get to the hospital like this.”

-Where are you?

Yoo Hun-Woo unexpectedly sounded grave.

“We’re in Pyeongchang-Dong. I don’t know the address, but it’s Yang Jin-Woo’s house.”

-I’m on my way now. I can send a nearby doctor to help first if you need me to.

“I’ll just wait for you, Director.”

-All right.

The call ended curtly.

“Hand me another cigarette.”

Seok Kang-Ho gave him another stick. The lighter was soaked in blood, so he had to use his old cigarette to light the new one.

“Let’s go sit over there, Channy.”

“Sure.”

The two limped over and leaned against a tree. They were beyond tired.

“Hu.”

The cigarette smoke vanished into thin air.

“Captain, did you know you killed at least ten of them?”

“I did?”

“I knew you wouldn’t know. You seemed totally out of it after killing that snake over there. Ow.” Seok Kang-Ho groaned as he tried to adjust his upper body.

“Let’s visit Gapyeong when we recover.”

Kang Chan chuckled, then agreed that they should do that sometime.

It was strange, but he wasn’t worried about who had died or how his allies who had collapsed on the ground were doing.

Damn it.

He felt as if he crossed a line that he could never uncross.

In the distance, the sound of an ambulance wailed.