

## **Blackfield 151**

Chapter 151.1: I missed you (2)

Kang Dae-Kyung and Yoo Hye-Sook left their hotel room, got on the elevator, and got off on the first floor lobby. The swimming pool and the gym were to the right of the lobby, and the buffet restaurant was to the left. They had a free pass that the hotel offered to guests, so they had actually already eaten breakfast at the buffet yesterday.

Their plane landed at the hotel on Friday night.

Yoo Hye-Sook grumbled that they would not be able to get their money's worth if they stayed in their room for too long, so they headed out early on Saturday morning. However, the complicated layout of the hotel caught them by surprise. Hence, today, they decided to take their time leaving the room.

Now that they were already familiar with some of the areas, they leisurely walked past the hallway, then turned left toward the buffet restaurant.

They just had to confirm the guest list at the information desk, and they would be able to head inside without trouble.

Kang Dae-Kyung and Yoo Hye-Sook had been in the midst of turning around when they stopped dead in their tracks. Unable to move, all they could do was stare blankly at the person before them.

"I tried calling your hotel room, but since no one answered, I came over instead."

"Channy?"

Kang Chan was right in front of them, wearing a black suit and a shirt. Smiling brightly, he approached his parents.

"You should have breakfast first," Kang Chan continued.

"When did you get here?"

"A little while ago."

Four of the hotel staff quickly came over and prepared a table for them.

"What happened?" Yoo Hye-Sook did nothing but stare at Kang Chan. It was as if she had completely forgotten that they came down to eat.

"Honey, Channy has to be hungry. Why don't we talk over breakfast?" Kang Dae-Kyung interjected.

"Ah, right! What's wrong with me? Quickly now, let's eat."

Kang Chan was left with no other choice but to have breakfast again. Nevertheless, he was happy to see Kang Dae-Kyung, who gave him a knowing look, and Yoo Hye-Sook, who looked both happy and surprised.

“We got here last Friday. It would have been really nice if you could join us on this getaway,” Yoo Hye-Sook said. She quickly changed her expression when Kang Dae-Kyung gave her a glance and cleared his throat.

“Still, thanks to you, we got to see a lot of amazing sceneries,” Yoo Hye-Sook added.

As he smiled, Kang Chan subtly gestured at Kang Dae-Kyung, thanking him.

“Can the two of you head home late today?” Kang Chan asked.

“Today? Our flight is at one o’clock this afternoon.”

“I can change that. If the two of you are okay with it, we can head home together later in the evening.”

Kang Dae-Kyung met Yoo Hye-Sook’s eyes for a moment, then nodded. “Okay, let’s do that. We can leave our luggage with the hotel until our flight.”

“Channy, try this. Eat this as well,” Yoo Hye-Sook said.

The point of a buffet was that customers could eat as much of their favorite food on the menu as they wanted. However, Yoo Hye-Sook just kept filling Kang Chan’s plate with different dishes.

Kang Chan had no choice but to force himself to eat.

After about an hour, they ended their meal with cups of tea.

“Let’s go to our hotel room and grab our luggage,” Kang Dae-Kyung said.

“Those can be left in the room—I asked the hotel to keep them there.”

“You didn’t have to pay more fees?”

“No, I didn’.”

Kang Dae-Kyung looked at Kang Chan with a puzzled expression; his expression soon turned strange.

“Let’s go. There’s a place that I want to go with the two of you,” Kang Chan said.

“Where are we going, Channy?” Yoo Hye-Sook asked.

“I have a surprise prepared for you both.”

Kang Chan left the restaurant and walked past the lobby with his parents. Standing in front of the entrance of the hotel, they noticed a taxi, a rental car, a private car, and a white limousine parked before them.

As Kang Chan walked onward, the employee standing in front of the limousine opened the door.

“After you, Mother.”

“Oh my!”

In front of the people who were blatantly looking at them, Kang Dae-Kyung and Yoo Hye-Sook got on the limousine. They both looked dazed.

*Bam.*

As soon as Kang Chan sat across from his parents, the employee closed the door and drove off.

“What’s this?” Yoo Hye-Sook asked.

Naturally, they weren’t asking that question because they didn’t know that they were in a limousine.

“This is the beginning of the surprise I have for you.”

Kang Dae-Kyung gave Kang Chan a look that seemed to say, ‘Aren’t you overdoing it?’

However, Kang Chan still seemed amused by Yoo Hye-Sook’s reaction.

“Where is this limousine taking us?” Yoo Hye-Sook asked.

Kang Chan couldn’t help but smile brightly. She looked exactly like Kim Mi-Young.

“I’m happier that I get to be with my son than I am about the limousine ride.”

“Me too.” Kang Chan really missed this moment.

Jeu island and the limousine aside, he had sincerely hoped for a moment when he could be with his parents like this.

Yoo Hye-Sook was looking outside with a curious expression when the limousine stopped. “Are we getting out of the limousine here?”

“Yes.”

Unlike Yoo Hye-Sook, who was flustered and excited, Kang Dae-Kyung had a mischievous expression on his face. He appeared to be thinking, ‘What is that kid trying to do this time?’

However, he soon began to look flustered as well.

“Getting to serve all of you is an honor.”

It seemed even Kang Dae-Kyung didn’t expect the yacht with five employees in uniforms lined up in front of it. Dumbfounded by the plan, he eventually burst out with laughter.

Kang Chan’s parents kept checking and asking him multiple times if they were in the right place. After a while, they finally boarded it. Only then did the yacht set sail toward the sea.

The yacht was fairly large. It had comfortable chairs at the back and sophisticated decorations inside. The interior was so elegant that it reminded them of a fancy restaurant.

The three sat outside the yacht.

The female employee brought over champagne and filled their glasses.

“Alright! Since Channy has gone through all the trouble to surprise us, let’s enjoy this gift to our heart’s content! Thank you, Channy.” Kang Dae-Kyung held his glass out for a toast, and Yoo Hye-Sook and Kang Chan clinked theirs with it.

*Clink!*

The long and narrow glasses rang clearly when they clinked together.

“This is good!” Yoo Hye-Sook complimented. If she knew the cost of the champagne, she never would have said that. Kang Dae-Kyung seemed aware that it was expensive, but he didn’t complain.

Strangely, Yoo Hye-Sook kept checking Kang Dae-Kyung and Kang Chan’s moods.

“Mother, do you want another glass of champagne?” Kang Chan asked.

“Can I have another one?”

When Kang Chan looked at an employee, a female employee quickly approached them and filled up Yoo Hye-Sook’s glass.

The sky was clear, the sunlight was warm, and the blue sea was brilliantly glinting.

“Honey, I’m so happy!” Yoo Hye-Sook said as if she was talking to herself. As Kang Dae-Kyung started massaging her shoulders, the yacht stopped. Not long after, the captain brought them three fishing rods.

Kang Chan put his fishing rod down and stayed near Yoo Hye-Sook, who had already caught a fish. The employee helped her collect the fish and put another bait on her hook.

“Oh my! I think I just caught another fish!” Yoo Hye-Sook exclaimed. She was catching so many fish that it was fascinating.

“You seem to have amazing luck when it comes to fishing, madam!” Even the employee looked surprised.

It looked like Yoo Hye-Sook didn’t hear them because she was too distracted by the fish.

They spent two hours fishing.

“Phew! This is so much fun.” Smiling brightly, Yoo Hye-Sook wiped her hands on a wet towel and sat on a chair. An employee cleanly sliced the raw fish that they had caught a little while ago and brought it to them along with side dishes such as abalone and sea cucumber.

“Mmm!” Yoo Hye-Sook didn’t have to exaggerate her exclamation since it really tasted amazing even for Kang Chan, who was full.

They rested for a bit, then returned to where they first got on the yacht.

The three got on the limousine that had been waiting for them and dropped by the glass park, which Kang Chan’s parents couldn’t go to yesterday. They then had abalone bibimbap in a hot stone pot and sea urchin soup for lunch.

Afterward, for the first time, they took a photo together.

His parents had likely done this before, but this was Kang Chan's first time taking photos with them since he reincarnated. With the sea as their background, they took a photo with all three of them. Afterward, Kang Chan took a photo with Yoo Hye-Sook, then with Kang Dae-Kyung.

It was a luxurious day, but Kang Chan just thought of it as a present to himself.

It was actually Kim Hyung-Jung that had prepared all of this.

Kang Chan didn't exactly know who was paying or how much everything cost. He just wanted to leisurely enjoy this moment.

At around four in the afternoon, they ate what was said to be the most famous melon bingsu on Jeju Island. By then, Yoo Hye-Sook already looked tired.

Taking a yacht out to sea and fishing seemed to have exhausted her.

"When's our flight, Channy?" Yoo Hye-Sook asked after finishing her bowl of bingsu. She seemed to be saying that she now wanted to go home and rest.

"Want to head back to Seoul now?" Kang Chan asked.

"Can we go?"

Kang Chan realized that Yoo Hye-Sook was pretty and that he felt thankful toward her. He felt grateful to have a mother who was so considerate of him that she was afraid telling him she wanted to go home would hurt him because he made time for them for the first time in so long. He was also grateful to have a father who pushed down his curiosity and surprise so he could pretend to be calm at all times.

"We should be just in time for our flight if we head back now," Kang Chan said.

"Yeah?"

The three returned to the hotel and dropped by their hotel room to brush their teeth. Afterward, they headed out again.

The limousine took them to the airport. As soon as they arrived, an employee who had been waiting for them greeted Kang Chan.

"Do you have our plane tickets?" Kang Chan asked the employee.

"It should be ready."

They headed deeper into the airport until they reached the runway where the private plane Kang Chan had ready for them was waiting.

Yoo Hye-Sook looked like she was at a loss for words. Meanwhile, Kang Dae-Kyung burst out with laughter.

"Let's go! This is a part of Channy's surprise for us," Kang Dae-Kyung said.

They calmed the startled Yoo Hye-Sook before they all boarded the plane. As soon as they were in, the plane took off.

“Was it you who flew to the hotel on a helicopter this morning, by any chance?” Kang Dae-Kyung whispered to Kang Chan.

“You saw that?”

“Phuhuhu,” Kang Dae-Kyung laughed again, finding Kang Chan’s answer funny.

“There isn’t more to this, is there? We’re not moving to a mansion or anything like that, right?” Kang Dae-Kyung asked again.

Kang Chan also laughed loudly—which he hadn’t done in a long time—at Kang Dae-Kyung’s joke.

“What’s so funny?” Yoo Hye-Sook asked.

“We’re talking about secrets that are strictly for men only,” Kang Dae-Kyung responded.

“You always tease me!”

Even without the yacht, the private plane, and other luxuries, Yoo Hye-Sook would have still been happy to see Kang Chan.

Chapter 151.2: I missed you (2)

Kang Chan and his parents got off the plane at the Gimpo airport and arrived home at around eight in the evening.

“What would you like to have for dinner?” Yoo Hye-Sook asked.

“Are you hungry?” Kang Chan asked his parents.

They were all still full.

“Should we just have fruits later?” Yoo Hye-Sook asked.

“Sure, Mother.”

While his parents were unpacking their luggage, Kang Chan took a shower. He wouldn’t trade this comfort for anything.

After showering, Kang Chan went into his room and lay down on his bed. He didn’t feel that tired, but he still ended up falling sound asleep.

*Creak.*

Checking in on Kang Chan, Yoo Hye-Sook looked at him with an expression that clearly showed how bad she felt for him.

“Is he asleep?” Kang Dae-Kyung asked.

“Yeah.”

Kang Dae-Kyung stood behind Yoo Hye-Sook. His expression wasn’t any different from hers.

Yoo Hye-Sook quietly approached Kang Chan and gently put a blanket over him.

“He must have been very tired,” Yoo Hye-Sook commented.

“He did look exhausted. He was probably forcing himself to keep going even though he was struggling.”

Tears threatened to fall from Yoo Hye-Sook’s eyes. As she bit on her lower lip to stop herself from crying, Kang Dae-Kyung hugged her around her shoulders. “He was very upset that he couldn’t go on the trip with us. He was also worried that you wouldn’t be able to enjoy the trip.”

“How hard must all of this be for a kid, honey?”

“Now, our job is to silently support him. Let’s make sure he knows we’re in his corner before he leaves, so that he knows he can come to us whenever he’s having a hard time resting.”

Yoo Hye-Sook nodded.

“Did the trip make you happy?” Kang Dae-Kyung asked.

“Of course! It was the best trip I have ever been on, and it’s all thanks to Channy.”

The two smiled, seemingly satisfied.

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Kang Chan woke up around the same time he normally did.

His mind was completely blank—almost as if he had just woken up after drinking the night away—and he could no longer feel any of the fatigue that had been accumulating in him.

Kang Chan stood up while tousling his hair, put on his workout clothes, and went outside.

“Whoa!”

The morning air here was nothing compared to the fresh air in Switzerland, but he still enjoyed the peculiar freshness that came with it.

“Good morning.”

Kang Chan, who had been warming up, burst out with laughter. Choi Jong-Il was approaching him with a small water bottle.

“You should rest!” Kang Chan said.

“I got enough rest already.”

“Doesn’t your family say anything? Don’t you have a child?”

“I met my wife at the 606.”

Kang Chan smiled dumbfoundedly. After taking a sip of water, he ran with Choi Jong-Il.

It was great to be alive.

Kang Chan felt as if he was being recharged whenever he extended his leg.

He didn't speed up not because of Choi Jong-Il but because he didn't want to overexert himself.

They ran in a circle for ten kilometers, then stopped at the entrance of the apartment.

"Haah. Haah."

Kang Chan caught his breath with Choi Jong-Il, drank water, then did simple exercises that did not require any equipment.

"Where are you going to wash up?" Kang Chan asked.

"There's a sauna at a nearby shopping center."

"What about breakfast?"

Choi Jong-Il smiled as if he found him funny.

"I'm going home," Kang Chan said. Smiling, he walked toward the entrance of the apartment.

"Channy! You should've rested today. Phew, look at all that sweat!" Yoo Hye-Sook exclaimed.

"I've gotten enough sleep anyway. And running actually made me feel more relaxed."

"Go take a shower quickly."

He smelled kimchi soup—a spicy soup made with aged kimchi, bean sprouts, and tofu.

It hadn't even been a few days yet, but he already felt at home again.

Kang Chan sat at the table after showering. Kang Dae-Kyung, who seemed to have also taken a shower before he did, sat at the table as well.

"Did you get enough exercise today?" Kang Dae-Kyung asked.

"Yes. I have completely gotten rid of my fatigue."

After Yoo Hye-Sook put the soup on the table and sat down, the three began to eat.

Kang Chan liked the soup as much as anything that he ate at Jeju Island.

After having breakfast, Kang Chan stayed in the living room while his parents changed.

Kang Dae-Kyung always tuned in to the news channel on TV until it was time to go to work. Currently, the news revolved mainly around the expected visit of the Russian president to South Korea. It continued with the hopeful news about the probability of an adjustment to the limit of the number of fish that South Korea could catch, which the country had been requesting for some time now.

"Are you okay?" Kang Dae-Kyung asked, having come out to the living room before Yoo Hye-Sook. He glanced at the master bedroom, seemingly hoping that Yoo Hye-Sook didn't hear what he was saying.

Kang Chan didn't understand what he meant.



“The look in your eyes makes me think you’re lacking strength.”

“I’m probably just tired. I can’t feel anything wrong with me right now, so I don’t know why my eyes look like that.”

“Well, it does. I feel bad for you.”

As Kang Dae-Kyung patted Kang Chan’s shoulder, Yoo Hye-Sook came out to the living room.

After they exchanged a few words, Kang Chan turned off the TV, sent off his parents, and went into his room.

Some people were waiting for Kang Chan to contact them.

Kang Chan called Lanok first and set up an appointment with him. He then called Kim Hyung-Jung. While talking to her, he decided to visit the office at Samseong-dong after his meeting with Lanok.

His appointment with Lanok was at two in the afternoon in the Namsan Hotel, so he still had some time to spare.

‘Now that I’m done making appointments, it’s about time I ask someone about the school festival so I can help.’

To comply with Kim Mi-Young’s request, Kang Chan had to first figure out what on earth the people at the festival wanted.

Kang Chan eventually decided that it would be best to meet Heo Eun-Sil and Lee Ho-Jun.

*I still have time before my meeting with Lanok. Since it’s Monday, should I go to school? While I’m there, I might as well have lunch at the school cafeteria with Kim Mi-Young. I’m going to need my school uniform for that, though... Damn it!*

Since the students had lunch at around noon, he would have to make his way to the hotel as soon as he was done eating. That would mean he would still be in his school uniform by the time Joo Chul-Bum greeted him and Lanok met with him.

As Kang Chan smacked his lips, his phone rang.

“Hello?”

- Are you busy?

“I’ve been waiting for you to call me. Let’s go get some coffee.”

- Phuhuhu. Come out here, then.

“Where are you?”

- I’m parked right in front of your house.

Kang Chan quickly put on his suit and went outside.

He and Seok Kang-Ho had really great chemistry.

As soon as Kang Chan got in the car, Seok Kang-Ho drove to Misari.

Seok Kang-Ho glanced at Kang Chan.

“My father talked about my eyes. Are my eyes still glinting?” Kang Chan asked.

Seok Kang-Ho looked as if he was about to say, ‘Obviously.’

“I asked how it looks.”

Seok Kang-Ho glanced at Kang Chan again, then frowned. “Honestly, you look like you’re forcing yourself to endure everything despite being full of spite.”

“Really?”

“Yeah. It would perfectly match the look in your eyes if you pick up a knife.”

“My eyes can’t look that bad. They’re probably just fiercer.”

“Are you sure you’re not thinking that way because you’ve grown even sharper? Maybe you look the same to those around you even after your eyes calmed down because the amount of spite that you were filled with was excessively higher than normal.”

Kang Chan looked outside the window.

Nobody died during his last operation. Rather, they actually yielded great results from it. So why was he like this?

He remained the same as he boarded the plane and the helicopter that Kim Hyung-Jung had prepared for him. And even though he enjoyed the yacht trip to his heart’s content, he was still somehow full of spite by the time he returned home.

They ordered coffee and started smoking as soon as they arrived at their destination.

“I’m meeting Ambassador Lanok at two o’clock this afternoon. After that, I’ll visit manager Kim at his office.”

“I saw the news about people going crazy because the President of Russia will be visiting South Korea.”

“Yeah. We’ll probably hear about that from Manager Kim himself.”

After talking about a couple more topics, Kang Chan also told Seok Kang-Ho about the favor that Kim Mi-Young had asked him to do.

“I’m thinking of going to school tomorrow,” Kang Chan commented afterward.

Seok Kang-Ho grinned at Kang Chan. “Your face relaxes a bit when you’re talking about Mi-Young.”

“It does?”

“Yes!”

Kang Chan confessed how he felt when she held his hand in the school cafeteria.

“Let’s be honest. From what I can see, you definitely like Mi-Young,” Seok Kang-Ho commented afterward.

He did like Kim Mi-Young, but did he really like her enough for the mere thought of her to change his expression? Before he reincarnated, had there ever been a time when he wanted to see someone during an operation?

Kang Chan looked at the river.

Chapter 152.1: Post-Operation Wrap-Up Procedure (1)

Kang Chan and Seok Kang-Ho left the hotel after having a Korean home-cooked-style meal.

Kang Chan thought they would be early, but due to some unexpected construction on the way, they barely arrived on time.

“What will you be up to while I’m in a meeting with the ambassador?” Kang Chan asked.

“I’ll rest up at home. Call me when you’re done and need a ride,” Seok Kang-Ho replied.

“Will do.” Kang Chan headed to the front entrance, then went up the floors with the French agent waiting for him.

The moment Kang Chan stepped into the elevator, he grinned mischievously. For the first time, he was heading up without running into Joo Chul-Bum.

*Ding.*

Kang Chan stepped off the elevator, passed the now familiar hallway, and entered Lanok’s office.

“Mr. Kang Chan!”

Lanok approached Kang Chan with his arms spread wide open, which the latter didn’t find uncomfortable in the slightest. The ambassador wasn’t a stranger to him anymore. Just recently, they even coordinated strategy without contacting each other even once throughout the entire operation.

Kang Chan gladly hugged him back.

“Have a seat,” Lanok said.

Tea, cigarettes, and cigars were on the table. They leisurely poured themselves some tea and picked up their choice of tobacco product.

“The operation yielded excellent results,” Lanok said, his eyes as full of emotions as commonly seen in French people. “Thanks to you, I now have the upper hand against Vasili.”

“It’s nothing. You would have gotten that sooner or later anyway, Mr. Ambassador,” Kang Chan remarked.

“Vasili probably feels he has just been caught having an affair,” Lanok joked.

The two laughed at the same time. Lanok exhaled the smoke of his cigar, then continued, "He had reached some form of agreement with Britain, but unfortunately for him, you were there to ruin it all. Considering Britain ended up taking responsibility for everything, they will likely request help from my country soon. Vasili is probably at his wits' end wondering what they will tell us."

Tapping his cigar in the ashtray to get rid of the ash, Lanok smiled a little differently than he usually did.

"It makes me wonder how hard he's panicking right now for the president of Russia himself to come to South Korea. That being said, I was asked to be an intermediary, so let me know if there's anything you want to request from Russia. In cases like these, it's best not to think about what comes after and just ask for something big," Lanok advised him.

"I'm not too familiar with this, so I'll have to discuss this with a government official. What would you suggest, Mr. Ambassador?" Kang Chan asked.

"The only things Russia has to offer are weapons and resources. The sly Vasili probably intends to appear generous by making Russia's president increase the limit of fish South Korea is allowed to catch. You should accept it. I also suggest requesting nuclear weapons or the development rights to oil reserves."

"Nuclear weapons or development rights to oil reserves?" Kang Chan repeated.

Lanok nodded.

"It is unlike the prideful Vasili to act so anxiously. He would not act this way unless he will be put at a disadvantage if Britain starts to work with my country or if Britain cooperates with you because Russia betrayed them," he said, his expression as cunning as a snake. "For that reason, I believe it wouldn't be a bad idea to see how he would react to you asking for their nuclear weapons. How will the cold and logical Vasili respond when South Korea asks for something so great?"

It would certainly be amusing.

"That isn't all, Mr. Kang Chan," Lanok added.

Kang Chan didn't show it on his face, but he was hoping that would be the end of it.

"The British Intelligence Bureau has finally expressed their desire to meet you. They also ask that you request of them what you want." Lanok looked as if he was speaking to a disciple who had just passed a difficult exam. "You have taken hold of the knife with just a single operation, Mr. Kang Chan, which is a truly incredible feat."

Another knife? Kang Chan inwardly shook his head. He had already held enough knives.

“Mr. Ambassador, I didn’t fight with that in mind,” Kang Chan objected.

“I know. That’s what makes me feel even more grateful to you.”

“I heard you ordered an emergency decree on all of the Foreign Legion, sir. I’m already happy enough that I got to work with you and take care of what you were worried about. That’s why I’m not really interested in what I can gain from the results of the operation,” Kang Chan asserted.

“I see. I will take liberties with the necessary arbitration for now, then.”

Kang Chan thought that closed the main topic of their meeting. However, Lanok still seemed to have something to say, considering he hadn’t stood up yet.

“The French government will soon express their gratitude to the South Korean special forces team for their hard work. My country will have Russia and Britain cough up the costs, so don’t worry about the finances behind all this.” Lanok grinned.

After taking a sip of his tea, Lanok turned to Kang Chan with a sly smile.

“You don’t seem to care about money, and it’s not like you’re interested in women either,” Lanok mused.

Kang Chan wondered if this snake knew he was missing a high schooler.

“Still, I want to thank you for this operation. Is there anything you want?” Lanok added.

*Anything I want?*

“I’m not sure. Can I think about it first?”

“Hahahaha!” Lanok casually laughed. “You’ve improved, Mr. Kang Chan! Back then, you always said no to offers like this! Good! Very good!”

*I should show him how much I’ve really improved and ask for a nuclear weapon.*

If Kang Chan made such a request, Lanok would do anything in his power to wrangle two nuclear weapons away from Russia and only give him one. Kang Chan didn’t know if Vasili had the power to hand out nuclear weapons, though.

“What about the two soldiers?” Kang Chan asked.

“You don’t have to worry about them. The intelligence bureau has given them level-one protection, and they have the best doctors tending to them,” Lanok replied, then examined Kang Chan’s expression.

“You should rest a bit. Your eyes still seem quite tense,” he said with concern.

“I will. Actually, I’ve been thinking about going on a trip soon,” Kang Chan assured him.

After discussing other personal matters over tea, Kang Chan and Lanok left the hotel.

Kang Chan saw Lanok off from the hotel entrance, then turned around to make his own way. Just then, Joo Chul-Bum greeted and bowed to him.

Was this bastard a ghost or something? He was always waiting for him around the corner.

“Mr. Kang Chan,” Joo Chul-Bum said with his hands clasped together in front of him. Although all he did was call out Kang Chan’s name, Kang Chan could read all the emotions he was feeling through his eyes.

Once Lanok’s car left, Kang Chan headed back inside the lobby.

“I didn’t know you were coming. I apologize, hyung-nim!”

This punk felt sorry for not coming to greet him earlier!

“Do you want to grab some coffee with me?” Kang Chan asked in resignation.

“Do you have the time, sir?” Joo Chul-Bum asked respectfully.

“Would I have asked if I didn’t? Let’s go!”

How could Kang Chan ignore the excitement on Joo Chul-Bum’s face?

The two walked into the lounge of the lobby and ordered some coffee.

“How’s Do-Seok doing?” Kang Chan asked.

“He’s been eating properly since a few days ago, hyung-nim,” Joo Chul-Bum replied.

The manager bowed to Kang Chan, then put their cups of coffee on the table.

“Have they found anything about the culprit yet?”

Joo Chul-Bum told Kang Chan that there hadn’t been any progress because the culprit was a foreigner. However, as soon as he was done, he suddenly slid over closer to Kang Chan’s ear.

“Hyung-nim, Do-Seok hyung-nim apparently has camera footage of that day,” he whispered.

Kang Chan looked at Joo Chul-Bum while deep in thought. Joo Chul-Bum was talking about the day that Kang Chan stabbed Sharlan in the side and the Chinese wrapped Sharlan up in plastic and took him underground using a rolling laundry bin.

The people involved already knew how all of that went down. They had even finished discussions with the Serpent Venimeux and wrapped everything up. What else was there to discover?

“I don’t think that will be needed anymore since the situation’s all done and over with,” Kang Chan said.

“He said he would give it to you if you need it, hyung-nim.”

“Did the footage catch something we don’t already know about?”

“Do-Seok hyung-nim said he hasn’t been able to take a good look at it, but he seems to think that it’s the only reason why foreigners would attack him and why someone would search through and make a mess of his car and house.”

“I see. Well, I’ll visit him soon and ask him about this in person. Oh, right! I’ll send you some money. Use it to help with Do-Seok’s hospital bill,” Kang Chan offered.

“Don’t, hyung-him. There’s no need. If Gwang-Taek hyung-nim finds out you did, I’ll be a dead man.” Joo Chul-Bum shivered. He acted as if Kang Chan was offering him drugs or something. He was being so adamant that Kang Chan couldn’t insist.

After speaking for a while longer, Kang Chan left the hotel and took a taxi to Kim Hyung-Jung. He called him to let him know he was already on the way, but funnily enough, Kim Hyung-Jung told him that he was already with Seok Kang-Ho. The guy probably had nothing else to do because he wasn’t teaching at school these days.

‘We really need to get that building soon.’

Seok Kang-Ho and Kang Chan both needed a comfortable place that they could use every day.

#### Chapter 152.2: Post-Operation Wrap-Up Procedure (1)

The streets already smelled of autumn. Kang Chan had been living a busy life filled with incidents and operations that were larger in scale than the ones he had been involved in back in Africa.

He was staring out the window in a daze when the cab stopped at his destination. After paying the taxi driver, he entered the building and went up to the fifth floor. Kim Hyung-Jung hobbled over and opened the door himself.

“Why are you opening doors in that condition?” Kang Chan sighed.

“You get used to moving with your injuries after a while,” Kim Hyung-Jung replied reassuringly.

Kang Chan followed him inside and was greeted by Seok Kang-Ho, who had stood up.

“Someone’s here early,” Kang Chan scoffed.

“We had jjamppong,” Seok Kang-Ho responded.

The table was covered in ashtrays, large ramen cups, and small paper cups that were clearly once filled with coffee. It seemed Seok Kang-Ho headed straight to this place after they parted ways at the hotel.

*Click.*

As Kang Chan sat down, an employee brought over three more cups of coffee and left with the empty ones.

“You should be in bed, Mr. Kim,” Kang Chan urged.

“It’s fine—I can handle it. I plan on getting rid of the bed next week.”

“Did something good happen?” Kang Chan asked out of curiosity as he took a cigarette. He noticed Kim Hyung-Jung was all smiles.

“Yes. It’s the offer from Russia. They have always been so stubborn, but they finally got off their high horse. Moreover, aside from Russia’s president paying us a visit soon, we have also received an amazing proposal from Britain. With the French intelligence agency, we’ve begun to take steps toward collaboration from both sides,” Kim Hyung-Jung said enthusiastically.

None of what he just said were personally happy events for him. Was this that important for him to be endlessly smiling from ear to ear?

“It probably does not sound like much, Mr. Kang Chan, but the three things I just mentioned will make our nation’s reputation soar. Moreover, once the name of our special forces team spreads... Whew! As an agent of the NIS, I’ve always dreamed of this moment. Back then, other countries didn’t have to worry about the consequences as they fired at our agents in Europe and all around the globe. Now, they will have to take the South Korean special forces into consideration.”

Kim Hyung-Jung looked at Kang Chan and Seok Kang-Ho with a proud expression.

“Our special forces defeated the Russian Spetsnaz and Britain’s SBS in France without losing a single man. That has made France, Russia, and Britain take the initiative to extend peace offerings toward us. This means that in the future, other countries will have to worry about our country’s retaliation if they assassinate our agents. Honestly, I’m moved beyond words. I don’t know how to handle all the emotions I’m feeling right now,” Kim Hyung-Jung said in a gracious tone.

Kang Chan smiled at Kim Hyung-Jung, finding it interesting that a single operation could affect each country and its people so differently.

“Oh, right, Mr. Kim. Russia has apparently requested France to mediate its meeting with South Korea. I heard we can ask for certain things from there. Ambassador Lanok suggested requesting nuclear weapons, development rights to oil reserves, or something along those lines. What do you think?”

Kim Hyung-Jung stiffened so much that Kang Chan was taken aback.

“N-n-nuclear weapons?” Kim Hyung-Jung stuttered.

*Did this man always have a stutter?*

“Yes, sir.” Kang Chan nodded.



“Or development rights to oil?”

“Yes. The ambassador firmly told me to ask for at least that much.”

“From Russia?” Kim Hyung-Jung asked in disbelief.

Kang Chan nodded again. “He told me to accept their offer to adjust the fishing limit and to ask for one of the two options I just told you,”

Kim Hyung-Jung gulped. “Ambassador Lanok said that?”

Kang Chan and Seok Kang-Ho smiled. It felt as if they were reenacting a skit from a weekend comedy show.

“Mr. Kang Chan, you have no idea what your suggestion means to us. Getting our hands on nuclear weapons... Phew,” Kim Hyung-Jung exclaimed as he shook his head.

“Well, the worst thing they can say is no. You don’t have to become so frenzied over something that they probably won’t give anyway,” Kang Chan said lightheartedly.

“I see. Maybe that’s why the ambassador also suggested asking for development rights as well,” Kim Hyung-Jung mused.

“That makes sense. Ambassador Lanok definitely would have thought two steps ahead,” Kang Chan agreed.

“Haah! Russia has never given its rights to oil reserves to another country. Aside from when Japan used their international resources to protect their 49% of shares of a reserve, no country has successfully taken development rights from Russia.”

“So this is pretty important, I suppose,” Kang Chan said.

Kim Hyung-Jung chuckled. The understatement calmed him down.

“Our country will have unlimited access to crude oil without having to worry about staying on the good side of Middle Eastern countries. And the inflation in our country...” Kim Hyung-Jung trailed off in thought, staring into space as he tilted his head. “It will probably drop by at least thirty percent.”

“Whoa!” Seok Kang-Ho exclaimed. Even Kang Chan looked surprised.

‘I didn’t expect the ambassador’s suggestion to have such significant impacts.’

This was why knowledge was power.

Kim Hyung-Jung looked directly at Kang Chan. “Are you sure Ambassador Lanok really told you those things?”

“Yes, but I just told him to take care of things himself in response,” Kang Chan replied somewhat abashedly.

“What?” Kim Hyung-Jung exclaimed. His eyes widened. “Do you think it would be possible for you to ask if we can request things ourselves?”

“Probably. I don’t see why not.”

“Great. Please give me a moment. I have to report this immediately.”

“Sure.”

Kang Chan picked up a cigarette, and Seok Kang-Ho lit it up for him with a lighter.

As they relaxed and smoked, Kim Hyung-Jung called someone to report their most recent conversation.

“Yes. I’m with Mr. Kang Chan right now. It’s difficult to verify the truth of the statements without confirmation from the French intelligence agency.”

Lanok wasn’t one to lie, but these people were horrible at believing others.

“Yes, I’m certain he said nuclear weapons and development rights to oil reserves,” Kim Hyung-Jung continued.

When Kim Hyung-Jung glanced at him, Kang Chan nodded back in confirmation.

“Yes, sir! I will be waiting on standby, then. Understood,” Kim Hyung-Jung said.

Putting the phone back down, Kim Hyung-Jung let out a long sigh.

“I’m suddenly filled with the sense of duty to improve the NIS’ abilities. Our agents abroad will most likely shout in joy today or tomorrow,” he added.

Kang Chan and Seok Kang-Ho exchanged looks and stayed silent. Kang Chan didn’t tell Kim Hyung-Jung about the news regarding Britain yet since he had not confirmed yet if it was true.

“Ah, right! Thank you for the Jeju trip. I got to have an amazing day with my parents because of you. It made me feel like I have finally done something for my mother, so I really appreciate it.”

Kim Hyung-Jung let out a laugh that sounded close to a sigh.

“With what we gained through this operation, lending you the entire hotel for a year still wouldn’t be enough to pay you back. We have to spend at least thirty billion won every year for three years to put our agents abroad in a better political position, yet all that we could do for you in return was a small trip. As an agent of the NIS, I cannot help but feel ashamed. I’m sorry.”

“I didn’t lead the operation hoping to get rewarded for my efforts. The main reason I got involved in this affair is to help Ambassador Lanok in the first place.

I have already gotten everything I wanted when we left for the operation, so please don't feel bad," Kang Chan assured him.

Kim Hyung-Jung still looked to be regretting things.

They talked for a little while longer when Kim Hyung-Jung's phone suddenly began to ring furiously. When it stopped, the bell to his office rang, and the landline on his desk started crying out too.

Kang Chan left the office with Seok Kang-Ho so Kim Hyung-Jung could take care of business.

"Let's have dinner," Kang Chan said once they were out, not wanting to head home yet. If he left Seok Kang-Ho alone, Seok Kang-Ho would just roam around because he had nothing else to do.

"Sounds good. Should we call that bastard Smithen too?" Seok Kang-Ho asked.

"Why?" Kang Chan asked in suspicion. Nothing good had ever come out of the two of them meeting.

"Gérard looked pretty lonely the last time we saw him. Considering I used to be like him, Smithen probably feels the same too. If it wasn't for you, we'd be wandering around alone, unable to find a place to settle."

*Why does this bastard still seem to have something up his sleeve despite what he's saying?*

However, even in front of Kang Chan's suspecting eyes, Seok Kang-Ho remained steadfast.

"That bastard has probably been feeling lonely, so let's call him and have dinner together. The fact that he got captured before he could even fight back has been bugging me," Seok Kang-Ho added.

"Alright." Kang Chan finally conceded.

They didn't know where they were going to eat yet, so Kang Chan dialed Smithen in the middle of the street.

*-Hello? May I ask who this is?*

Ha! The punk's Korean had improved again. More importantly, his pronunciation had become so natural that it sounded as if someone else had picked up the phone.

"Smithen, it's me."

*-Oh my goodness, Captain! It's me, Smithen!*

"Where are you?"

*-Why, I just left the language school, of course!*

This motherfucker! Maybe it was because he learned from women, but people would think he was a girl in her twenties trying to act cute if they heard him talk in Korean. If Kang Chan didn't know

Smithen any better, Smithen's soft and giggly tone would have made him wonder if Smithen was gay.

"Do you want to have dinner with us?"

*-Oh my! Unfortunately, I have a date today. Hmm! I have plans with my language schools until tomorrow, so how about the day after tomorrow, dear?*

Kang Chan slowly exhaled the sigh that was building up in his chest.

"Got it. I don't know what will come up then, so let's just keep each other updated."

As Kang Chan spoke, he heard someone ask "Who is it?" over the phone.

*-That sounds absolutely perfect. Toodle-oo, Captain.*

"Is he busy?" Seok Kang-Ho asked when Kang Chan hung up.

"He says he's got plans with his language friends until tomorrow. It sounded like he was with a girl, too, so let's just have dinner ourselves."

"Ugh! That son of a bitch!" Seok Kang-Ho spat.

The two chuckled. So much for wanting to include a lonely guy in their plans.

"What do you want to eat?" Kang Chan asked.

"Let's have beef ribs!" Seok Kang-Ho exclaimed.

That was a bit of a heavy meal, but if that was what Seok Kang-Ho wanted, Kang Chan saw no reason to refuse. The two soon headed to a famous rib restaurant nearby.

Upon entering and taking a seat, Seok Kang-Ho ordered, "Five portions of beef ribs, please."

"Will there be more in your party, sir?" the waiter asked.

"No, it's just us," Seok Kang-Ho replied.

The middle-aged woman glanced at Seok Kang-Ho, then quickly went inside the kitchen.

"Want a glass of beer too?" Seok Kang-Ho asked Kang Chan.

"And a bottle of soju while you're at it," Kang Chan replied with a grin.

"Phuhuhu!" Seok Kang-Ho laughed in satisfaction.

Chapter 153.1: Post-Operation Wrap-Up Procedure (2)

"Wow!" Seok Kang-Ho exclaimed in delight as he ate more meat. He had just downed his beer in one go. Despite how much he ate, he neither suffered from indigestion nor gained weight. That was a talent in itself.

Meanwhile, Kang Chan felt relieved for finally getting to drink alcohol after so long.

"I know it's a little boring, but I need you to hang in there for just a bit longer," Kang Chan said after Seok Kang-Ho ordered another bottle of beer.

As Kang Chan tried his best to move the cooked meat on the grill away from the heat, Seok Kang-Ho put raw ones in the middle of the grill.

“I’m still looking into buying a building, but once I’ve bought one, we can use it as an office in the mornings. We can also work out and eat lunch there. Sounds nice, doesn’t it?” Kang Chan continued.

“Phuhuhu.” Seok Kang-Ho held up his glass, initiating a toast.

*Clink!*

The beer swayed a little as they clinked their glasses.

“Wow! This is nice!” Seok Kang-Ho exclaimed.

Seok Kang-Ho seemed too busy eating, so Kang Chan poured them alcohol this time.

“I don’t want anything else right now. We got to meet again, so I don’t feel lonely, and we can also participate in operations every now and then,” Seok Kang-Ho commented.

As they downed another round of bomb shots, the meat in the middle of the grill began to smoke.

“Gasp! The meat is burning.” A middle-aged woman approached them, skillfully turned the meat over, and cut off the burnt parts. Before walking away, she first put the meat away from the heat to make it easier to eat.

“This is going to sound funny, but...” Seok Kang-Ho observed Kang Chan’s expression. “I’ve been feeling anxious lately.”

“Why would you go on operations while feeling that way?”

“That’s not what I meant.”

Kang Chan silently waited for Seok Kang-Ho to continue.

“I’ve just been constantly thinking about what I should do if you suddenly disappeared or if something bad happens to you. What should I do if I suddenly find myself all alone? If you’re killed right in front of me again? Do you ever get worried about someone when you’re not with them and feel relieved when they’re around?”

Kang Chan couldn’t help but smirk. “Want me to hit you? Stop spouting nonsense and just keep drinking. The meat got all burnt because of your nonsense.”

Seok Kang-Ho took the meat and ate it as quickly as Kang Chan turned the meat over.

“Now that you mention it, I was worried you would get killed during our last operation,” Kang Chan said.

“Jeez! You were overreacting with that one! Did you really think those worthless bastards could kill me?”

Kang Chan couldn't help but laugh so hard it sounded as if he was sobbing.

If the Spetnaz and the SBS heard what Seok Kang-Ho had just said, only death could have stopped them from attacking him or jumping off a cliff.

"I'll buy a building as soon as I can. Anyway, I think it would be best for us to stick together," Kang Chan commented.

"Sure."

After having doengjang-jjigae and rice, they went to a nearby specialty coffee shop.

They ordered two cups of hot coffee and sat on the terrace since they were allowed to smoke there.

"This is quite nice!" Seok Kang-Ho commented.

"Why's that? Are you not anxious now?"

"As I said earlier, I feel fine when I'm with you! And get rid of that look in your eyes. You'll scare the other customers."

"Will you keep pretending like you're completely normal?"

They both laughed at Kang Chan's remark even though it was not really anything special.

"What are you going to do now?" Seok Kang-Ho asked.

"I'm not sure. I told everyone that I'll be resting for the time being."

"Should we run away and stay somewhere else for about three days?"

"Run away?"

Seok Kang-Ho grinned. "Let's disappear for around three days. Phuhuhu, wouldn't that turn lots of things upside down?"

Kang Chan burst out laughing. That would make Jeon Dae-Geuk jump up so high he would touch the ceiling of his patient room and Kim Hyung-Jung search for them all over the country despite his injuries.

"We shouldn't. That would get Jong-Il scolded even though he didn't do anything wrong," Kang Chan said.

The two snickered while smoking.

Right now, they were behaving the way they normally did the day after they had completed an operation in Africa. Back then, if they didn't suffer any casualties, they would drink to their heart's content. Gerard would also sometimes butt into their conversation only to back off after getting sworn at by Dayeru.

"It's good to be alive," Kang Chan said.

"That's right!" Seok Kang-Ho grinned.

An hour quickly passed by as they drank coffee and smoked. Kang Chan felt the same way he did before he reincarnated.

Kang Chan held up his phone and checked the time. It was almost 9 pm.

“We should go home.”

“Don’t go home yet. Why not go to Mi-Young’s hagwon first?” Seok Kang-Ho suggested.

“What?”

“Mi-Young’s hagwon. She would definitely love to see you waiting for her in front of her hagwon to walk her home. Seeing her would get your eyes to relax too.”

Kang Chan drank coffee while smirking. He could certainly go, especially since it wouldn’t really inconvenience him that much even if she had already left by the time he arrived. However, he didn’t want to meet her just to get his eyes to relax. If he did wait for him, it had to be because he really wanted to see her.

“You really have no idea how to surprise people!” Seok Kang-Ho exclaimed.

“Mind your own business.”

“Huh? Why are you saying that to me? Despite how I act around you, I’m amazing when I go home.”

“I got it, so let’s go already!”

They no longer smelled like alcohol, so they could definitely go home now.

*Buzz— Buzz—Buzz—. Buzz— Buzz—Buzz—. Buzz— Buzz—Buzz—.*

Just as they were about to clean up after themselves, Michelle’s name popped up on Kang Chan’s phone.

“Hello?”

- Channy, did you see the drama today?

“Ah, shoot! Sorry, I couldn’t watch it. I’ve been out all day.”

- That’s too bad. We got extremely positive reactions to today’s episode.

“Really? That’s good.”

- Where are you? Are you busy?

Kang Chan knew that she wanted to see him, but he thought it wouldn't be right to see her while he had so much spite in him.

“I can’t meet with you today. Is something going on?”

- I found a building that meets your requirements. I would love to check it out with you if you have time tomorrow.

“I’ll call you tomorrow morning.”

- Alright. I’ll see you then.

Kang Chan put his phone down. Seok Kang-Ho glanced at him.

“Was that the lady named Michelle?” Seok Kang-Ho asked.

“Yeah.”

“Today’s an amazing day to go on a date with her. Why are you acting like you often did back in Africa?”

“That’s not it. She just informed me that she found a good building for us on the market. I’ll check it out tomorrow.”

Seok Kang-Ho just nodded in response.

“Let’s go home.”

“Sure. Let me just smoke one more cigarette.” As Seok Kang-Ho picked up a cigarette...

*Buzz— Buzz—Buzz—.*

Kang Chan received a text. When he checked it, he couldn’t help but smile.

[I miss you.]

As Seok Kang-Ho bit on a cigarette, his eyes alternated between Kang Chan and his phone. He seemed to be growing suspicious.

Kang Chan immediately called Kim Mi-Young.

- Hello!

“Where are you?”

- I’m at hagwon.

“Have you had dinner?”

- I have. Are you busy today?

“No, I’m not.”

Seok Kang-Ho looked somewhere else while grinning.

- My classes will finish in an hour. We have French class today. I was reminded of you when I saw our cool teacher, so I thought I should text you.

“Want me to come over?”

- Really?



“Whoo!” Seok Kang-Ho loudly exhaled cigarette smoke. It was as if he wanted Kim Mi-Young to hear him.

*That bastard!*

Seok Kang-Ho then pointed at the end of his eye with his index finger, then moved it up and down. He seemed to be saying that the spite in Kang Chan’s eyes was disappearing.

- I’m at Daechi-dong. If you want, we can meet at the ice cream shop after my hagwon.

“Alright.”

- Phuhuhu.

When Kang Chan put his phone down, Seok Kang-Ho looked at Kang Chan with narrowed eyes.

“What?” Kang Chan took out a cigarette since he still had some time left.

“I didn’t know you had such a side. ‘Want me to come over?’ Whew!” Seok Kang-Ho laughed loudly after imitating Kang Chan. “That’s good for you, though. You should always use some of your time for yourself like this. Doesn’t it make you feel better?”

Kang Chan lit up a cigarette, then had a sip of coffee, which was now cold.

“I can totally tell that you like her now that I’ve listened to you talking to her. Why can’t you make the first move and ask her to meet up with you?” Seok Kang-Ho asked.

“Why can’t I do what?” Kang Chan responded bluntly. He knew Seok Kang-Ho was right, though. Smirking, he told him what was on his mind.

“Jeez! What the hell?” Seok Kang-Ho said afterward.

“What’s wrong?”

“You don’t look like it, but you’re really square with girl problems. Even though Mi-Young genuinely likes you, you’re still planning on taking a step back and saying ‘I’ll accept you’re still the same next year’?”

“Not exactly.” Kang Chan dropped his cigarette into the used coffee grounds, then drank the rest of his coffee.

“How is it different? People are allowed to break up, you know. Who in this world can be sure that the one they’re dating right now would never change for the rest of their lives?”

Kang Chan blankly looked at Seok Kang-Ho. He couldn’t help but wonder if the fucker had always been that good at talking. Either way, Seok Kang-Ho had such a great point that he couldn’t help but be swayed a little.

Kang Chan had no idea what to say.

“Let’s go,” Seok Kang-Ho said.

Kang Chan stood up.

Chapter 153.2: Post-Operation Wrap-Up Procedure (2)

“Captain,” Seok Kang-Ho called out to Kang Chan just as he was about to leave the terrace. “Let’s find happiness in this life. Don’t we have the right to that much, at least? You should do what you want to do with your parents so you won’t have regrets later on. You should also date Mi-Young. I want to see you living a genuinely happy life for once.”

Kang Chan blanked out even more due to how serious Seok Kang-Ho sounded.

Kang Chan smirked. Seok Kang-Ho grinned in return.

“Go home,” Kang Chan said.

“Okay.”

“Don’t make other plans tomorrow.”

Still grinning, Seok Kang-Ho made his way to the road. Not long after, they both hailed and got into two different taxis.

Seok Kang-Ho was right. They did have the right to be happy.

*Has Seok Kang-Ho been living in discomfort like me because he took over someone else’s life?*

Kang Chan couldn’t deny that every now and then, he would feel happy just because he got to meet Kang Dae-Kyung and Yoo Hye-Sook. Still, that didn’t answer why Seok Kang-Ho would say something like that.

Kang Chan took a deep breath and softly exhaled when the taxi arrived at Daechi-dong. He got out at the intersection and slowly made his way to the ice cream shop.

Now that he had thought about it, Choi Jong-Il still had to be following him.

He should have called him and treated him to dinner. Still, he couldn’t help but feel uncomfortable at the thought that he was still following him around while he was meeting Kim Mi-Young.

“Ugh!” Kang Chan tousled his hair after sitting down at a table.

He had so many thoughts going on in his mind that he was having a headache. Unfortunately, what Seok Kang-Ho said just made it even worse.

Seok Kang-Ho told him that they should be happy.

Kang Chan was adapting to his life right now. In his past life, he grew up with a drunkard of a father who would beat him up whenever he was drunk. They were also so poor that he could not even afford to buy a single serving of pork cutlets. After that, he spent the rest of his life on battlefields in Africa. He fought battle after battle until death finally claimed him.

Reincarnating?

It had been about six months now since he returned to life.

Could his past life, which lasted almost thirty years, disappear from his memories overnight?

While living with Kang Dae-Kyung and Yoo Hye-Sook, he was certainly learning how to be happy.

As Kang Chan rubbed his face, he smelled nicotine from his fingertips.

He went into the bathroom to wash his hands, then looked at the mirror above the sink.

Kang Chan smirked. His eyes really were glinting.

But wasn't this only natural? It had only been two days since he killed over twenty people. It would be weirder if he already looked calm today.

Kang Chan dried his hands, returned to his seat, and blankly looked outside the window. Listening to Seok Kang-Ho talk only gave him a headache.

Kang Chan breathed in loudly to get rid of his thoughts. As he did, Kim Mi-Young entered the ice cream shop.

She waved at him.

*Does she have to do that when it's obvious she's here to meet me?*

"Do you want ice cream?" Kang Chan asked.

"Yes!"

She put her bag down on the chair and went to the display stand. After choosing an ice cream flavor, she returned to her seat.

Kim Mi-Young smiled, which made her look even prettier. She scooped up ice cream with a plastic spoon while looking at Kang Chan.

"Say 'ah!'" Kim Mi-Young said.

"What?"

As Kang Chan looked at her with an expression that said, 'What are you doing?' Kim Mi-Young held out the spoonful of ice cream toward him.

This was the first time he would be doing this.

Despite feeling awkward, he ate the ice cream she was trying to feed to him. Strangely enough, that made Kim Mi-Young smile. She just kept eating afterward.

'How old am I really?'

He normally behaved in a way befitting his previous age. However, he regressed into the perfect high schooler whenever he met Kim Mi-Young. That could be the biggest reason why he relaxed around Kim Mi-Young.

Everything would be simple if he could just decide how old he should behave.

If he went with his previous age, then that would make him a great match with Michelle. If he went with his current age, then it would be best to be with Kim Mi-Young.

Was who he liked more important? Even Seok Kang-Ho hadn't gotten used to that problem even though he was already married.

"What are you thinking about?" Kim Mi-Young asked.

"I'm just thinking of how I can become happy."

Kim Mi-Young's eyes widened as she looked at Kang Chan. This was the expression that he had badly wanted to see during the operation.

"With me?"

Kang Chan also missed these strange questions. "Yeah."

"Huhuhuhu, say 'ah.'"

Kang Chan just silently ate the ice cream that Kim Mi-Young fed him.

After staying with Kim Mi-Young for about twenty minutes, they took a taxi home.

He tried his best to ignore the disappointment in Kim Mi-Young's gaze as they parted ways and entered their respective apartment complex.

Kang Chan wanted to hug her but now was not the time.

"Bye!" Kim Mi-Young said.

"See you. You should sleep early."

After sending Kim Mi-Young home, Kang Chan headed to his apartment.

Should I really disappear for about three days? No, I shouldn't. That could quickly get out of hand.

When Kang Chan entered their home, he was greeted by nothing but silence from the entire apartment. Kang Dae-Kyung and Yoo Hye-Sook had probably gone to bed.

The trip to Jeju Island had probably tired them out.

Kang Chan headed into his room.

After lightly washing up and changing, he walked out of his room again. Much to his surprise, he found Yoo Hye-Sook standing in the living room. She still looked quite sleepy.

"I thought you were already asleep. Did I wake you up?" Kang Chan asked.

"No, I came out of the room because I wanted to see you. I'm sorry I slept and couldn't wait for you."

Kang Chan stared at Yoo Hye-Sook.

Wouldn't things like this be happiness?

*They should have just made me the son of a household like this from the start!*

“It’s okay. I came home late anyway. Please go back to sleep. I’ll be heading to bed soon as well,” Kang Chan said.

“Okay.” Yoo Hye-Sook hugged Kang Chan and stroked his back.

Kang Chan just smiled.

“Goodnight, Channy.”

“Goodnight.”

As if she was walking and talking in her sleep, Yoo Hye-Sook smiled as she headed back to bed.

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Kang Chan freshened up when he woke up. Afterward, he went outside and ran and worked out with Choi Jong-Il.

“Don’t you ever rest?” Kang Chan asked.

“Pardon?”

“You’ve been following me nonstop. You should go home.”

“If I rest now, I won’t be able to come back ever again.”

“Why? What’s wrong?”

Choi Jong-Il discretely looked at the entrance of the apartment. “A bunch of people want to serve you. It seems even Cha Dong-Gyun thought about applying to be an agent but was badly scolded by General Choi.”

Kang Chan smirked.

“As you’re probably well aware, the special forces are all connected. The men you commanded in the recent operation and the one in Mongolia talk about you like you’re an actual god. So if I rest for even just a moment, more than a dozen men would immediately show up to do my job instead,” Choi Jong-Il added.

They were annoying Kang Chan in so many ways.

“I’ll go home now. Make sure to have breakfast!” Kang Chan said, then went into his apartment.

After working out, Kang Chan always used the stairs because he didn’t want the smell of sweat to be trapped in the elevator.

As soon as Kang Chan returned home, Yoo Hye-Sook happily greeted him.

“Are you done working out?” Yoo Hye-Sook asked.

“Yes. How are you feeling?”

“I looked ugly yesterday, didn’t I?”

“No way! You looked prettier when you’re slightly sleepy.”

Yoo Hye-Sook side-eyed him in a pretty way, then headed to the kitchen.

After washing up, Kang Chan went out of his room. Kang Dae-Kyung and Yoo Hye-Sook were waiting for him so they could all eat breakfast together.

His morning was peaceful for once.

“How have you been lately, mother?” Kang Chan asked.

“Huh?”

Now that he thought about it, his question did sound kind of abrupt and strange.

“Is there anything you would like to come true or want to do?”

“Mm! I want to see you more often.”

“Aren’t you going to ask me?” Kang Dae-Kyung asked.

“I was just about to. How have you been lately, father? And is there anything you wish would happen?” Kang Chan scooped up rice with his chopsticks as he looked at Kang Dae-Kyung.

“I wish your mom would pay more attention to me.”

“You always tease me!” Yoo Hye-Sook exclaimed.

They finished breakfast with a smile.

Kang Chan sat in the living room and watched TV as he waited for his parents, who were rushing to get ready for work, to leave.

The news headlines were still all about the President of Russia’s visit to South Korea. While he was watching, Yoo Hye-Sook’s phone rang three times from the master bedroom. She seemed extremely busy with the Foundation.

Today, Kang Chan planned to meet up with Michelle and check the building. Afterward, he would start thinking about how to help with the school festival.

*Buzz— Buzz—Buzz—. Buzz— Buzz—Buzz—. Buzz— Buzz—Buzz—.*

Kang Chan’s phone, which was on his desk, rang as he organized what he had to do.

Kang Chan’s eyes glinted.

His heart didn’t throb or sink. Strangely, however, he felt anger filling not only his eyes but the top of his head as well.

‘Which son of a bitch is it this time?!’

Kang Chan didn’t know who was calling him or what the call was about, but he was starting to become unbearably enraged. He walked toward his room as if he was closing in on his enemy.

*Buzz— Buzz—Buzz—. Buzz— Buzz—Buzz—.*

Kang Chan looked at his phone.

‘Anne.’

Kang Chan answered the call and immediately pressed it against his ear.

“Ello!”

- Channy! I think my dad just got kidnapped!

Kang Chan inhaled softly.

- I don’t know what to do, Channy! Help me! Please! I really need you right now!

“Anne.”

Anne burst into tears as she waited for Kang Chan to continue.

“I will do whatever it takes to save the Ambassador. I promise you that. So don’t worry too much and keep calm, okay? I’ll be heading over to you as soon as the call drops. Where are you right now?”

- I’m at the embassy right now.

“Alright. I’m on my way.”

- Thank you... Thank you so much, Channy.

Kang Chan put down his phone and changed as quickly as he could.

Chapter 154.1: Watch and Learn (1)

Although Kang Chan had already changed clothes, he couldn’t walk out of his room yet because he didn’t want Kang Dae-Kyung and Yoo Hye-Sook to see his eyes blazing with so much spite.

“Channy, dear!” shouted Yoo Hye-Sook in such unfortunate timing.

“I’m getting changed, Mother!” Kang Chan shouted back in response, trying to avoid meeting them.

“Okay then! We’ll be heading out now. Have a good day today, and don’t forget to be careful!” Yoo Hye-Sook shouted again so Kang Chan could hear her.

“See you later!” Kang Dae-Kyung bid him farewell.

They didn’t ask him where he was going or what he would be doing today. When other parents told their high school sons to be careful, it was to be careful of the roads or when crossing streets. But Kang Chan’s parents telling him to be careful had a whole different meaning.

*I’m going to make sure I become happy in this life.*

After rescuing Lanok, he planned to become a powerful, fearsome man if that was what it would take for his enemies to never touch even a strand of his people’s hair ever again.

The moment he heard the sound of the front door closing shut, Kang Chan immediately picked up his phone so he could try to locate where Lanok was. However, the application strangely did not display the ambassador’s location.

*What's wrong with this? What's the problem?*

*Tsk!*

Brushing his irritation aside, Kang Chan called Seok Kang-Ho, then dialed Choi Jong-Il. After the phone calls, about five minutes went by.

*-Your parents have just left the apartment complex, sir.*

Choi Jong-Il reported to him through the application.

Kang Chan hurried out of his home and headed down. By the time he exited the building, Seok Kang-Ho and Choi Jong-Il were already waiting for him with their cars by the entrance.

“Choi Jong-Il, we're heading straight to the French embassy,” Kang Chan declared.

“Understood, sir,” Choi Jong-Il replied.

They all drove off as soon as Kang Chan got into Seok Kang-Ho's car.

“What's going on?” Seok Kang-Ho asked, clearly concerned.

“Ambassador Lanok has apparently been kidnapped,” Kang Chan bluntly replied.

“What? Jeez!” Seok Kang-Ho exclaimed in surprise, turning to Kang Chan with wide eyes before quickly looking back to the road again. “How the fuck did that man get kidnapped? The security detail he has around him is no joke. What in the world were his guards doing? Twiddling their thumbs?”

“I don't know the details yet. I'll have to learn more about what happened when we get there first. All I know is that Anne called me crying and told me her dad was kidnapped,” Kang Chan informed Seok Kang-Ho.

Seok Kang-Ho looked like he was having a hard time understanding how Lanok could be kidnapped.

They were driving during rush hour, so traffic was slow. Nevertheless, they did their best to get to their destination as quickly as possible.

The agent standing outside opened the doors for Kang Chan upon confirming his identity. He then glared at Choi Jong-Il's car.

“Let him through,” Kang Chan told the agent. “I brought him along.”

“Understood, Monsieur Kang,” the agent respectfully replied.

Kang Chan, Seok Kang-Ho, and Choi Jong-Il's group all rushed up to Lanok's office.

“Channy!” Anne cried in distress. She hobbled over to Kang Chan with her hand over her mouth.



“It’s okay, Anne. Everything will turn out just fine. You know how strong your father is, don’t you?” Kang Chan reassured her. He hugged her and patted her on the back, then took a scan around the office.

He saw agents and aides standing on edge, but he could not see Louis anywhere.

Kang Chan carefully helped Anne sit down and took a seat across the table from her.

“What happened?” Kang Chan asked her.

Anne looked at one of Lanok’s aides, who then began to speak in her stead.

“My name is Raphael, Monsieur Kang. We lost all contact with the ambassador after he said he would have a private conversation with the Chinese ambassador and the speaker of the national assembly following their lunch appointment at the Seoul Hotel,” Raphael said stiffly.

“The speaker of the national assembly? You mean Huh Ha-Soo?”

“Yes, that is correct, Monsieur Kang,” Raphael answered.

“When did that son of a— that guy get back to South Korea?” Kang Chan was having a hard time bottling in his irritation.

“The speaker returned while you were away on your operation, sir,” Raphael responded.

*That rat! Son of a bitch!*

Kang Chan gritted his teeth.

“You said they were meeting at a hotel. How have you not found the ambassador yet?” Kang Chan asked through clenched teeth.

“We haven’t been able to officially request any assistance because we can’t report him as missing. Moreover, Ambassador Lanok gave us specific instructions a while back for situations like this,” Raphael explained.

“What were they?” Kang Chan asked.

As Kang Chan picked up a cigarette from the table, Raphael glanced at Anne, carefully choosing his words.

“He told us that if something like this was ever to happen, all the staff at the French embassy should follow and listen to your orders. We were to report to you first, and whatever you decided to do, we should comply with your orders under all circumstances.”

Kang Chan exhaled, breathing out a long wisp of smoke.

*Damn it!*

Kang Chan didn't know the snake had so much faith in him.

"For now, give me and the agents with me a place where we can remain on standby. If we can stay in this room, then that would be even better," Kang Chan ordered Raphael. Afterward, he turned to Choi Jong-II. "Did you bring any weapons?"

"They're in the car, sir," Choi Jong-II replied.

Kang Chan looked back at Raphael.

"Prepare five pistols, each with four magazines, for me and all the agents here," Kang Chan ordered.

Raphael delivered Kang Chan's instructions to the agents around them, obeying Kang Chan's words as if he was really his superior.

"And get me Ludwig, Vant, and Vasili's numbers. Stat." Kang Chan ordered again.

"Monsieur Kang, if it's all right with you, please use Ambassador Lanok's desk. It has a direct line to the men you just mentioned. I will connect you to them," Raphael advised him.

Using Lanok's desk was such an unexpected suggestion that Kang Chan couldn't immediately reply. Fortunately, Anne quickly nodded in agreement in his stead.

Kang Chan decided to push worrying about invading Lanok's personal space to a later time. Right now, he had to focus on rescuing him.

Kang Chan rushed to the desk. As soon as he sat down in the chair, he immediately felt as if Lanok was watching him from behind. In the meantime, a few agents carried desks, tables, and chairs into the room so Seok Kang-Ho and Choi Jong-II could sit down. On the table, they set tea, ashtrays, and the five guns Kang Chan had requested for each of them.

Time was of the essence. Kang Chan couldn't waste it contemplating the situation.

Was Huh Ha-Soo so influential that he could kidnap Lanok? Absolutely not. That was bullshit. There had to be more to this.

Kang Chan first pulled out his phone to call Kim Hyung-Jung.

*-Hello, Mr. Kang Chan. This is Kim Hyung-Jung.*

"Mr. Kim. I'm sorry, but I don't have time to explain. I may need the South Korean special forces team—the same men who went on the operation in Switzerland. Please have them all fully armed and waiting on standby as soon as you can," Kang Chan requested, urgency in his voice.

Kim Hyung-Jung paused for a moment before finally replying.

*-Are you in a difficult position to explain the reason why?*

"That's correct, sir," Kang Chan replied.

-I will call the director. I'll get back to you right after.

"Please tell him that this is something I absolutely have to do," Kang Chan implored.

*-I will, Mr. Kang Chan.*

Much to Kang Chan's gratitude, Kim Hyung-Jung didn't ask any other questions. After hanging up, Kang Chan raised his head to look at Raphael.

"I want to order another emergency decree to the entire Foreign Legion and have the special forces team who participated in the Mongolian operation head straight to South Korea immediately. Who do I speak to for this?" Kang Chan asked sharply.

"Unfortunately, that would be difficult to do unless it's Ambassador Lanok's direct orders," Raphael replied, his tone conveying how troubled he was.

"I see. Then connect me to Ludwig for now," Kang Chan requested.

Raphael picked up the phone on the desk and dialed a number for him.

*Ring. Ring. Ring.*

Kang Chan raised the receiver to his ear and patiently listened to the dial tone.

*-Lanok? To what do I owe the pleasure at this hour?*

"Ludwig, this is Kang Chan from South Korea," Kang Chan greeted brusquely.

Based on Ludwig's lack of response, it seemed he was taken aback.

"I apologize for calling you so abruptly, but I have a request, sir," Kang Chan continued.

*-Did something happen to Lanok?*

"That seems to be the case. I require assistance on the matter.

*-Hmm, can I ask exactly what you need before I agree?*

"An emergency decree issued to the KSK and the command of three of their units."

*-Whew!*

Ludwig let out a resonant sigh. It was as if all the sleep in him had suddenly left him.

*-Who is the target?*

"China," Kang Chan responded sharply.

*-Ha. This is...*

Ludwig seemed flustered and astounded by the scale of Kang Chan's request and target.

*-Mr. Kang Chan, do you understand the weight of what you just said?*

“Ludwig,” Kang Chan firmly began, his tone lowering enough to silence Ludwig once more.

“Regardless of whether you help me or not, I will proceed with this mission. If anyone dares hurt Ambassador Lanok, I will without question make an example of every single person who gave the command to do so. The ambassador’s safety and well-being are more important to me than whatever political meaning my actions will have among the intelligence agencies,” Kang Chan stated resolutely.

There was still no reply over the line.

“Ludwig, I understand your decision. However, from this moment on, you are no longer my friend,” Kang Chan hung up right after.

*These cold-hearted bastards!*

He was making slower progress than he anticipated.

Kang Chan looked back at Raphael.

“I trust you know Xavier?” he asked him.

“I do, sir,” Raphael said.

“Let me borrow an agent of yours,” Kang Chan asked Raphael, then glanced at Choi Jong-Il. “Go and bring back this guy named Xavier. A French agent will guide you to him. He’s armed and has received special training too, so be careful. I don’t care if you shoot him or cut off an arm. Just make sure you bring him to me alive,” he ordered.

“Yes, sir,” Choi Jong-Il responded and immediately stood up to leave. As soon as Kang Chan nodded at Raphael, the latter relayed his orders to another agent.

Chapter 154.2: Watch and Learn (1)

The direct line on Lanok’s desk rang. Exchanging a look with Raphael, Kang Chan picked up the phone.

“Ello?”

*-Mr. Kang Chan. It’s me again, Ludwig.*

This time, Kang Chan was the one to keep his silence.

Meanwhile, a French agent and Choi Jong-Il’s group left the office with their weapons in hand.

*-When you reach my age, you start to make calculations before you make decisions. It’s two in the morning here right now. Anyone would need some time to think if they suddenly received such a request in the middle of their sleep.*

Kang Chan remained silent.

Raphael had poured some tea into a cup and was putting it in front of Kang Chan as if he didn't care about what the German was saying any longer.

*-I ordered an emergency decree on the KSK. The European intelligence agencies are probably already watching with sharp eyes. What should I tell the three units that you asked for?*

*Great. That's one checked off on the list.*

Kang Chan turned his head away from the receiver so Ludwig wouldn't hear his sigh of relief.

"Thank you, Ludwig. I'll give my orders to the three units myself, so please just inform them that the God of Blackfield will have command of this entire operation," Kang Chan stated.

*-Understood, Mr. Kang Chan. I never imagined there would come a time in my life when I would be jealous of Lanok. I wish you the best of luck.*

The moment the call ended, Kang Chan suddenly had the urge to smoke. As if reading his mind, Raphael brought him an ashtray and a cigarette.

"The ambassador always enjoyed cigars at moments like these," Raphael explained.

Kang Chan chuckled wryly. He put the cigarette in his mouth and lit it up. Afterward, he asked Raphael to connect him to Vasili. Raphael dialed a number, then handed him the receiver.

*Ring.*

*-Lanok. It's Vasili.*

The bastard picked up almost immediately. What was this guy?

"Vasili. It's Kang Chan."

Kang Chan was once again greeted by another deafening silence as he had with Ludwig.

"I heard from the ambassador. Haah... you wanted him to act as an intermediary between South Korea and Russia, is that right?" Kang Chan asked wearily.

*-Hmm, is that such an urgent matter that you had to call at four in the morning?*

*Motherfucker. He picked up on the first ring because he was desperate. Is he trying to pretend like he has the upper hand?*

"I need three Spetsnaz units. I'm out to kill a man whom I would go to any lengths to kill. However, this is a personal request, not a matter related to the reparation discussions."

*-Hahaha.*

Vasili's disbelieving laughter carried over the line into Kang Chan's ear.

*-I'll be generous and listen to your reason, at least. Why?*

"China," Kang Chan responded briefly.

*-Ha! Are you trying to start a world war?*

“Tempting, but I’m not going that far. I just suddenly developed a sense of hatred overnight. I don’t understand why people are trying to go off with my perfectly intact head.”

Kang Chan felt anger boiling inside him as he spoke. Anne had stopped crying some time ago and was now focusing on Kang Chan’s words.

“It’s hard to deal with them all at once, so I’m trying to beat up one person at a time. What are you going to do, Vasili?”

*-Kang Chan, just because I made a mistake in front of you once does not mean that Russia and South Korea are on the same level. That is foolish thinking*

“You’ll change your mind on that soon,” Kang Chan announced menacingly.

*-Interesting. No one has dared threaten me before.*

“I take it you refuse. If so, then I see no need for mediation from France anymore,” Kang Chan curtly declared.

*-Where’s Lanok?*

The question came in like a surprise attack. However, Kang Chan didn’t intend to hide the truth anyway.

“Why do you think I would consider attacking China, Vasili? Hm?” Kang Chan asked sarcastically.

*-Hahaha.*

There was something about Vasili’s laughter that Kang Chan couldn’t quite put his finger on.

*-That’s a fine idea. So this is why Ludwig moved earlier. Fine. However, to be clear, you will be indebted to me after this, understood?*

“Fine, Vasili.”

*-Let’s go with the same conditions as you did with Ludwig. An emergency decree ordered on all of the Spetsnaz, and the command of three units. Is that enough for you?*

*That sinister punk.*

The sly Vasili already knew about Kang Chan’s arrangement with Germany.

“Thank you, Vasili,” Kang Chan said genuinely.

*-This is the second time in my life I have met someone to be afraid of. Keep this in mind. Once Russia orders an emergency decree following Germany, All of Europe and the United States will be issuing emergency decrees as well. This could really end in a war before you know it. No one knows how this will go down.*

“Understood.” Kang Chan hung up the phone and leaned back against the chair.

“Monsieur Kang, did Russia just order an emergency decree?” Raphael seemed anxious. “Emergency decrees from Germany and Russia will leave the DGSE no choice but to give an order to the Foreign Legion as well. Would you like to speak with the official in charge?”

“They don’t know about the ambassador’s kidnapping yet, do they?”

“With the emergency decrees already ordered, I’m sure the DGSE will catch up soon anyway and take their own measures,” Raphael answered with confidence.

Kang Chan nodded.

Not understanding what was being said, Seok Kang-Ho drank his tea with a comedically grave expression.

Raphael dialed another number and handed Kang Chan the receiver again.

“It would be best to tell them that you’re the God of Blackfield,” Raphael suggested.

The moment that Kang Chan held the phone to his ear, someone responded with an “Ello?”

“This is the God of Blackfield.” Kang Chan followed Raphael’s advice.

*-Why are you using this number?*

The voice that came across the line was a deep baritone.

“Something happened to the ambassador. It’s the reason Germany and Russia ordered emergency decrees on their special forces. I would like for France to take action as well,” Kang Chan said.

*-Ah, then that explains why those countries suddenly sprang into action after you checked the ambassador’s location with your phone. What do you need, Monsieur Kang?*

“An emergency decree on the Foreign Legion and command of three of their units,” Kang Chan repeated.

*-Understood. How would you like to carry out your commands of the special forces?*

“Just have them on standby for now,” Kang Chan stated.

*-May we know the target location?*

“China.”

The person he was talking to grew quiet for a moment, probably just as astounded as the two ambassadors he called earlier.

*-I will have that arranged. It will take a minute at most.*

“Thank you.”

Kang Chan ended the call, took a sip of his tea, then bit on his cigarette again. When he turned around, he coincidentally met eyes with Anne.

“You’re exactly like my dad when he was younger, Channy,” she said, making Kang Chan smirk. “Once he made up his mind, he never went back. And he enjoyed some tea and cigars when he was done with his calls, just like you are doing now.”

*What can I say to that? I don’t know if she’s right or wrong.*

Kang Chan lit up his cigarette, choosing silence.

*Buzz. Buzz. Buzz.*

It was a call from Kim Hyung-Jung.

“Hello?” Kang Chan said.

*-Mr. Kang Chan, the First, Third, and Fifth Airborne Forces, the Thirty-fifth Brigade, and the Special Forces Team 606 are all on emergency standby. In about five minutes, the North Korean special forces will also go into emergency standby. Please be informed.*

“Thank you, Mr. Kim,” Kang Chan said gratefully.

*-I can only hope this affair is beneficial to South Korea.*

*I see now.*

Kang Chan realized something new as he hung up. Whatever the matter was, he should deliberate the interests of those who were involved. Of course, it wasn’t as if he could start doing that immediately.

He had rushed into this plan without thinking, but he thought it wasn’t that bad of an approach. Anne and Raphael also had hope on their faces. Seok Kang-Ho looked like he was fighting against boredom, but that wasn’t important.

This was the same method that Lanok used when Kang Chan was facing the Spetsnaz.

*Being willing to go to war if someone dares to touch you.*

Kang Chan thought that this was a big gamble—one where he was putting everything he had on the line. If he couldn’t get Lanok back after all this, he would definitely be put in an uncomfortable position.

Who in China was he supposed to attack? It wasn’t as if he could actually start a war with the entire country.

*Ring. Ring. Ring.*

The bell tone tore down the heavy bubble of nervousness and silence that was building up in the room.

Kang Chan gave a look at Raphael, then answered the phone.

“Ello?”



*-This is the DGSE. The White Wolves located in six territories of China have gone into emergency standby.*

France's feedback was immediate.

There was a chance that China wasn't behind Lanok's kidnapping. However, even if they weren't, they still had to find the bastards who were. Was it unfair from China's point of view? Maybe. But why did they collaborate with Huh Ha-Soo and create this whole mess in the first place?

The incident took place while Lanok was returning from meeting the Chinese ambassador and Huh Ha-Soo. Did that mean South Korea was also partly to blame?

Neither China nor Huh Ha-Soo would think that. Therefore, all that was left was for a powerful country like China to cooperate in getting Lanok back. They had two options to choose from. They could find the culprit who kidnapped Lanok or they could kill Kang Chan. There was no going back now.

"Please give me the exact location and the number of people in those six areas," Kang Chan said firmly.

*-Monsieur Kang, please know that we will update you with intel as it enters our hands. However, giving orders to go into mainland Chinese territory isn't something that can be done on your command.*

"Understood. Please give me the information for now," Kang Chan stated.

When he put the phone back down, Raphael poured him another cup of tea. Kang Chan rested his forehead on his arm that was laid on Lanok's desk. He suddenly recalled when he had first met the ambassador at the conference hall for Gong Te Automobiles' event.

It truly was impossible to expect where life would lead a person or how one's relationships with people would turn out.

Chapter 155.1: Watch and Learn (2)

An entire hour had passed even though all Kang Chan did was take a few phone calls. Within that period, he received a call from Michelle to confirm if he was free to visit a few buildings he could buy, but Kang Chan put that aside for now.

When he checked the clock, it was already twenty past eleven. The time for the situation to receive new developments was already long gone.

Meanwhile, Anne and Raphael were currently so calm that it was almost funny. They regained their peace of mind upon seeing Kang Chan handle the situation so critically.

*Should I have searched the Seoul Hotel?*

He could easily get this done even if he asked Kim Hyung-Jung for a favor. However, he couldn't bring himself to pick up the phone since his rash judgment could be the determining factor for Lanok's survival.

Kang Chan rested his forehead on his palms while calculating every situation and action he could think of. Not long after, someone knocked on the door three times. He looked up to see Xavier

walking through the entrance. Choi Jong-Il, Woo Hee-Seung, and Lee Doo-Hee followed right behind him.

*Pft.*

He didn't know about Choi Jong-Il, but Woo Hee-Seung's left cheek was definitely swollen, and Xavier's face and t-shirt were completely covered in blood.

"A chair, please," Kang Chan requested. In response, Raphael quickly took a chair and put it in front of Lanok's desk.

Xavier sat down opposite Kang Chan. He looked irritated beyond his wits.

"What you have just done completely disrespects my organization! I don't know how strong you are, but it doesn't matter. The moment my organization decides to eliminate you, you and the people around you will never be safe again!" Xavier complained in annoyance.

"Enough with the talk about your oh-so-mighty organization, Xavier," Kang Chan sarcastically replied. He stared directly at Xavier, who was wiping his face with a handkerchief.

"What do you want from me?"

"I already know you're an agent of the United States and that you're trying to obtain military secrets through Huh Ha-Soo."

"Ha! You've seen too many movies," Xavier snorted.

Kang Chan slightly shook his head. "Xavier, I brought you here to ask you for just one simple thing. It doesn't matter if you use Huh Ha-Soo's Chinese connections or the US intelligence agencies—just bring me back Ambassador Lanok."

"I don't know where Lanok is!" Xavier countered.

"Then find him."

Xavier laughed in disbelief. "That won't get you anywhere in information warfare. Just because you threatened and strong-armed someone does not mean you'll be able to have your way."

"I don't care about how things are supposed to be done. All I want is for Ambassador Lanok to return to this office without so much as a scratch on him. That's all there is to it," Kang Chan said with a fierce glare. "What I can't stand the most has already happened, so I hope you cooperate with me while I'm still asking you nicely, Xavier. The moment I run out of patience, I won't hesitate to proceed with the operation. China, the United States, Britain... It doesn't matter which country is involved in this. I will show the bastards involved in this affair no mercy as I get my revenge."

"You don't have the power to do that yet," Xavier rebutted.

Kang Chan suddenly felt as if talking to Xavier was a waste of time. This wasn't what he was expecting.

*Ring. Ring.*

He immediately picked up the receiver on the desk.

"Ello?" Kang Chan answered.

*-We have decoded the intel about the six locations in China and sent it to the embassy.*

"Thank you." Kang Chan was about to hang up the phone when the man started speaking again.

*-God of Blackfield, if you send Russian and German special forces to China, it may lead to a war that no one can stop.*

The low, grave warning traveled over the line into Kang Chan's ear.

*-The DGSE is doing its utmost best. However, if you still judge it best to send in the special forces to rescue Ambassador Lanok, we will follow your decision.*

"I understand. I will call you once it's decided," Kang Chan replied.

After setting the phone down, Kang Chan let out a deep sigh. It was meaningless to drag things out from here. He had already decided to attack anyway, so there was no point wasting any more time.

*Buzz. Buzz. Buzz.*

This time, Kang Chan's phone began to vibrate on the table.

"Hello?"

*-Mr. Kang, North Korea has gone into full defense, and Japan has issued a level one alert to its forces. The director would like to know what you wish to do.*

"Mr. Kim."

*-Go ahead, Mr. Kang.*

"If you get punched and don't do anything about it, you're definitely going to get punched again. Once that becomes a pattern, you and the one who punched you will start thinking it is simply the norm. I don't want that to happen."

*-Is that what I should tell the director?*

"Yes, sir. This is my intent."

As Kang Chan ended the call with Kim Hyung-Jung, an agent headed inside with a few documents in hand. It was a Chinese map with six red dots marked in certain locations. Each one was labeled with the areas' names.

Kang Chan scanned the pages, then raised his eyebrow at Xavier.

“The ambassador went missing after having a meal with the Chinese ambassador and Huh Ha-Soo... Huh Ha-Soo is the one who was trying to give you military secrets.”

*Ring. Ring. Ring.*

Kang Chan stopped talking to Xavier to answer the phone.

“Ello?”

*-I'd like to speak with the God of Blackfield, please.*

Kang Chan was hearing this voice for the first time.

“Who's this?”

*-My name is Eton. I'm with the United Kingdom.*

Britain? Kang Chan thought this was great. He had been planning to do something about them anyway since they kept getting on his nerves.

*-Is this the God of Blackfield?*

“Yeah.” Kang Chan replied.

The man let out a low sigh.

*-We requested mediation from Lanok because we want to meet you. Your existence is critical to us as well. For that reason, we would like to help.*

Kang Chan did not expect this. However, the UK had just recently attempted to launch a preemptive attack on France, and they hadn't formally met yet, so Kang Chan didn't feel right about readily accepting their support.

*-To begin with, we will order an emergency decree on the SAS and SBS and give you command over them.*

“That's too much. We can discuss the specifics later.”

*-We will make the preparations just in case, then. We will contact you as soon as we obtain new information.*

The call ended on that note. Eton seemed pleased about finally getting to speak to Kang Chan. Meanwhile, Xavier carefully observed Kang Chan's expression from where he had been arrogantly wiping his blood. He was probably acting this way because he didn't have any reason to hesitate anymore.

Kang Chan put a cigarette in his mouth and lit it up with a lighter. He then turned toward Raphael, Choi Jong-Il, Seok Kang-Ho, then Anne.

He didn't know what would happen if he proceeded with his decision, but they couldn't just keep letting the enemy beat them up. It had only been a few months since the golf course and conference hall terrorist incidents, yet they still did not hesitate to kidnap Lanok.

Kang Chan faced Raphael with a determined look.

“Connect me to Vasili,” Kang Chan ordered.

Raphael quickly pressed the speed dial button.

*Ring.*

*-Kang Chan, this is Vasili.*

Now that Kang Chan had thought about it, the Russian had probably gotten no sleep today.

“Vasili, I received information from the DGSE regarding the location of China’s White Wolves. Eliminate them all for me.”

*-Haah.*

A long, loud sigh could be heard over the phone.

*-You’re asking for a lot.*

“Alright. I’ll just discuss this with the UK, then. Eton said they are ready to deploy at my command.”

*-Eton? You spoke with that dirty English bastard? You can’t take his help so easily! Who knows what he’ll ask in return?*

“I make the decisions, Vasili. So tell me what it’s gonna be.”

*-Ha! Fine. We will send the special forces in immediately.*

“I’ll be waiting for results.”

Kang Chan hung up and asked Raphael to connect him to Ludwig.

*Ring.*

*-It’s Ludwig, Mr. Kang Chan.*

“White Wolves will be waiting on standby in the Chinese territories I’m sending you. Please eliminate them all.”

*-Hmm.*

His reaction was similar to Vasili’s. The only difference was that Kang Chan heard Ludwig swallow at the end.

*-Mr. Kang Chan, I said I would help, but you should really reconsider this choice.*

It didn’t seem like Ludwig was saying that because he changed his mind. He appeared to be genuinely concerned.

“Russia has already agreed, and Britain has expressed their intent to take part as well. Ludwig, if I stop now, it won’t just end with me getting humiliated. We could lose the ambassador forever.”

*-The United Kingdom contacted you?*

“He said his name was Eton, I believe.”

*-That cunning bastard is trying to pull some tricks again, I see. Whew! All right. I will do as you say. May God bless this operation.*

Kang Chan ended the call, then used his phone to call someone. By this point, Xavier already seemed beyond flabbergasted.

*-This is Kim Hyung-Jung.*

“Mr. Kim, I will send a few Chinese addresses to the NIS. We will be participating in a joint operation with France, Russia, and Germany. Please have the South Korean special forces sent to China. The objective is the complete elimination of the White Wolves, China’s special forces.”

Unlike the others Kang Chan had called, Kim Hyung-Jung gulped.

“I’ll inform you when the French special forces will arrive. The South Korean special forces can leave with them.”

*-I will report this first. Are we really going to be conducting this operation with France, Russia, and Germany?*

“Yes. Some of their forces have already started making their way to the target locations. The UK has also expressed their intent to participate if we requested their help.

Kim Hyung-Jung sounded as if he was choking back a sigh. The call ended not long after.

Kang Chan looked at Raphael.

“The DGSE,” he commanded.

Raphael connected the line as Anne nervously watched on from the background.

*-Yes, go ahead.*

“Please give Russia and Germany information on all locations of the White Wolves. We will choose one territory for the Foreign Legion to attack. Once the French special forces arrive at the Osan airport, you will be joined by the South Korean special forces.”

*-I will request approval and inform you immediately.*

After hanging up, Kang Chan leaned back in his chair. He would make it clear to everyone that anyone who touched his people would suffer fatal consequences. He would make sure his enemies would fear messing with him or anyone around him ever again.

Chapter 155.2: Watch and Learn (2)

Kang Chan stretched his arm out to pick up a cigarette. As he was lighting it up, Anne came hobbling over to the desk.

*Huh? What is she doing?*

Once she approached the table, she began to pour him more tea like a respectable society lady. In her eyes, Kang Chan could see the faith she had in him.

‘It’ll all be fine in the end, so you don’t have to worry too much.’

‘Thank you.’

Anne turned back and returned to where she had been sitting. She probably just wanted to do something to express her gratitude toward him.

“May I make a call?” Xavier carefully asked when Kang Chan was exhaling the smoke of his cigarette.

“It’s too late, Xavier. Now that the operation has already started, it’s just going to be the men on our side getting sacrificed if you secretly deliver our strategy to the people you report back to. Let me get this straight. Like I said before, if something happens to Ambassador Lanok even after this operation, I will work with the UK if I have to if that means I can take revenge on the States. So you better hope to God that the ambassador will return safe and sound,” Kang Chan stated.

“Why are you still keeping me here, then?” Xavier asked, seemingly finding his situation unjust.

Kang Chan looked at Xavier in amusement.

“You were arrested by the NIS for spying and trying to sneak out South Korean military secrets,” Kang Chan informed him.

Xavier looked as if he couldn’t believe his ears.

“What? Did you think South Korea wouldn’t be able to touch an American spy? Ha, bullshit.”

“You don’t understand that having the ability to command special forces is nothing in the world of international politics.” Xavier was starting to sound frustrated.

“That might be true,” Kang Chan agreed, nodding as he spoke. “But you’re a spy who was trying to steal South Korean military intelligence. That fact won’t change regardless of what’s going on in the political scene.”

With his arms still laid on the table, Xavier looked to Raphael for backup.

“Did you think South Korea would continue to just take everyone’s terrorist attacks lying down? Did you think we won’t be able to arrest guys like you even if you steal the country’s military secrets? Don’t be an idiot, Xavier,” Kang Chan continued. He extinguished his cigarette on the ashtray and took a sip of his tea. Soon after, the phone began to ring again. Still glaring at Xavier, Kang Chan picked up the receiver.

*-The Foreign Legion has departed. They will arrive in Osan in approximately twelve hours. Germany and Russia's special forces have also left their countries. God of Blackfield, China has ordered emergency standby on their entire military. Will you still proceed?*

Kang Chan smirked, his eyes still on Xavier.

“An important official from France was kidnapped. I don't care if France decides they don't want in on the action. But you should think about why Germany, Russia, and South Korea's special forces are moving at my command. I'm a little disappointed with the DGSE today.”

*-We were only relaying the possible dangers to you. Our special forces team has already left. I hope there aren't any misunderstandings about our stance.*

“Got it. Thanks,” Kang Chan replied in a lighter tone, then set down the receiver.

“Please let me make a call!” Xavier pleaded desperately.

“Shut up,” Kang Chan said firmly.

“War will break out at this rate! South Korea is going to go up in flames!” Xavier exclaimed.

Kang Chan tilted his head as he began to glower at Xavier. Xavier flinched.

“What? Go up in flames? Repeat what you just said, you son of a bitch,” Kang Chan growled. He suppressed the urge to shoot Xavier in the forehead with his gun when he got interrupted by his phone.

*Buzz. Buzz. Buzz.*

It was probably for the better that he received a call at such timing.

“Hello?”

*-Mr. Kang, the DGSE has contacted us and sent us all the necessary information, and the director has also given his approval. Our special forces will be joining the French team in Osan.*

“Thank you. I'll do my best to make sure this is a success,” Kang Chan reassured him.

When he put his phone down, he felt as if everything was over now. There was no turning back, but this was not something he should retreat from in the first place. He decided to attack, so he simply proceeded with that decision. If he just kept making calculations and worrying about what could happen, he would have been left taking punches from the enemies. After all, no one would dare attack him if they thought he wasn't worth the consequences to mess with.

Xavier looked flustered and shocked. This was probably how China and the United States were feeling right now. Nevertheless, the phone on Lanok's desk still wasn't ringing with any calls from the two countries. They were essentially threatening Kang Chan to let go of the agent who was trying to steal classified information and not meddle with China.



*Those motherfuckers.*

They were holding out until the end in hopes that Kang Chan—no—that South Korea would surrender to them. The bullies in them probably wanted to argue and ask why he wasn't taking their beating lying down.

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“Mr. President! You have to accept the calls,” a man said. They were in a conference room illuminated by lights that were wrapped around the dome-shaped ceiling.

With his mic still off, the assistant director continued, “South Korea’s future is on the line here. He’s just a student, sir, and yet the child has almost all the country’s authority in his hands. This will only result into bigger issues if you keep approving of this. Mr. President! Geographically speaking, it’s difficult for us to stay safe without the protection of China and the United States.”

Moon Jae-Hyun stared at his mic, remaining silent.

The fourth deputy chief of the NIS looked at the callers and carefully glanced at Moon Jae-Hyun.

“China and the United States are still requesting to speak to you, sir. This is already the United States’ third request.”

Moon Jae-Hyun turned to look at the fourth deputy chief. “They’re only going to tell us not to send our special forces if we answer, are they not?”

“Mr. President. He’s just a high-school kid. He’s bombarding China with all these special forces teams like how a child plays a game. If this results in a full-scale war, this isn’t something that can be solved by just turning off your computer,” the assistant director replied with a tinge of frustration.

Nevertheless, Moon Jae-Hyun continued to speak to the assistant director in an unaffected tone. “What are the chances this will result in war?”

"The Ministry of National Defense's simulation result is forty-seven to fifty-three, and the National Intelligence Service's simulation result is fifty-two to forty-eight."

As if on cue, everyone sighed quietly at the same time.

“You have to speak with them now, sir, even if it’s already too late. If the United States and China decides to ruin us, our country will collapse from its economic foundation.”

“They wouldn’t do that recklessly. South Korea is set to be a part of the Eurasian Rail, after all.”

“If Ambassador Lanok is already dead, we can’t guarantee the Eurasian Rail either.”

“Isn’t that all the more reason why we should work together to rescue Ambassador Lanok? Let’s keep an eye on the situation a little longer.”

The assistant director blatantly showed his displeasure at Moon Jae-Hyun's response.

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-Ludwig?

“Well, well, well. A call from Vasili? This situation is certainly interesting.”

Ludwig rubbed his tired eyes with his thumb and index finger. Despite the fatigue, he kept his guard up during the phone call that he had just received.

*-Our new hero seems to be aggravated, hm? If I turn him down, he will begin to work with the UK, and if I do as he wants, the results will be quite something. What do you think?*

“You're making a complicated issue out of a simple matter. All China had to do was set Lanok free, but they are worsening the problem by staying silent instead. We're not the aggravated ones here. That's China, Vasili.”

Ludwig lifted his mug and sipped some of his coffee.

*-China seemed to be trying to pressure the South Korean government into backing down.*

Ludwig quickly put his mug back down and frowned.

“Vasili, don't you already know what kind of person Kang Chan is and what Lanok means to him? If I were in China's shoes, I would have quickly returned Lanok, apologized to Kang Chan and the South Korean government, and made reparations.”

*-That would likely be the best way out, yes.*

“China has already launched three terrorist attacks in South Korea. If it were you, you would have already sought retribution, would you have not? The South Korea we used to know and the South Korea now is different. The synergy between Moon Jae-hyun and Kang Chan is fantastic. Anyone who treats them like they treated South Korea in the past will come to regret it just like how China and the United States are regretting it right now.”

With a deep sigh from Vasili, the call ended.

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*Ring. Ring. Ring.*

Kang Chan lifted the receiver.

*-Mr. Kang Chan, the United States and China contacted me. They are asking me to mediate the situation. What would you like me to say?*

It was Ludwig.

“My conditions are simple, Ludwig. For Ambassador Lanok's safe return and for them to take responsibility for this incident through definite reparations.”

*-Understood.*

As he set the phone down, he saw Anne and Raphael's lips tremble nervously.

*Ring. Ring. Ring.*

"Ello?"

*-It's Vasili. I understand China, but why is the United States acting like they're freaking out?*

"Vasili, I'm sure you know what it is that I want."

*-Sometime in the future, when you look back to this way, you will painstakingly regret it and get shivers down your back.*

"I'll worry about that later, Vasili. Perhaps after I get everything I want," Kang Chan said, unbothered.

*-You made a scene with your first appearance too. Seems like you've got a talent for making people focus and pay attention to you. I'll contact you again.*

Kang Chan set the receiver down and looked at Seok Kang-Ho. All that was left to do now was wait.

*Ring. Ring. Ring.*

The direct line began to ring again.

*Damn it!*

Could these windbags not get enough chattering? The operation had barely started. Why did they have to call about so much?

Kang Chan lifted the receiver to his ear.

"Ello?"

*-Is this the God of Blackfield?*

Kang Chan didn't recognize the voice.

Chapter 156.1: That Would Be Wise (1)

"Go ahead. Speak," Kang Chan stated.

A chuckle came over the phone. It sounded more like a scoff, though.

*-You waste no time with formalities. You're just as curt as I heard.*

This had to be the person currently holding Lanok hostage or someone who had the power to get Lanok back safely. His lax, unhurried tone made it clear he was definitely either one of the two.

*-You should be careful when you speak to me.*

*Pft!*

Kang Chan snorted, then slammed the receiver down with a loud bang.

*Motherfucker! He's the one who called because he's in a rush. Does he really think he can play it nice and cool?*

Kang Chan had not given up on Lanok. However, in the spur of the moment, he concluded that he couldn't let the man confidently take the upper hand just because the man had Lanok in his grasp.

Seok Kang-Ho, who was looking bored because he couldn't understand what was being said, was now carefully observing Kang Chan's expression.

*Ring. Ring. Ring.*

When the phone rang again, everyone's gazes shifted to Kang Chan and the line on Lanok's desk.

Kang Chan made his trademark smirk as he picked up the receiver.

"Ello?"

*-If you hang up on my calls like that again—*

*This son of a bitch still hasn't learned his lesson, has he?*

Kang Chan swiftly ended the call again. As he bit on another cigarette, Raphael quickly held up a lighter for him.

Across from Kang Chan, he noticed Anne's hands trembling vehemently, understandably so. After all, everyone in the room knew that the calls that they were receiving right now were directly related to Lanok's safety. Even Xavier was looking at Kang Chan with a pale face.

However, Kang Chan's expression clearly showed what he was thinking. 'What the hell are you going to do about it?'

His eyes had one clear message as well: find Lanok first and think about other things later.

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The man gritted his teeth as he put down the phone. There were four desks in the vast room that he was in, and Lanok was sitting on the opposite sofa from him.

He stared daggers at Lanok as the corners of his lips began to twitch out of a mix of anger and frustration. Not long after, the phone started to ring.

*Ring. Ring. Ring.*

Letting out a deep sigh, the man picked it up.

"Wei!" he answered.

*-Sou Ke, it's Vasili.*

With his head hanging low, Huh Geuk's expression crumpled. He seem as if he was having a hard time trying to keep his temper under control.

*-You have already lost. If you keep ignoring my warnings and still attempt to open the entrance to the nuclear silo, just know that I'm not above cooperating with the United States and Britain to administer revenge. You only have an hour left before our special forces arrive now. You better finish your negotiations with the God of Blackfield before you run out of time. This is my last warning, Sou Ke. If you don't listen, you'll know just how heavy my words are.*

Huh Geuk's face reddened as he let go of the lower lip he had kept bitten.

"The God of Blackfield won't answer my calls," he said.

A moment of silence crossed the line before Vasili began to snicker at him.

*-Ah, you must have unnecessarily put up an arrogant front. Huhuhu. Hahahaha.*

Huh Geuk glared at Lanok, not having anyone else to direct his anger to.

Lanok just looked calm and collected. He was leaning back on the chair with his legs crossed as if he was aware of everything that was going on.

*-I'll mediate for you just this once. And if I may give you a piece of advice, don't mess with that man.*

"Hmm!"

*-And if you haven't already, you better make sure Lanok isn't uncomfortable. I hope in your best interests that there isn't even a single stray scratch on Lanok. If he does, China will have to pay an astronomical price as a consequence of this incident.*

"Hey! Is there something about that guy that I'm missing? What's his deal?"

*-Ha. You dared touch Lanok when you don't even know who he is? Now that the God of Blackfield has expressed his intent to protect Lanok, we're left with no other choice but to guarantee nothing happens to him. Because of that, the other countries' intelligence agencies can relax a little.*

Huh Geuk furrowed his brows, not understanding what Vasili was saying.

*-From here on out, The God of Blackfield's first suspect will always be China if ever Lanok's life is in danger again. It doesn't matter if it's just because of a traffic accident or some other reason.*

Huh Geuk sighed and sat against one of the desks.

*-I'm only helping you this one time. I'll call God of Blackfield and speak to him, so call him again in ten minutes. Apologize, and don't state any conditions for returning Lanok. You better not waste my arbitration.*

Huh Geuk hung up and let out another sigh.

"Can I have some tea, if it's fine with you?" Lanok asked, looking directly into Huh Geuk's eyes.

Huh Geuk had lost. This was pretty much already a lost battle. It was a futile and humiliating one too, because coming out of it, China had just essentially donated their vested rights in the world of intelligence to Lanok.

"Of course," Huh Geuk replied. He gestured and gave a look to an agent, who quickly brought over a porcelain tea set and filled Lanok a cup. "Lanok, it seems there has been a misunderstanding."

Lanok nodded as he lifted his teacup.

“Apologies and reparations to the South Korean and French government, as well as to any other country who mobilized soldiers,” Lanok stated his requests unfazed.

Huh Geuk agreed in a tone that sounded like he was sighing.

“And isn’t it about time for you to call?” Lanok asked calmly.

Lanok set down his cup with a click, and Huh Geuk glared at the phone at Lanok’s question. Huh Geuk was now cornered and would only be able to make one last move.

Would he retreat from here or attack again?

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*Ring. Ring. Ring.*

“Ello?”

*-It’s Vasili.*

Everyone in the office swallowed nervously when Kang Chan smirked.

*-What are you so angry about? Sou Ke will call you again. It won’t be the end of the world to answer the phone nicely for once, you know, especially with Lanok waiting for you.*

Kang Chan stopped himself from asking the question that was threatening to spill out from the tip of his tongue.

*-I see you still refuse to ask about Lanok’s well-being. I understand you’re brewing with anger, but it seems that some people have been injured, so why don’t you stop here? At this rate, it’s only going to be our nation’s innocent men who are sacrificed all because they’re geographically close to China.*

“All right,” Kang Chan answered in acknowledgment.

The call ended with Vasili’s strange laughter. Just as the silence in the room palpably sank to the floor, the direct line began to bellow again.

*Ring. Ring. Ring.*

Kang Chan extended his arm to pick it up. Xavier anxiously watched on.

“Ello?”

*-It’s Sou Ke, God of Blackfield.*

“Where are you?” Kang Chan cut to the chase.

The man seemed to have been taken aback by how abrupt it was, considering he didn’t say anything in reply.

“Tell me where the ambassador is,” Kang Chan commanded.

Anne covered her mouth with a hand, and Raphael’s fists trembled slightly.

A quiet sigh came from across the phone.

*-Come to the Chinese embassy. But you have to come alone.*

“That’s up to me to decide,” Kang Chan stated standoffishly.

*Click.*

After hanging up, Kang Chan immediately got out of his seat and turned to look at a French agent.

“Move Xavier where you see fit, but make sure to keep a close eye on him,” Kang Chan ordered.

“Understood, sir,” the agent replied.

“This is absurd,” Xavier grumbled loudly as two agents grabbed hold of both of his arms and took him out of the office.

“I will be heading to the Chinese embassy now. Seok Kang-Ho and I will head inside. Choi Jong-Il, you’ll stand by right outside,” Kang Chan commanded.

“Yes, sir,” Choi Jong-Il responded.

Anne looked between Kang Chan, Raphael, and Choi Jong-Il, not understanding their Korean. As Seok Kang-Ho and Choi Jong-Il’s group left the office, Kang Chan turned to Anne.

“It seems the ambassador is being held in the Chinese embassy,” Kang Chan explained.

Tears immediately began to fall from Anne’s eyes.

“Thank you. Thank you, Channy!” she exclaimed.

“It’s all going to be okay,” Kang Chan assured her as she ran into his arms and hugged him. He patted her back in response, then turned back around.

“Raphael,” he said.

“Yes, Monsieur Kang,” Raphael replied.

“If there are any more calls asking for me, give them my number,” Kang Chan informed him.

“As you command, Monsieur Kang,” Raphael replied.

Kang Chan hung the gun that was on the table at his waist. Before walking out the door, he glanced back, finding Anne wiping her tears and Raphael respectfully bowing at him.

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Choi Jong-Il knew the location of the Chinese embassy, so Kang Chan and Seok Kang-Ho simply followed him. As they hit the road, Kang Chan called someone on his phone.

*-Mr. Kang Chan! It’s Kim Hyung-Jung.*

The tone and urgency with which Kim Hyung-Jung answered the phone showed just how nervous he was.

“Mr. Kim, please send two units of the special forces to the Chinese embassy,” Kang Chan requested.

*-What? Pardon?*

“I’ll be arriving there in around twenty minutes. It’s where Ambassador Lanok is, Mr. Kim. We will win this battle whether we deploy special forces units or not. However, I also plan to use this opportunity to display our country’s strength.”

*-I understand, Mr. Kang Chan! I’ll call you as soon as I’m done arranging this.*

When the call dropped, Seok Kang-Ho glanced at Kang Chan.

“Those motherfuckers! Seems like they didn’t learn their lesson even after getting wrecked in Paju, huh?” Seok Kang-Ho said jokingly.

*Nope! They definitely didn’t.*

Kang Chan simply nodded in agreement.

Chapter 156.2: That Would Be Wise (1)

“Mr. President, please!” the assistant director of the NIS pleaded with a pale expression.

They were currently connected on a call, so Kim Hyung-Jung also heard the assistant director’s plea.

“Mr. Kim, are you absolutely certain that he said this battle will end in our victory?” Moon Jae-Hyun asked.

*- I am, Mr. President! I heard him say those words loud and clear.*

“To confirm, he also told you that he wants to display just how powerful South Korea truly is?” Moon Jae-Hyun asked again.

*-Yes, that is correct, Mr. President!*

Moon Jae-Hyun turned his head and looked at Hwang Ki-Hyun, who had been silent all this time.

“Mr. President, we’re already on a running tiger. There’s no stopping now,” Hwang Ki-Hyun spoke up for the first time. Moon Jae-Hyun smiled back wryly.

“Mr. Kim, do we have men to mobilize right now?” Moon Jae-Hyun asked.

*-The 606 is on standby in Songpa, sir.*

“I see. Give them the order, then,” Moon Jae-Hyun directed with a slightly resigned tone.

*-Thank you, Mr. President!*



As soon as the call ended, Moon Jae-Hyun turned away from the conference mic and leaned back to rest in his chair.

Moon Jae-Hyun sighed deeply, then asked the assistant director, “Do you think this is reckless?”

“Mr. President, our country cannot survive antagonizing both the United States and China. They have such a powerful influence that if the U.S. raises their interest rates by just two percent, over ten countries in Latin America and Africa will inevitably suffer. If they raise the interest rates by three percent, then even we will find it impossible to keep our heads above the water,” the assistant director said in an attempt to change Moon Jae-Hyun’s mind.

Moon Jae-Hyun nodded at him and sighed deeply.

“We have to cooperate with at least either China or the United States, but we have turned our backs on both countries at the same time instead. Mr. President! We are in hostile relations with all the countries that surround us. If Russia, France, and Germany turn away from us as well...” the assistant director trailed off after seeing Moon Jae-Hyun’s expression. He calmed his turbulent emotions down.

“I’m sorry, Mr. President,” he said, then quieted down. Everyone here was already aware of the dire possibilities that he was talking about. There was no need to say them out loud.

“He’s just a high school student, huh?” Moon Jae-Hyun said as he looked at every face in the room. “Well, you’re right. As hard as it may be to believe, Mr. Kang Chan is certainly still in his senior year of high school.”

Hwang Ki-Hyun quietly sighed in response, then looked down.

“However, that high school student gave South Korea the opportunity to be connected to the Eurasian Rail. He also displayed diplomatic excellence by providing assistance in getting the announcement for the railway system held in our country,” Moon Jae-Hyun continued. “It doesn’t stop there. He also rescued me and the founder of the Eurasian Rail when a terrorist attack hit the conference hall where its announcement event was being held, safely brought back our agents from Mongolia, and, during the operation in France, helped our special forces make their greatest accomplishment in the entire history of the unit’s existence.”

He paused halfway through to pick up the cigarette that was in front of him.

“We have always lost talents like him to the United States or China or nipped them in the bud with our own hands because other countries would not just sit still and allow such talent to grow in our nation. As the assistant director said, our

people will have to suffer if we want to protect such a man with potential. I cannot imagine the costs that they will have to pay.”

*Click.*

The smoke of his cigarette spun up to the ceiling fan, then was blown out of the room.

“If we lose Mr. Kang Chan, this man you label simply a high schooler, we will also lose the Unicorn project. We have no influence or connections in that matter. We have put an extremely heavy burden on that young student’s shoulders, men. I, the prime minister, the director of the NIS, and even General Choi Seong-Geon have forced that child to carry that back-breaking load.”

Moon Jae-Hyun inhaled once, then extinguished the cigarette in the ashtray in front of him.

“If we lose Mr. Kang Chan, I have no idea if we’ll ever be able to find a genius like him ever again. That young man is putting himself through all kinds of hardships just to complete the task we have left in his hands. As the president, for as long as he is still moving forward, I refuse to surrender and yield just because of an immediate threat. We can no longer turn a blind eye to China’s acts of terror and the United States’ thefts that they so blatantly execute within our country. I will put my life on the line for him. I believe this is the best thing I can do during my regime.”

The expressions of all the people at the conference stiffened. However, the tension they felt now was different from the one they felt before.

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As soon as they reached the Chinese embassy, Kang Chan stepped out of the car and turned toward Choi Jong-II.

“As soon as the 606 arrive, order them to wait on standby at the front,” Kang Chan instructed.

“There are too many watchful eyes here, sir. I will have them wait inside the cars,” Choi Jong-II politely suggested.

“Choi Jong-II. This is a battle against China. Don’t be timid or worry about what others will think. The special forces will fight as they rightfully should,” Kang Chan stated firmly.

“Understood, sir,” Choi Jong-II replied.

As soon as Kang Chan was done giving orders, an employee of the embassy—someone who seemed to be an agent—approached him.

“Please come with me, sir.” The agent unexpectedly spoke in Korean. The agent gave Seok Kang-Ho, who was following after Kang Chan, a second look, but he

didn't stop him from heading inside. Kang Chan and Seok Kang-Ho followed the employee past the entrance of the first floor and down a hallway to the left.

*Beep.*

The agent pressed a button, and a pair of heavy iron doors opened as a blue light turned on. Inside it was another set of doors.

Suddenly, Kang Chan's heart loudly thumped.

Before Kang Chan and Seok Kang-Ho were just doors. Normal entrances. And they were standing in a space that was about three meters in size.

Nevertheless, Kang Chan's heart was warning him to get out of this place. Thick cement walls, and a three-meter space that seemed pointless?

Kang Chan quickly turned to Seok Kang-Ho and signaled at the doors that they had just entered. Seok Kang-Ho dashed forward to grab the door and put his foot in the doorway so they wouldn't close.

"Call Choi Jong-Il over," Kang Chan firmly ordered.

The embassy employee looked sharply at Kang Chan. Unfortunately for him, Kang Chan had never been the type to avoid such a glare.

"Don't make things unnecessarily complicated and just open the doors," Kang Chan spoke commandingly toward the employee.

*Beep.*

In the end, the employee opened the doors with a stiff expression. As he did, Seok Kang-Ho walked over to Kang Chan. Choi Jong-Il was now standing guard at the first set of doors.

The employee had evident hesitation on his face.

Kang Chan glowered at the agent.

*Choose. Make your decision. Whatever it is, I'm ready for it.*

The corner of the employee's mouth twitched as he guided them further in.

Kang Chan swiftly glanced at Seok Kang-Ho.

'Have the 606 positioned in this location.'

'Got it, Cap.'

Others would have wondered how they communicated. However, Kang Chan's sharp eyes and a wide grin from Seok Kang-Ho, who had deliciously gulped down his nervousness, were enough for them to read each other.

As they walked past the open doors, they were met with another.

Just how careful could these bastards be?

*Beep.*

The third set of doors opened. Kang Chan grinned as soon as he walked inside, having found Lanok leisurely sitting on a sofa with a cup of tea in front of him.

‘Are you all right, sir?’

‘We should get out of here as soon as we can.’

As they exchanged a series of looks with each other, someone suddenly spoke up.

“Are you the God of Blackfield?”

“I believe I am free to escort Ambassador Lanok out of this place now,” Kang Chan replied.

Behind the sofa, over ten Chinese agents were on standby, perfectly prepared to attack at any given moment.

“Is it because you’re a teenager that you’re immature?” the man asked, making Kang Chan face him.

“It would be in your best interest to choose your next words carefully,” Kang Chan warned.

The look in the man’s eyes was as menacing as Kang Chan’s.

“I’ll be taking the ambassador out of here first. If you have anything to say, then do it some other time and somewhere else,” Kang Chan announced.

They could hear people shuffling outside.

“Did you bring soldiers inside the embassy?” the man asked.

“The 606,” Kang Chan replied.

“Are you aware of how unbelievable your actions are? You just tossed your soldiers into Chinese territory, young man,” the man said with a scoff.

“And you think it’s any better to kidnap a French ambassador inside South Korean land?” Kang Chan snarked back.

The man sighed, seemingly trying to relieve some stress. He then turned to Lanok.

“Lanok, I hope everything moving forward proceeds smoothly,” the Chinese man said.

Lanok nodded briefly and stood up from his seat. Afterward, he said, “Suo Ke, what about my agents?”

“Just let me know which hospital to send them to, and I’ll have them rushed over,” Suo Ke replied.

Lanok walked over to Kang Chan and stood next to him. When Kang Chan turned around to leave, the employee who guided him into the room opened the doors.

*Click! Click!*

Soldiers of the 606 waited for them right outside, their rifles aimed in the air and their faces perfectly covered with bandanas and helmets.

“I didn’t know South Korea was this powerful,” the man said in a sarcastic tone.

Kang Chan glanced back at his disrespectful manner of speaking, but Lanok called out to him before he could do or say anything.

“Let’s go, Mr. Kang Chan,” Lanok said.

Kang Chan didn’t know what the world of intelligence was like yet. Letting Lanok take care of the rest, he walked out of the room.

*Click! Click!*

Witnessing the 606 soldiers covering them gave Kang Chan a sense of pride and protection.

Seok Kang-Ho quickly started the engine of his car, and Choi Jong-Il gave commands to the soldiers. Stepping outside of the embassy’s lobby, Lanok took in a deep breath and faced Kang Chan.

“Monsieur Kang,” Lanok started.

“Let’s head to the embassy first, sir. Anne is very worried about you,” Kang Chan said, sounding quite concerned.

“Ah, that would be wise. From this moment forward, I will show you exactly how I wrap up incidents like these,” Lanok said. He smiled from ear to ear, making it seem as if he was wearing a mask that hid his true expression.

Chapter 157.1: That Would Be Wise (2)

It was already one in the afternoon when they left the Chinese embassy. Kang Chan briefly told Lanok everything that had happened that day. Once he was done, Lanok took out his phone and called Vasili.

“Vasili, it’s Lanok.”

Lanok faintly smiled at Kang Chan as he spoke into his phone a few times.

“Yes, please withdraw the troops. I’ll contact you later,” Lanok said, then finally hung up. Not long after, he called another number.

“It’s Lanok. Order every unit that has been deployed to return to base. Please pass on my gratitude to Ludwig as well, and tell him that I’ll contact him by tomorrow. One last thing...” Lanok paused and quickly looked at Kang Chan.

“Contact South Korea’s National Intelligence Service and send an official application for the STB. Report to me once it has been approved.”

Lanok hung up. He then turned his head and briefly looked at Choi Jong-Il’s car and the van that the members of the 606 were in. “The STB refers to the system that allows my country’s DGSE to share all information and guarantees the mutual security of the Intelligence Service’s agents.”

Kang Chan simply nodded.

“Hahaha!” Lanok burst out with laughter, his expression seemingly saying he found Kang Chan’s reaction funny.

The sly snake had been laughing too often these days.

“That means South Korea will get joint rights to use the satellites that my country’s DGSE manages,” Lanok explained. “China has been applying nonstop for the STB to the DGSE for the past five years, and Japan has been doing the same thing for the past ten years.” “Thank you, Mr. Ambassador.”

Kang Chan thought getting access to the STB was great and all, but it couldn’t seem to sink in right now.

“Did you really come to every decision you made this morning by yourself?” Lanok asked.

“Yes. I didn’t exactly have anyone I could have asked for help.”

Lanok smiled as he pursed his lips. “Was it also you who deployed South Korea’s special forces at the Chinese embassy?”

“I only managed to do that because I got the National Intelligence Service’s approval.”

“I see.” Lanok nodded.

Not long after, Seok Kang-Ho parked at the French embassy’s parking lot.

*Swoosh!*

Agents swiftly exited the building and surrounded the car.

“Mr. Kang Chan, do you have time to have tea with me?” Lanok asked.

That was a given.

As Kang Chan got out of the car, he noticed that Choi Jong-II and the two vans that the members of the 606 used were parked in the parking lot as well.

“Wait here, Choi Jong-II. You should deploy the members of the 606 somewhere inconspicuous,” Kang Chan ordered.

“Understood.”

Lanok silently waited for Kang Chan as he was giving orders. Afterward, they went up to the embassy.

The embassy was full of agents. Some stood in front of them, and two others walked behind them. They walked down the hallway on the second floor and opened the door to the office.

“Papa!” Even though she was limping, Anne quickly ran over and went into Lanok’s arms. Lanok stroked her head, then kissed it.

“Anne, you’ll be able to rest easy under any circumstances now, won’t you?”  
Lanok asked.

Anne nodded toward Lanok, then looked at Kang Chan. “Channy!”

Kang Chan stroked Anne’s back when she went into his arms.

“Raphael, I would like to enjoy some tea and cigars with Monsieur Kang,” Lanok requested.

“As you wish, Mr. Ambassador.”

“Right! Raphael.”

“Yes, Mr. Ambassador?” Raphael quickly looked at Lanok just before he could completely turn around.

“You’ve been through a lot today. You did well.”

“All of this was possible thanks to Monsieur Kang.”

Lanok nodded, and Raphael quickly left the room.

Lanok sat down at the table and took out a cigar from a case. At the same time, Kang Chan bit on a cigarette.

*Chk chk.*

It only felt real now for Kang Chan that he had rescued Lanok.

“Mr. Kang Chan, I would like to request that South Korea lighten the weight of the requests that they were going to ask Russia to fulfill as a courtesy for Vasili’s contribution to solving this incident. In return, I will make sure France compensates South Korea for anything that they’ll be lacking as a result,” Lanok said.

“Your safe return is already more than enough for me. I still haven’t done anything for you for connecting South Korea to the Eurasian Rail anyway,” Kang Chan said. As he was talking, Raphael brought over a teapot and poured them a cup of tea each.

Anne and Seok Kang-Ho sat in different seats at the back, drinking tea in what seemed like an awkward atmosphere.

“Nevertheless, you should still accept your well-earned compensation, Mr. Kang Chan. To that end, I hope that you can join me in a meeting with Suo Ke as soon as an appointment is made,” Lanok said.

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Kang Chan's conversation with Lanok lasted for about an hour. Once it was over, he returned the weapons and entrusted Xavier to Lanok before leaving the embassy.

It was around 2:30 pm.

Only half of the day had passed, but Kang Chan had such a long morning that he felt as if a week had gone by.

As per the embassy's request, the members of the 606 stood guard all over the building. Hence, only Kang Chan, Seok Kang-Ho, and Choi Jong-Il's party left the embassy.

"Let's eat," Seok Kang-Ho suggested.

"Sure. Everyone is probably already hungry. We should call Mr. Kim as well, shouldn't we?" Kang Chan held up his phone and dialed Kim Hyung-Jung's number.

- Mr. Kang Chan! It's Kim Hyung-Jung.

His greeting got increasingly faster, making it seem as if he was stating his official rank and name.

"We have just left the French embassy."

- What do you plan to do now?

"We all skipped lunch, so I was thinking of going somewhere to eat."

Kim Hyung-Jung's exhausted laugh carried over the call.

"You haven't had lunch yet either, have you?"

- Everyone ranked deputy manager and above in the National Intelligence Service couldn't eat with everything that was happening.

Kim Hyung-Jung's laughter this time sounded as if he found the situation funny.

- Where are you going for lunch? I'll head over.

Kang Chan looked at Seok Kang-Ho. "Where do you want to eat?"

"Well, if he's joining, then why don't we eat at the barbecue restaurant right in front of the office in Samseong-dong?"

Kang Chan told Kim Hyung-Jung about Seok Kang-Ho's suggestion.

- Ah! I know that place. I'll head on over right now.

"We're still thirty minutes away from the restaurant, Mr. Manager."

- Ah, Is that so? I'll just wait until you're a little closer, then.

Kang Chan hung up, then lowered the window about halfway.

"I was bored to death all morning. You seemed to be having one intense phone call after another, but I couldn't understand anything you were saying so I



couldn't even play along. Should I just learn French?" Seok Kang-Ho commented.

"We didn't talk about anything special." Kang Chan draped his arm on the window as cold winds brushed past his face and his arm.

Autumn was just right around the corner, and there wasn't that much traffic.

They reached their destination at around three in the afternoon. By the time they got there, Kim Hyung-Jung was already inside—and he was the only customer.

"I told you to wait for us to get here before you leave the office," Kang Chan commented.

Kang Chan and Seok Kang-Ho sat at Kim Hyung-Jung's table, and Choi Jong-Il's party sat at the table next to them. Kang Chan wanted to eat a simple lunch, but Seok Kang-Ho suddenly ordered ten servings of galbi, leaving him with no other choice but to eat meat again.

They also ordered a few bottles of beer. Everyone filled up their glasses with it except for Kim Hyung-Jung.

"You went through a lot today, Mr. Manager. You all did as well," Kang Chan said.

"Wow!" Seok Kang-Ho exclaimed, complimenting the side dishes he was eating.

"France's DGSE has applied for the STB," Kim Hyung-Jung told them.

"Ah, I already know about that. I was in the car with Lanok when he ordered someone to do that."

"Phew."

Kang Chan didn't know why Kim Hyung-Jung suddenly sighed.

"We're actually acting with extreme caution right now," Kim Hyung-Jung said.

"Will it be difficult to clean up today's incidents?" Kang Chan asked.

"The President has been making all the necessary calls to handle that. That being said, it wouldn't be wrong to say that you have just done something impossible. Going toe-to-toe against China and the United States is bound to have heavy consequences."

Seok Kang-Ho, who had been pouring him more beer, suddenly glanced at Kim Hyung-Jung.

"That's all you're drinking today. Keep in mind that you're driving," Kang Chan reminded Seok Kang-Ho.

"Alright."

To Kang Chan, Seok Kang-Ho drinking and driving seemed like a bigger problem than China and the United States.

“Mr. Kang Chan, did Ambassador Lanok say anything else?” Kim Hyung-Jung asked.

“Well, he said that we should be compensated for our help and that he hopes we will make a few compromises with what we’re going to be requesting from Russia. They helped out in this incident as well, after all. In return, he said France will be making it up to us for whatever we’ll be lacking as a result.”

“Haa!” Kim Hyung-Jung sighed once more. As he did, the meat they ordered was served.

Eating whenever they could was for the best.

Seok Kang-Ho ate in silence. While Choi Jong-Il’s party ate a lot, Kang Chan and Kim Hyung-Jung only ate moderately.

“Argh! I feel good,” Seok Kang-Ho commented.

If Kang Chan ate as voraciously as Seok Kang-Ho did, he would’ve died.

After their meal, Kim Hyung-Jung asked, “Would you like to have some coffee as well?”

Kang Chan had actually been hoping someone would suggest that. Hence, after resting for a bit, they went to the specialty coffee shop in front of Kim Hyung-Jung’s office. They split into two groups and sat at two tables. Kang Chan, Seok Kang-Ho, and Kim Hyung-Jung sat together.

“Mr. Kang Chan, the President basically gambled with this incident,” Kim Hyung-Jung explained as coffee was served. “He may not have gambled when we deployed our special forces team in France. However, if even just one error was made, our troops being inside the Chinese embassy would have been seen as no different as being caught committing major wrongdoings in Chinese territory.”

“What should we do?”

“It depends on the situation and the factors at play, but in general, the most important thing to do in situations like this is to establish quick and seamless communications. To that end, if by any chance you are faced with a decision to make again, please contact me. It doesn’t matter what time it is.”

“I’ll be sure to keep that in mind.”

“Phew. It wouldn’t be wrong to assume that we’ll have difficulties asking for Russia’s oil development rights, then?” Kim Hyung-Jung asked.

“I’m not sure, but Ambassador Lanok did say that we will have to compromise to some degree, so wouldn’t that naturally be the case?”

Kim Hyung-Jung drank his cup of coffee with a disappointed look on his face, then proceeded to tell Kang Chan about a few other matters until his phone rang. Not long after, he left the specialty coffee shop.

Chapter 157.2: That Would Be Wise (2)

Kang Chan really felt as if he could be comfortable.

“Phew! I’m tired!” Seok Kang-Ho exclaimed.

Kang Chan had felt this way over and over again, but it was a hundred times better to have a gunfight than to fight exhausting battles like the one this morning.

“Should we visit a sauna?” Seok Kang-Ho asked.

“Sure.”

Going to the sauna that they had gone to last time should provide them with plenty of rest.

“Huh? I only noticed it now, but your eyes have calmed down,” Seok Kang-Ho commented.

“Really?”

“Ha! That’s fascinating. If your heart is pounding, then something happened to your parents or me, and if your eyes are glinting, then something happened to Ambassador Lanok!”

“Stop talking nonsense and let’s just go to the sauna already,” Kang Chan said.

“Okay.”

Kang Chan stood up from his seat and headed to the sauna with Choi Jong-Il’s party.

“One person has to stay in the car,” Choi Jong-Il said.

No matter how hard Kang Chan insisted that they should all go, Choi Jong-Il didn’t budge an inch.

In the end, Lee Doo-Hee—the most junior of them all—stayed behind as the others headed to the sauna.

They soaked in hot water, enjoyed the wet sauna and the massage from a machine, then went into a hot cave and lay down.

Kang Chan suddenly felt as if he wanted to come here with Kang Dae-Kyung and Yoo Hye-Sook. Not long after, he began to feel himself sweating away the fatigue.

However, just as he was about to fall asleep, Seok Kang-Ho asked, “You’re not going to eat dinner?”

Kang Chan ended up feeling fully awake because of Seok Kang-Ho’s question.

“If you’re not going to eat now, then I’ll just go get some eggs with the guys,” Seok Kang-Ho continued.

Choi Jong-Il definitely would not want to do that either.

However, contrary to Kang Chan’s expectations, Choi Jong-Il and Woo Hee-Seung followed Seok Kang-Ho with a grin on their faces.

*Scary fuckers.*

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“I’m back,” Kang Chan said.

“You’re home early. Have you had dinner?” Yoo Hye-Sook asked.

“I’ve already eaten a lot today. What about you, mother?”

“Your dad and I ate together when we got home.”

Kang Chan greeted Yoo Hye-Sook and Kang Dae-Kyung, changed into comfortable clothes, then went back out to the living room.

“Come quickly—the drama is starting,” Kang Dae-Kyung told Kang Chan.

“Ah! The drama is airing today, huh?”

“Yes. It’s getting more and more interesting. Even all my staff over at Kang Yoo Motors find it interesting.”

“My friends like it as well,” Yoo Hye-Sook commented.

The three sat down and watched TV together.

Kang Chan felt as if he was learning about happiness.

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The next day, Kang Chan called Michelle in the morning and met her two hours before noon to check out the building she had been talking about. It had a nice exterior, but since it was newly built, its interior was basically empty aside.

Kang Chan thought it wasn’t bad overall, especially when considering it was on the side of a large street.

“How many floors does this building have?” Kang Chan asked.

“Seventeen in total.”

It was way bigger than he was expecting. However, considering Michelle was the one who selected it, they would likely have a hard time finding a building even better than this.

“If you decide to buy this building and pay for it within the week, they said that they will change the structure of the elevator and the basement for you. It won’t even go against the regulations since they gave the basement parking lot some extra space, which is quite fortunate for us,” Michelle explained.

“That’s good. How much are they asking for this?”

“About that, since real estate prices have increased a lot lately, it will most likely be at least ninety-two billion won.”

“Will that be enough to guarantee I’ll get ownership of the building once all construction is finished?” Kang Chan asked again.

“Yes, Channy.”

Kang Chan took his time examining the building.

“Michelle, I don’t know much about things like this, so I’ll let you decide on what to do. However, I want you to determine if this building can meet all the conditions I have,” Kang Chan said.

“Whoo, there are a few buildings that could meet all your conditions if we expand our scope beyond Gangnam. Otherwise, this is the best building that’s available right now.”

She seemed to be in a predicament, but Michelle clearly already had a clear answer in her mind.

“I see. Let’s finalize this decision, then. I’m going to call Cecile, so withdraw the payment for this building and pay for it. When can I start using this building?” Kang Chan asked.

“I heard it’s going to take a little more than a month. Channy, have you really decided to buy this building? That’s really quick.”

“I doubt I’m going to find a better building even if I look into it.”

Michelle seemed dumbfounded, perhaps because Kang Chan reached a decision so easily. Nevertheless, she called someone about the building, then headed to Bangbae-dong with Kang Chan.

They went to the small French restaurant that they dropped by last time and ordered some food and wine. When the wine was served, they poured themselves a glass.

“Right, Michelle—the school that I went to will be holding a festival soon. Even events like that have competitions now. Anyway, Is there something that we can do for the festival?” Kang Chan asked.

“A festival? In high school?”

Kang Chan nodded.

“I would have likely already given you an answer if we were talking about university festivals, but I’m not as familiar with high school festivals, so I’m going to need more details about this, Channy.”

“I heard that there’s a competition among schools about who can hold the best festival. The school next to ours is going crazy since they have a celebrity coming over. The father of one of their students is a President of an entertainment agency.”

Michelle cocked her head. “Channy, can I meet with the student that’s in charge of the festival?”

“Do you have time for that?”

Michelle smiled softly. “This is for the school that the President is attending, right? You’re the President of the drama production company we work for, so we should do a great job on anything you’ve tasked us to do.”

“Kids are participating in the festival, so don’t overdo it.”

Michelle burst out laughing as she raised her wine glass. “At times like this, you really seem older than me. How is that even possible?”

*Clank.*

After having a toast, Michelle had a sip of the wine. She then looked at Kang Chan with a sly look in her eyes.

“Why are you looking at me like that?” Kang Chan asked.

“Is the student that’s preparing the festival the pretty student that I saw at the hospital, by any chance?”

Kang Chan cocked his head. “Heo Eun-Sil? Yeah, that’s right. She’s the girl that the employee from D.I. picked clothes for last time. But you’ve got the wrong idea—the girl that I like is Kim Mi-Young. You’ll get to meet her soon.”

“Hmm!” Michelle sighed deeply. French women often expressed their intentions with such sighs.

“You hesitated to tell me who you liked in the past, but now you look confident,” Michelle added. The appetizer was served not long after.

“Channy,” Michelle called out to him calmly as she picked up a shrimp with her fork. “You two haven’t slept together yet, have you?”

French people were quite profound. How could they eat shrimp while asking that kind of question?

“You know how it works in France, right? It’s fine with people over there if their significant other has a lover even if they’re married. Some married couples even give their better half allowances that they can use to go out with their lovers,” Michelle continued.

“I can’t do that.”

Michelle smiled as if she found Kang Chan funny.

Not long after, the main dish was served. Kang Chan changed to a new fork and knife.

As they ate, they talked about multiple topics, including drama production, reactions to the drama, requests for Eun So-Yeon and the other actors to make an appearance, photo shoots, and requests for the actors to appear in commercials.

“About the school festival... Introduce me to that female student,” Michelle said, changing the topic again.

“I don’t know her number, so I’ll give her your number.”

“Okay, Channy. Should we go somewhere else?” Michelle nodded toward the small bar at the back. It had picturesque umbrellas in the yard.

Kang Chan went to the bar with Michelle. He ordered coffee, then smoked a cigarette.

“I’ll leave the whole matter about the building to you. If possible, it would be best to allocate a space for D.I. over there as well, after we decide the space that it needs in the building” Kang Chan said.

“I see no reason to keep paying rent if we can move to a building that you own. We still have a month anyway. I’ll make sure D.I. is ready to move out and transfer to your building by then. There’s a lot of demand for the building that D.I. is in right now, so it should be easy to terminate the lease.”

Kang Chan just stayed silent, not knowing what else to say to that. He sat back against the chair and looked up at the sky, which seemed completely different from the one he saw in Switzerland even though they were part of the same sky.

“What on earth have gotten you so deep in thought?” Michelle asked.

Kang Chan smirked while looking at the sky. “I just thought that I want to get stronger.”

“How much stronger?”

Michelle’s question made Kang Chan sigh, but it did need to be answered.

“I want to be strong enough to protect those that I find precious and achieve everything that I want,” Kang Chan replied.

“What do you want?”

*Do I have to reach an answer to that as well?*

Kang Chan stared at Michelle. It felt as if the sky was the one asking him that question.

Chapter 158.1: I’m Going to Get Stronger (1)

After his morning workout with Choi Jong-Il, Kang Chan had breakfast as usual, then walked out to see Kang Dae-Kyung and Yoo Hye-Sook off.

“Feeling better?” Kang Dae-Kyung asked Kang Chan.

“I think so.”

Kang Dae-Kyung took a good look at Kang Chan’s eyes, then laughed softly. “That’s a relief. I’ll be back.”

“See you later, Channy!” Yoo Hye-Sook exclaimed.

“Drive safe!”

After seeing his parents off, Kang Chan sat on the sofa and watched the news for a moment. He couldn't help but laugh because he suddenly felt as if he was doing something useless—half of the things that he had gone through lately did not even get reported on the news and even those that did had been heavily altered.

Kang Chan turned off the TV, then stared past the living room window.

This was his break. He should spend days like this at home, especially since he hadn't done this in a while...

*Buzz— Buzz—Buzz—. Buzz— Buzz—Buzz—. Buzz— Buzz—Buzz—.*

*Damn it! Go figure!*

His phone rang as if the sky was teaching him to live diligently. Kang Chan stood up and went into his room. When he looked at his phone, Lanok's name was on the screen.

“Mr. Ambassador, it's Kang Chan.”

- Mr. Kang Chan, did I disturb your break?

*Is this gentleman watching me or something?*

Kang Chan knew that Lanok couldn't see him, but he instinctively looked around his room anyway.

- I'm planning to meet Suo Ke tomorrow at two in the afternoon at the Namsan Hotel. Does that work for you?

“It does. Should I head straight to the hotel?”

- Yes.

Kang Chan hung up.

He was bound to meet Suo Ke anyway. After all, he was the main perpetrator behind the terror attack in Paju, the raid at the golf course and the presentation hall, and the military intelligence exchange with Huh Ha-Soo.

After talking to Lanok, Kang Chan called Cecile and told her that he would be acquiring a building soon.

- The branch manager will be the one handling this since that requires a large amount of money. You can use the funds whenever you want, though, so I'll talk to Michelle and visit you with the withdrawal slip on the day you need it. You're incredible, Channy. You're now the owner of a building worth more than a hundred billion won.

“It just happened somehow. Anyway, please do your best to avoid messing up my schedule.”

- Don't worry. There is no way your schedule would get messed up. You're the best VIP in our branch, after all.

After the call, Kang Chan looked for Seok Kang-Ho's number.

*Buzz— Buzz—Buzz—. Buzz— Buzz—Buzz—. Buzz— Buzz—Buzz—.*



However, his phone rang right before Kang Chan could press the call button. Seok Kang-Ho seemed fucking bored as well.

“Hello?”

- What are you doing?

“Stop talking nonsense and let’s get some coffee.”

- Phuhuhu, come out quickly.

As usual, Kang Chan put on a suit with a shirt, then left his house. He met Seok Kang-Ho in front of the apartment and headed to Misari together.

They arrived a little after ten in the morning.

The employee had just finished setting up the tables when he greeted the two, seemingly happy to see them. A moment later, he brought over the coffee that they ordered.

“Autumn is here,” Seok Kang-Ho commented. He sounded as if he was lamenting it because he found it disappointing that he couldn’t eat it.

“I decided which building to buy yesterday. We can move in a month after we pay the initial and intermediate payments,” Kang Chan said.

“Oh! That’s great!”

“I also decided that a floor of the basement parking lot will be just for us, like manager Kim’s building. I also told the construction company to make sure we can use the elevator right away. I’ll see how it goes first, but if everything goes according to plan, let’s build a gym and a few rooms. We can renovate it as much as we want anyway.”

Seok Kang-Ho looked satisfied. “What’s the square footage of the land?”

“What?”

Seok Kang-Ho sighed loudly. “You’re planning on buying the building without even knowing the square footage of the land and the building? How much is it?”

“Michelle said it’s ninety-two billion won.”

“How many floors is it?”

“Seventeen floors.”

“Phew! That’s an extremely large building.”

Feeling as if Seok Kang-Ho would keep asking questions, Kang Chan quickly changed the topic. “Remember Suo Ke, the guy that you saw at the Chinese embassy? I’m going to meet that fucker tomorrow with Ambassador Lanok.”

“Just the two of you? Is that alright?”

“The agents from the embassy will be accompanying us as well, and we’re meeting at the Namsan Hotel anyway. What could go wrong?”

Seok Kang-Ho pouted like a catfish and cocked his head. “When I saw Suo Ke, he looked like he would have done things differently if you weren’t holding the door. I’ll be on standby with Jong-Il on the first floor of the hotel.”

Seok Kang-Ho would be bored anyway, so Kang Chan just nodded and told him when the meeting would be held. After talking about various matters and killing some time, they had lunch.

They decided to have another cup of coffee after lunch. However, around the same time, Kang Chan received a call.

“Hello?”

- Mr. Kang Chan, it’s Kim Hyung-Jung. Can I see you for a moment?

“I’m at Misari with Seok Kang-Ho. Should we head to your office?”

- I would appreciate that.

“We’re on our way.”

Kang Chan headed to Samseong-dong with Seok Kang-Ho, who was happy because he now had something to do.

They parked the car close to the entrance of the parking lot and went up the building. When they arrived, Kim Hyung-Jung opened the door for them himself. Even though he couldn’t get even a day’s worth of a proper rest, he at least looked to be in much better condition than before.

“Have you had lunch?” Kang Chan asked Kim Hyung-Jung.

“I had jjamppong.”

Disappointed, Seok Kang-Ho sat at the table. Kim Hyung-Jung brought over tea for them.

“Mr. Kang Chan, have you decided to meet Ambassador Lanok, by any chance?” Kim Hyung-Jung asked.

“Yes. He said that I should go with him tomorrow at two o’clock in the afternoon to meet a person named Suo Ke?”

“We call him Huh Geuk in Korean. He’s third in line in China’s Intelligence Bureau.”

Kang Chan lifted the tea cup. While he was ruminating about the name ‘Huh Geuk,’ Kim Hyung-Jung continued, “To our shame, the National Intelligence Service did not notice that Huh Geuk had entered South Korea.”

Kang Chan took a sip of the tea while looking at Kim Hyung-Jung. He knew Kim Hyung-Jung was just about to get to his main point.

“The National intelligence Service thinks China is going to take a dualistic stance with Ambassador Lanok and the South Korean government.”

“A dualistic stance?” Kang Chan asked.

“That’s right. He will surrender to Ambassador Lanok and agree to his demands. However, he will likely also take deadly measures against South Korea's economy.”

What Kim Hyung-Jung was saying was somewhat suffocating and difficult for Kang Chan to understand, so he picked up a cigarette and bit on it. If there was one thing fascinating about cigarettes, it was that those next to someone smoking always ended up smoking as well. Hence, when Kang Chan started smoking, the other two lit up their own cigarettes as well.

“Is Huh Geuk in a position to make that decision?” Kang Chan asked.

“He’s in a position that directly reports to the President of China. He is more than capable of exerting his influence.”

Kang Chan felt bitter.

No wonder Huh Geuk made a fuss when he the 606.

“So things got out of hand because I asked you to send over the 606?” Kang Chan wondered.

“Not exactly. Even if you didn’t, China has been disgraced anyway when Huh Geuk was found secretly staying in South Korea. However, because we’re weak...” Kim Hyung-Jung’s face twitched. “Anyway, we also ignored the United States’ attempts to intervene in this matter. If China and the United States work together and place economic sanctions, then South Korea might find it difficult to endure until the Eurasian Rail has been established.”

*Basically, we’re in this situation because I hit the kid from the rich family that South Korea is supposed to work for due to financial problems. Now that things have come to this, should I just kill Huh Geuk?*

Kang Chan firmly pressed the cigarette against an ashtray to extinguish it. “Mr. Manager, is there anything I can do to help?”

Kim Hyung-Jung looked at Kang Chan, unable to bring himself to say anything.

“Do I have to apologize to Huh Geuk or something?” Kang Chan prodded on.

Kim Hyung-Jung sighed deeply. After a while, he confessed, “The higher-ups has told me to ask you to improve your relationship with Huh Geuk during your meeting with him and Ambassador Lanok.”

Kang Chan didn’t quite understand what was happening.

When the special forces team headed to France, the higher-ups even came to Osan and kicked up a fuss. They also approved Kang Chan’s request to dispatch the 606 to the Chinese embassy. Taking

those into consideration, why were they asking Kang Chan to improve his relationship with Huh Geuk now? Kang Chan was not trying to form a relationship with a woman here. Otherwise, this could have been easier. Why would he need to improve his relationship with a man? Kang Chan didn't have anything to say to Huh Geuk except for, 'I'm sorry about what happened the other day. Lighten up.'

"Will this end if I apologize?" Kang Chan asked.

"They will be negotiating along the lines of the Prime Minister's resignation. Only the Director and the Prime Minister know about what I'm telling you right now. If we tell the President, then he will do everything in his power to stop this from happening."

*What did he just say?*

"The President believes that you're talented enough to make South Korea shine. For that reason, he wants us to protect you, keep you within South Korea's arms, and prevent you from ever crumbling down. He also said that we should help you develop your talents even if we are put under heavy foreign pressure," Kim Hyung-Jung continued.

Kang Chan couldn't help but cock his head to what Kim Hyung-Jung just said.

This would ultimately end if he apologized, so what was this all about? Who was out to break him, and who was trying to take him away from South Korea? He wasn't a flower to be passed onto someone else.

Kim Hyung-Jung looked straight at Kang Chan, who appeared to be perplexed.

"Chairperson Huh Ha-Soo has told us that if you don't apologize, he will either replace the Director of the National Intelligence Service or submit a motion of impeachment against the President to the National Assembly."

"Can he really do that?" Kang Chan asked.

"If China places economic sanctions, and if the United States delivers a sudden rise in interest rates and withdraws the US armed forces in South Korea... then the motion to impeach the President will push through."

Extremely dumbfounded, Kang Chan laughed hard enough for his head move back and forth.

Chapter 158.2: I'm Going to Get Stronger (1)

The Chinese had come into someone else's country and shot people as they wished, launched missiles, and kidnapped the ambassador of France. Now, Huh Ha-Soo was even threatening to file a motion to impeach the President because Kang Chan had put a stop to their attempt to kidnap Lanok.

"What would happen if the Director is replaced?" Kang Chan asked again.

“If the Director of the National Intelligence Service gets replaced, then we will no longer be able to protect you like we've been doing until now. You can get naturalized in France, at the very least. If that doesn't work either, then...”

Kang Chan shook his head.

Everything he was hearing right now was absurd. However, he could not help but believe every last one of them since they came from the manager of the national Intelligence Service himself.

“Mr. Manager, I'm asking this because I genuinely have no idea what's happening, but is my apology really as important as the impeachment of the President or the replacement of the Director of the National Intelligence Service?” Kang Chan asked.

“They are probably trying to use the value that you hold in the world of intelligence to their advantage. They want to show everyone that even though you suppressed Russia and are working with France, South Korea still cannot fight back against China. Your apology will also allow Huh Ha-Soo to recover and save face. Above all else, it will help China treat South Korea's Chairman of the National Assembly as their subordinate.”

“What if I kill Huh Geuk and Huh Ha-Soo?”

“Mr. Kang Chan! You shouldn't do that.” Kim Hyung-Jung looked as if he was sincerely trying to stop him. If Kang Chan was to kill Huh Geuk and Huh Ha-Soo, South Korea would inevitably suffer as they witnessed China actually kicking up a fuss.

“The world of the Intelligence Bureau and the world of politics is certainly different. Those two are like night and day. Moreover, even if Huh Ha-Soo dies, the second and third Huh Ha-Soo is going to appear again. A lot of people still want to take that route, after all.”

Kang Chan pursed his lips, not knowing what to say next.

Goodness! If a high schooler apologized, then this entire situation would end with the Prime Minister resigning. On the other hand, if the high schooler held his ground and refused to apologize, then it would result to either the Director of the National Intelligence Service getting replaced or the President getting impeached.

“Can I discuss this with Ambassador Lanok?” Kang Chan asked.

“China will pretend to obey Lanok since they can take action any time they want. Moreover, the United States will no doubt join hands with China to deal with this matter.”

“Is there anything else you would like to tell me?” Kang Chan replied.

“I am terribly sorry, Mr. Kang Chan.”

Kang Chan only nodded in response.

“The Director wanted to come here in person,” Kim Hyung-Jung said. “But I told him to not do that.”

*Well, it's not like changing the person telling me about this would also change the situation we're in right now.*

“I'll be going now,” Kang Chan said.

Unable to say anything else, Kim Hyung-Jung headed to the door and sent off Kang Chan. He felt bitter.

“Are you going straight home?” Seok Kang-Ho asked Kang Chan.

“We shouldn't stay here. Let's go to the specialty coffee shop at the intersection.”

Kang Chan and Seok Kang-ho got in the car and drove to the coffee shop.

“God! Your apology alone can change the outcome of this situation. Seems like you have already become an extremely important person,” Seok Kang-Ho commented.

Kang Chan didn't expect that Seok Kang-Ho would reach that conclusion just from hearing about the situation. He was so surprised that he could not even come up with a response.

“Those fuckers are funny! They kicked up a fuss in someone else's country and now they're trying to make you apologize by making even more threats and taking economic measures!” Seok Kang-Ho exclaimed. He now looked like a proper human being.

“That son of a bitch Huh Ha-Soo is acting like a fucking traitor!” Seok Kang-Ho continued.

“Let's be real. That fucker isn't just acting like a traitor. He is a traitor.”

“That's right!”

No matter how important or huge the problem Kang Chan was facing, he couldn't help but feel as if it was no big deal whenever he was with Seok Kang-Ho.

“That being said, what do you plan to do?” Seok Kang-Ho asked.

“I'm honestly not sure yet.”

“Why is the United States even kicking up a fuss?”

Smirking, Kang Chan answered, “They're probably angry because of that fucker Xavier. I did beat him up, after all. Moreover, he's now being held hostage in the French embassy.”

“Dickheads! Jeez, those sons of bitches!” Seok Kang-Ho swore as his gaze turned into a glare. “Captain! You should just head to France and kill all the fuckers who planned this!”

Kang Chan glanced at Seok Kang-Ho. “Calm down. We have never fought in this type of battle before, but there has got to be a way to get out of this. Have you forgotten that we have only ever fought in battles that we’re certain we were going to win?”

“That’s true.”

*Jeez, you simple-minded fucker!*

They talked a little more about the situation at hand. Kang Chan was looking out the window when they arrived at their destination.

As Seok Kang-Ho went to the counter to order, Kang Chan sat at the terrace.

*Damn it!*

Kang Chan thought that if he discussed this with Lanok, they were bound to find a way to get out of this mess. However, the problem was that China would be surrendering to Lanok and accept all their demands during the meeting but then immediately turn around and put economic sanctions against South Korea in motion.

Lanok had clearly said that Kang Chan would be receiving an apology and compensation. However, from what Kim Hyung-Jung had told him, that would only happen if South Korea was powerful enough to receive such rewards. If so, then why did Lanok tell him about the STB and pretend to be doing him a favor? Moreover, what did Lanok want South Korea to yield to Russia?

Kang Chan was frowning when Seok Kang-Ho approached him while carrying two cups of lemon tea.

“Why did you order those?” Kang Chan asked.

“We already had coffee anyway. It’s always best to have something sweet when you’re feeling like shit.”

Kang Chan smirked, then had a sip of the lemon tea.

It was fucking sour and sweet.

“Whoo!”

Afterward, Kang Chan took out a cigarette and bit on it.

Should Kang Chan kill Huh Geuk and Huh Ha-Soo? Thinking about actually doing it made him feel relieved. However, if he did proceed with it, the things that Kim Hyung-Jung was worried about would all turn into reality. China would deliver economic sanctions, and Huh Sang-Soo, Huh Ha-Soo’s younger brother, would take action. Moreover, Kang Chan would also be labeled as a murderer.

Kang Chan hated Huh Ha-Soo—who sucked up to others—more than he hated Huh Geuk. Now that he thought about it, thought, those two fuckers had the same last name.

Kang Chan cocked his head.

“What’s wrong?” Seok Kang-Ho asked.

“Huh Geuk and Huh Ha-Soo have the same last name. There was definitely one more bastard who irritated me and also shared their last name.”

“I only know about Heo Eun-Sil.”

Kang Chan looked at Seok Kang-Ho with a frown. He was about to remember who the fucker was, but the name escaped him again when Seok Kang-Ho suddenly brought up Heo Eun-Sil of all people.

“There was definitely another fucker with that last name. Tsk! Who was that bastard again?” Kang Chan asked himself.

“Is it really that important to know who it was?” Seok Kang-Ho asked, making Kang Chan realize that remembering the name now really wasn’t that necessary.

“Whoo!” Kang Chan felt frustrated.

Kim Hyung-Jung couldn’t have felt comfortable asking Kang Chan to do something so despicable. Go Gun-Woo, who had decided to resign to protect Moon Jae-Hyun and Kang Chan, and Hwang Ki-Hyun, who had to order something like this to be done, likely felt the same way as well.

This was funny. The people who were actually trying their best to bring development to the country were forced to swallow their anger because China was oppressing them. Meanwhile, the guy who helped execute a terrorist attack and sold off South Korea’s military secrets remained free and shameless!

*A fucker that represented the national assembly, huh...?*

“Ah!” Kang Chan suddenly raised his head. “I remember now! It was Huh Chang-Sun! He was the airport division chief of the National Intelligence Service!”

Seok Kang-Ho stared at Kang Chan. His expression was clearly asking him, “What about him, though?”

*Does that name really have no value in this conversation?*

“That fucker was a cocky bastard, but I got him in deep trouble. For some reason, I feel like Huh Chang-Sun is on the same side as Huh Ha-Soo or Huh Sang-Soo,” Kang Chan explained.

“Even if that’s the case, what power would the airport division chief even have in this situation?”

“Right?” Kang Chan briefly nodded in response to Seok Kang-Ho’s logical reasoning.

*What should I do?*



While Kang Chan was feeling quite helpless, Michelle called him and asked for Heo Eun-Sil's number. Kang Chan called Cha So-Yeon because it was just about time for the eleventh-graders' classes to end.

- Sunbae-nim?

“Yeah, it's me, So-Yeon. How have you been?”

- I'm doing good. What about you, sunbae-nim? How can I help you?

Women had a tendency to ask multiple questions all at once. Kang Chan could be perceived as weird if he were to answer them in order, but at the same time, answering just one would make him look stupid.

“I'm sorry to ask this, but I would like to give you someone's number. I want you to pass it on to Heo Eun-Sil and tell him to call the number so she can discuss things about the school festival.”

- You're going to be helping with the festival, Sunbae-nim?

“Yes—Mi-Young asked me to help.”

- Wow!

That exclamation came out of nowhere.

After talking for a just a brief period longer with Cha So-Yeon, Kang Chan hung up. He then texted Michelle's number to Cha So-Yeon.

He had just taken care of something that was not relevant to the pressing matter at hand.

Chapter 159.1: I'm Going to Get Stronger (2)

After putting his phone back down, Kang Chan watched cars and people pass by.

It would be cowardly to back down just because one didn't have any immediate influence or strength. Doing that would be no different from giving in to the bullies at school.

Did they think including Lanok in the discussions would be like bringing school teachers to the meeting? It was as if they were scared that Huh Geuk would apologize in front of the adults but start putting up his fists once the teachers weren't around anymore.

Kang Chan was well aware of Hwang Ki-Hyun's responsibilities and Go Gun-Woo's sacrifice. However, Kang Chan also had his own judgment on the matter.

They wanted South Korea to fucking apologize? And they were threatening to impose economic sanctions and change South Korea's president if they didn't get what they wanted?

Suo Ke frantically called Kang Chan when Germany, France, and Russia deployed their respective special forces teams to China. Now, however, he was acting up after cutting deals like the wimp that he was. How could Kang Chan apologize to that kind of bastard?

‘I'm doing this my way.’

He felt the same way when he first went to school and met Lee Ho-Jun. The guy did not even say sorry to the teacher who tried to stop him, so what could apologizing even do in that scenario?

Steeling his resolve, Kang Chan took in a deep breath. Just then—

*Buzz. Buzz. Buzz.*

His phone began to ring.

“It’s Smithen,” he informed Seok Kang-Ho when the latter glanced at him. He then answered the call. “Hello?”

- Captain, why don’t we have dinner today, sweetie?

Kang Chan had no particular dinner appointment today, but things were already hectic enough. He didn’t have time to have dinner with...

- I specially made time for you today, dear.

“Where are you?”

-Why, I’m in front of Hongdae, of course.

Fuck that. Kang Chan was going to teach Smithen how to talk today.

After asking Seok Kang-Ho if he was joining them, Kang Chan discussed with Smithen where they were going to meet.

Meanwhile, Seok Kang-Ho didn’t utter a word about what was happening tomorrow. He acted as if he would support Kang Chan no matter what his decision was. It was one of the things Kang Chan liked about him.

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“I think the pressure has gotten to them, sir,” a man said.

Huh Ha-Soo nodded in agreement as he carefully swept back the few strands of what remained of his hair.

“Everyone has their rightful ranks, as history shows. I have no idea what exactly they were trying to do by going against China and the United States, though.” Huh Ha-Soo clicked his tongue. “Although they seemed to have given up on it now, we can never let our guard down. Quite a few punks were captivated by and swore their loyalty to Moon Jae-Hyun,” Huh Ha-Soo warned disgustedly.

“I’ve taken all the necessary precautions, sir,” the man reassured him.

“I spent my whole life serving this country. I can’t believe I would see South Korea fall in danger all because some young bastard pushed the nation around. Letting that kid run rampant is starting to ruin our country. They even murdered an individual as precious as Yang Jin-Woo in cold blood just because of a tiny flaw! This is absolutely ridiculous,” Huh Ha-Soo exclaimed with derision.

“It must be because they believe the Eurasian Rail is the solution to all these problems,” the man mused.

“Hmph, that has to be it. Those inexperienced idiots will fail to build the Eurasian Rail in Korea. They left out all the wise, seasoned veterans, so what else were they expecting? You’ve seen that child before, haven’t you? What did you think of him?” Huh Ha-Soo asked.

Heo Chang-Seon, the man in the room with Huh Ha-Soo, scowled before he even said anything.

“He definitely had an extraordinary look in his eyes, but he was just a kid. He was apprehensive that I would meet Lanok or the man who came from Russia.”

“He’s the type that tries to take credit for everything, then?” Huh Ha-Soo asked.

“Well, we really cannot expect any better from an immature child, can we?” Heo Chang-Seon replied with confidence.

Huh Ha-Soo nodded in agreement, then commandingly said, “This will be our last chance, then. We have to lay low and take over the National Intelligence Service before they know what hit them.”

“Understood, sir, but...” Heo Chang-Seon hesitantly trailed off. “Who were you thinking of putting in the seat of the director?”

“Haha, would you not feel better knowing that it’s family in that position?”

“That’s right, sir.” While still in his seat, Heo Chang-Seon bowed down with his entire upper body with his hands resting on his knees.

“I cannot help but wonder how that young kid will react when he apologizes but the director of the NIS still gets replaced. Anyway, there may be something we missed or don’t know, so never put your guard down. We also have to hurry and find out how a high school student was able to become so close with someone as significant as Lanok so quickly. For all his impudence, it would do us good to learn some of his tricks.”

Heo Chang-Seon just briefly nodded in response.

“If we can replace the director with one of our people, we’ll be able to check the young man’s records. Lanok will also have no choice but to cooperate with us for the Eurasian Rail. We should prepare something to give him as a gift when that time comes,” Huh Ha-Soo said as he stroked his nonexistent hair back out of habit. “Where did that kid even come from? Moon Jae-Hyun didn’t seem to have raised him either. Just who is he really?!”

Huh Ha-Soo shook his head from side to side, annoyance clearly evident in his expression.

“I will be taking my leave for now, sir,” Heo Chang-Seon politely stated.

“Tomorrow’s the day the announcement will be made. Stay on your toes and don’t miss the moment the contingency actions are released. Make sure to thoroughly prepare your men as well,” Huh Ha-Soo commanded.

“You don’t have to worry about a thing, sir,” Heo Chang-Seon said, having gotten up from his seat. He bowed and left the room.

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Kang Chan took time out of his chaotic schedule to have dinner with Smithen because it had been a while since they last ate together. He remembered Seok Kang-Ho saying that Smithen probably felt lonely too, so Kang Chan went all the way to Hongdae when he learned Smithen was finally free.

However, not long after they arrived, Kang Chan found himself taking deep breaths in an attempt to suppress his anger. He understood that the people who came to this place to learn Korean had different cultures and traditions. However, he couldn’t understand why Smithen brought four people with him—all of them women—to their dinner plans.

“Argh! That idiot!” Seok Kang-Ho grumbled.

“Let’s just hurry up and eat, then leave,” Kang Chan said in an effort to calm himself down. They walked into the restaurant that Smithen recommended—a fusion place that served Korean food Italian-style.

“Let me introduce you, sweetie! This is…”

Smithen proceeded to introduce all four of them to Kang Chan, Kang Chan wasn’t really interested. He had no reason to remember them either, so he just lazily nodded. He would save Smithen some face, but that was it.

It occurred to Kang Chan that Smithen probably wouldn’t have much joy in his life if he couldn’t enjoy these occasions. The poor guy had lost his eye and strength, so he deserved to be cut some slack. Since Kang Chan and Seok Kang-Ho were already here and Smithen had brought these girls along, Kang Chan thought they might as well let Smithen have some fun being the big man.

It was partly Kang Chan’s fault for expecting too much from someone who didn’t think too deeply anyway, so he decided to just eat and leave right after.

“What should we order?” Smithen asked.

“Order whatever you want. Dinner’s on me,” Kang Chan replied in resignation.

Smithen and the four women clapped with delight.

‘Whatever. You just keep enjoying the rest of your life.’

They ordered some wine and a couple of dishes on the menu. As everyone was poured a glass, their food were served.

With Smithen at the center of the conversation, the four women chattered in somewhat awkward Korean. The atmosphere was uncomfortable, but the food itself wasn’t that bad. The dinner ended with Kang Chan still perplexed about why Smithen had asked him to come here.

“Daye and I have something to do, Smithen, so we’ll get going first. You all take your time finishing your food. I’ll pay on the way out,” Kang Chan said.

“You were busy? Then you should have said so, goodness!” Smithen exclaimed.

Kang Chan pushed down his anger and forced a smile out instead.

*Remember, this punk has never been the bright type.*

It didn’t matter. Kang Chan wanted to see Smithen anyway. After all, nobody knew what could happen once he attacked Suo Ke.

“Captain, there’s actually someone I wanted to introduce to you today. That person will be coming by soon. Do you really not have time?” Smithen asked.

“Smithen, this is it for today,” Kang Chan warned.

“I see. I understand, sweetie,” Smithen replied.

The women carefully observed Kang Chan and Smithen’s expressions. After saying their goodbyes, Kang Chan and Seok Kang-Ho left the restaurant.

“That bastard is the same as ever. Jeez,” Seok Kang-Ho complained.

“Well, he’s always been that way,” Kang Chan reasoned.

They normally would have had coffee together before parting ways, but they were worn out even though all they did was have dinner.

“I’ll be parked in front of the complex tomorrow before one. Let’s go together. I’ll be sitting in the apartment lobby with Jong-II,” Seok Kang-Ho said.

“Got it,” Kang Chan responded, his fatigue evident in his voice.

Traffic was heavy because everyone was leaving work, so it took about an hour to reach Kang Chan’s home.

“You should rest. Don’t think too hard about it,” Seok Kang-Ho said out of worry.

Kang Chan stepped out of the car and thumped the car roof in response.

There was nothing to think hard about. He had already made up his mind, after all. The question was how he would sort out the consequences, but that was something that he should worry about once he had executed his plan. Why worry beforehand?

Upon entering his apartment, Kang Chan washed up and spent some time in the living room. He went to bed early. Fortunately, he did not receive any other calls for the rest of the day. However, Yoo Hye-Sook’s phone was ringing nonstop.

## Chapter 159.2: I’m Going to Get Stronger (2)

After his morning workout and having breakfast, Kang Chan saw his parents off. Left alone in the living room, he felt as if time was flying by extremely fast.

“Today’s going to be good!” he exclaimed.

Kang Chan was bursting with so much energy that he wondered why he had been so lethargic yesterday. He could not help but wonder what to do until the clock struck one, though. He didn’t have anything to do on the internet, and there was nothing fun on the TV or the news.

*When in doubt, call Seok Kang-Ho.*

They had just enough time to have tea and lunch and then leave for Namsan Hotel together.

Kang Chan headed toward his room to get his phone, when it suddenly began to ring.

*Buzz. Buzz. Buzz.*

He chuckled at the sound.

*He must have been bored too.*

However, when he looked at the screen, he found Lanok's name instead.

"Hello?" Kang Chan answered.

-Mr. Kang Chan, do you have time for a chat?

"Of course. What is it?"

-My work ended early today, and there's someone I want to introduce to you. Would you like to have lunch with me?

"Sounds good. Where should I go?"

-The embassy is fine. I want to eat my food safely.

*Did this guy really just crack a joke?*

-Do you think you can head over right now?

"Sure. I'm on my way."

Kang Chan hung up and got changed. As he left his apartment, he called Seok Kang-Ho and told him to head straight to the hotel. Not long after, a taxi rolled to a stop in front of him.

He still didn't get any call from Kim Hyung-Jung. Kang Chan didn't know what Kim Hyung-Jung was thinking, but he was probably feeling pretty conflicted right now. If so, then the moment Kim Hyung-Jung heard of the outcome, he would likely pass out from shock.

The roads were usually empty around the time he left, so it didn't take long for him to get to the embassy. Raphael bowed to him gracefully, and Lanok approached Kang Chan in greeting.

"Mr. Kang Chan," Lanok began.

An Asian man that Kang Chan had never seen before stood up to look at him.

"Let me introduce you both. Mr. Kang Chan, this is Mr. Yang Fan. Mr. Yang Fan, this is the Kang Chan that I've been dying for you to meet," Lanok said.

"Yang Fan. Nice to meet you," Yang Fan greeted.

"Kang Chan. Likewise," Kang Chan said back.

The man's French was conversational—not the best, but not too bad. He looked to be in his mid to late thirties, and his unreadable eyes and sharp cheeks stood out to Kang Chan.

On Lanok's offer, Kang Chan took a seat at the table.

"Mr. Kang Chan, Yang Fan is associated with the Chinese intelligence agency," Lanok explained as he poured some tea. "Now, shall we take care of business before we get started with lunch?"

Lanok pulled out a cigar from a case and offered the two men cigarettes. Yang Fan motioned for Kang Chan to take one first and began to speak as he extended his hand to take his own.

"Mr. Kang Chan, I'm sure you're aware that Suo Ke threatened the South Korean government."

Kang Chan abruptly stopped halfway into lighting up his cigarette and looked sharply at Yang Fan.

"Thanks to Ambassador Lanok's understanding, fortunately, we were able to stop Suo Ke from making another mistake. This is a personal curiosity of mine, but what did you intend to do the moment you meet Suo Ke today, Mr. Kang Chan?" Yang Fan asked.

It seemed Lanok and Yang Fan were both aware of what Huh Geuk requested. If so, Kang Chan didn't have to hide anything.

"I was going to kill him."

Lanok showed a mask-like smile the moment he heard Kang Chan's response. Meanwhile, Yang Fan subtly shook his head.

"Well, then. We will take care of Suo Ke as you wish, Ambassador Lanok."

Were they trying to make a fool of him? What were they talking about?

Lanok quickly started to explain the situation after seeing the look in Kang Chan's eyes.

"Mr. Kang Chan, Yang Fan and I discussed how Suo Ke proceeded with the operation and pressured the South Korean government with no prior approval, ignoring the purpose of why intelligence agencies exist. From now on, Yang Fan will be the one dealing with reparations and compensations, and Suo Ke will be subjected to what you originally wished to do to him."

Kang Chan felt as if he had been hit in the face with a truck. Although he did not spend much time worrying yesterday, he had still struggled to come to a conclusion. Now, however, it seemed it was all for naught. He had just been sowing in the sand. There was certainly a reason why snakes were scary.

A part of him also thought that even the South Korean intelligence agency probably still had not completely grasped this snake's full capabilities.

"The Chinese intelligence agency has decided to accept Ambassador Lanok's mediation in this matter, Mr. Kang Chan. If something displeases you, please contact the ambassador, or you can simply contact me directly. You can speak to me in Korean when it's just us," Yang Fan said.

“You know how to speak Korean?” Kang Chan asked in surprise.

“I also know my name is Yang Bum when pronounced in Korean.”

Lanok tried his hand at pronouncing the name but soon shook his head, giving up.

“Well, why don’t we have lunch now?” he suggested next.

Kang Chan and Yang Bum had no reason to refuse, so they stood up and headed to the cafeteria.

As they ate, they just spoke about mundane topics. Just like when Kang Chan met with Ludwig and Vant in Loriam, they talked about normal things like recent movies and family.

Yang Fan treated them both casually, but he seemed to be a bit uncomfortable around Lanok. He didn’t try to hide it, though.

There was a mysterious element to this world of politics. People solved issues by having tea from across each other, eating meals together, or through calls. Just like the dark underground world inhabited by the mafia and gangsters, these people controlled everything from behind the curtains. It was extremely rare for them to become known or appear in news articles.

The lunch lasted for about two hours. Afterward, they each had a glass of wine. Yang Bum seemed greatly satisfied with his lunch with Lanok.

The employees hurried to put the dishes aside and prepare coffee and ashtrays for the three.

“Mr. Kang Chan, there’s no need for you to go to the hotel yourself. However, if you would like to see Suo Ke’s end yourself, I can take you there,” Yang Bum nonchalantly suggested. He made it sound like he was simply asking if Kang Chan wanted sugar in his coffee.

“It wouldn’t be respectful for me to go out of my way to confirm what the ambassador mediated for me. However, since Suo Ke cowardly tried to threaten South Korea, I’d like another employee to go and be a witness in my stead,” Kang Chan replied.

Yang Bum seemed to have expected a different answer.

“In our country, we have a saying that you should also swallow the bowl if you’re going to eat poison. We also say ‘shan gao, huang di yuan,’ which means if you start something, you should see it to the end! There’s also one that goes along the lines of, ‘The law is far, but your fists are closed.’ Anyway, the Chinese intelligence agency wants to establish a good relationship with you through Ambassador Lanok’s mediation. Please send an employee to the Chinese embassy. You can ask for Yang Fan.”

However, Yang Fan quickly concealed his expression and accepted Kang Chan’s wishes.

It was clear that there was something that Kang Chan didn’t know about, but he couldn’t ask about it now.



He could probably just discuss it with Lanok in private.

“Should I send an employee right now?” Kang Chan asked.

“Of course. The matter has already been decided,” Yang Fan replied good-naturedly.

Kang Chan thanked him and immediately pulled out his phone to make a call.

- Mr. Kang Chan. This is Kim Hyung-Jung.

His voice was quite down in the dumps.

“Manager Kim, please go to the Chinese embassy right now and ask for a Yang Fan. I’ll explain the rest to you at a later time,” Kang Chan politely requested.

After a brief moment of silence, Kim Hyung-Jung replied, “Got it. I’ll head over there now.”

“Was that an employee of the NIS?” Yang Fan asked.

“Yes. He’s someone I have complete trust in,” Kang Chan replied confidently.

Yang Fan nodded, then offered a cigarette to Kang Chan.

*Why is this guy going so far?*

It was a nonsensical comparison, but this was like the son of a rich family coming to promise that he would kill his own brother. He was even trying to appease Kang Chan.

Kang Chan accepted. They lit their cigarettes at the same time.

“Now then, Mr. Ambassador, Mr. Kang Chan. I have to get going to greet the visitor. We will make sure everything goes according to plan, so I hope France, China, and South Korea’s relations can flow smoothly,” Yang Fan said as he stood up, putting his barely smoked cigarette into the ashtray.

They all walked out of the cafeteria together. When Yang Fan left, Kang Chan and Lanok headed up to his office.

Once they were seated, Lanok smiled in response to Kang Chan’s gaze.

“You were thinking of killing Suo Ke alone? You’re really quite something, Mr. Kang Chan,” Lanok said, seemingly amused, as he leaned back in his seat with his legs crossed. “I did expect this from you, however. And I was hoping you would finally become a French citizen with this issue.”

“How did you know Suo Ke secretly pressured the South Korean government?” Kang Chan asked, getting straight to the question he had been most curious about.

“There are a few rules to intelligence agencies. For example, Vasili and I may plan to assassinate each other, but we won’t do kidnappings. And once you’ve

agreed to an apology and compensation, you shouldn't pull any other tricks until after the payments have been made."

Lanok paused to make a displeased frown.

"That is partly the reason Vasili and Ludwig were so proactive in stopping Suo Ke. Those kinds of men do not change easily. That was why I only asked one condition from the Chinese government," Lanok added.

"Suo Ke."

Lanok nodded.

"But even so, aren't you going too easy on China?" Kang Chan asked.

"It's not every day that you get the opportunity to eliminate a political enemy. And China is now aware of your abilities."

Kang Chan cocked his head, his gaze remaining on Lanok. He didn't barge into China with the special forces, and it wasn't like China would get scared even if he did. So what did that matter?

"Mr. Kang Chan, for the time being, I will act as your official guardian. I can't speak further because I haven't obtained confirmed intelligence, but everything will be revealed soon. May I proceed as your guardian?" Lanok asked with a look that Kang Chan had never seen before. The ambassador's eyes were filled with trust.

"I don't mind," Kang Chan accepted.

The corners of Lanok's lips curved to a broad grin.

Chapter 160.1: You Dare Try to Avoid It? (1)

Kim Hyung-Jung exhaled softly right before he entered the Chinese embassy, having firmly made up his mind.

Even if their country was weak, it didn't mean that their people were weak as well. Although they recommended that Kang Chan should apologize, as an agent of South Korea's National Intelligence Service, Kim Hyung-Jung didn't want to be overpowered in spirit. That was especially the case now since there were people who had decided to protect a talented young man to the point where they were willing to put their positions on the line. Some of those people were the President, the National Intelligence Service Director, and Go Gun-Woo, who even decided to resign as the Prime Minister for Kang Chan's sake.

When Kim Hyung-Jung walked into the embassy, a man in a full suit approached Kim Hyung-Jung.

"What brings you here?" the employee spoke fluent Korean, but he had a Chinese accent.

"I'm here to see Mr. Yang Fan."

The man stared at Kim Hyung-Jung for a moment, then turned around. "Please follow me."

The man guided him to the left side of the building and stopped in front of a door. He raised his hand and carefully knocked.

*Rattle.*

With a sharp look in his eyes, an agent opened the door and examined Kim Hyung-Jung and the man who guided him.

“He came here to see President Yang,” Kim Hyung-Jung’s guide said.

“Please come in,” the agent said after briefly nodding to the guide. He then stepped aside to let Kim Hyung-Jung in.

Kim Hyung-Jung had no plans to back down now. He didn’t know why Kang Chan told him to go to the Chinese embassy. Perhaps it was so he could apologize in Kang Chan’s stead. If he could do that, then he wouldn’t mind bowing over and over again.

However, he would be bowing for his country. He would be following the intentions of the President and the others who wished to protect a very important talent. He would not be bowing just because he was stupid or lacking.

Kim Hyung-Jung softly inhaled, then entered the room. As he did, he remembered the horrible torture that he went through in Mongolia.

Kim Hyung-Jung wanted to smile like Kang Chan.

*Come at me—I’ll fight all of you as much as you guys want.*

As Kim Hyung-Jung went further inside, he stumbled upon another door that was about three meters in height. People who lacked the courage to do this would have already sunk to their knees as they walked through the doors.

With a grim expression, Kim Hyung-Jung stood in front of the door.

*Rattle.*

A man with a pointy face opened the door and greeted Kim Hyung-Jung.

“Did Mr. Kang Chan send you here?” the man asked.

“That’s correct.”

“Please come inside.”

Kim Hyung-Jung didn’t know what was going to happen inside the embassy.

He might have to give them a humiliating apology, or he could be disgraced. However, if he could do it instead of Kang Chan, then he would not mind at all.

Kim Hyung-Jung entered the room and immediately noticed a man with a sharp look in his eyes sitting on the sofa. Behind the man were about ten agents standing by, all looking as serious as could be.

The man on the sofa looked somewhat familiar.

*Click.*

The one who let him in closed the door and held out his hand to him. “I apologize for the late introduction. My name is Yang Bum.”

“I’m Kim Hyung-Jung.”

“Nice to meet you. I’d like to introduce Huh Geuk as well, the one on the sofa.”

Only then did Kim Hyung-Jung remember seeing the guy sitting on the sofa in a document that he had checked yesterday. He didn’t recognize Huh Geuk right away because his hairstyle had changed and he wasn’t wearing glasses. Moreover, Kim Hyung-Jung initially only gave him a quick glance.

“Huh Geuk broke his promise to Mr. Kang Chan and made a cowardly demand to the South Korean government. China’s Intelligence Bureau passes on its deepest apologies to the South Korean government and Mr. Kang Chan about this matter. To hold Huh Geuk accountable, he will be...” Yang Bum trailed off.

The moment Yang Bum sharply turned his head, one of the agents behind Huh Geuk quickly drew a pistol and pointed it at the back of Huh Geuk’s head.

*Ting!*

Huh Geuk flinched. Blood spurted out from his forehead like water gushing out of a faucet.

*Crash!*

Huh Geuk violently smashed headfirst into the sofa table, then fell to the floor.

“I apologize if that startled you. Mr. Kang Chan asked me to let you confirm Huh Geuk’s execution. Now, can we take care of his dead body?” Yang Bum asked Kim Hyung-Jung.

*What’s going on?*

Right in front of Kim Hyung-Jung, who had looked away to get his emotions under control, two agents skillfully put Huh Geuk in a body bag.

“Shall we leave? If you’re okay with it, I’d like to treat you to a cup of tea. Do you smoke?” Yang Bum asked Kim Hyung-Jung again.

“Yes.”

“Great. Mr. Kang Chan was quite hard to handle for some reason—his eyes were so intense.”

“You’ve met with Mr. Kang Chan?” Kim Hyung-Jung asked.

*Rattle.*

Yang Bum opened the door and guided Kim Hyung-Jung out of the room. Seemingly finding Kim Hyung-Jung funny, Yang Bum smiled as he looked at him. “I had lunch with him. Anyway, I’d like to take this time to discuss a few things with you. It would be best to think of it as China’s present. Our country wants to maintain a friendly relationship with South Korea, after all.”

Kim Hyung-Jung and Yang Bum had to go through three doors before they finally got out of the building. As soon as they exited, Kim Hyung-Jung looked up at the sky. It looked completely normal to him, which meant he wasn't just dreaming. He had never felt emotions as deep as the ones he was feeling right now—not even when he was being rescued in Mongolia. This moment made Moon Jae-Hyun's comment about protecting and nurturing talented people pierce through Kim Hyung-Jung's heart.

"I heard that Mr. Kang Chan isn't twenty yet," Yang Bum continued. He stretched out his arm and pointed to the establishment right next to the main building of the embassy. "If he was born in China, he probably would have withered before he even had the chance to bloom. That's why I commend the judgment of the South Korean government and the National Intelligence Service. After all, they recognized and developed Mr. Kang Chan's capabilities. Anyway, please come this way."

Kim Hyung-Jung and Yang-Bum entered the building that Yang Bum pointed to. Inside it was a Chinese-style living room that allowed in a bit of natural lighting. With a gesture from Yang Bum, an employee quickly brought over and put a teapot, teacups, an ashtray, and cigarettes on the table.

"The present that we prepared is..." Yang Bum started.

*Should he really be revealing something like this so easily?*

"I'm sorry, but I don't have the power to make decisions," Kim Hyung-Jung said once Yang Bum finished.

Yang Bum gave Kim Hyung-Jung a pleasant smile. "It's okay. However, we do hope that you can give us an answer soon so we can start taking all the necessary measures in accordance with your decision."

"Alright," Kim Hyung-Jung said, then immediately stood up from his seat.

*Why did Yang Bum tell me something like this without even asking about my position?*

At the entrance of the embassy, Kim Hyung-Jung shook Yang Bum's hand. The latter then sent him off.

"Mr. Kang Chan said that he has absolute trust in you. I hope we meet each other often."

"Likewise."

Kim Hyung-Jung let go of the handshake and walked away. Not long after, the car that had been waiting for him stopped in front of him.

*Click!*

"Get me to Naegok-dong[1] as quickly as possible," Kim Hyung-Jung ordered, then quickly took out his phone. He had no idea what was happening, but he was certain of one thing.

What he just heard was only possible because they had Kang Chan.

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Huh Ha-Soo ran his fingers through his hair, making it seem as if he was trying to hide his anxiety. He then clenched his fist and looked at his phone. After a while, he sighed softly and wiped his lips. He still hadn't received the phone call that he had been waiting for.

"Ugh."

Huh Ha-Soo let out another groan.

He believed in China. He had to believe them. China would never abandon him. Powerful countries didn't break loyalty easily.

Huh Ha-Soo sighed once more.

*Ring. Ring. Ring.*

The phone that he had placed on the end table rang.

"Hello?"

- We have received word that Kang Chan held his ground and refused to apologize. They also told us that we should proceed as planned, but they want us to change the schedule a little bit first.

"The schedule?"

- China said that they will completely support you this time.

"Haha, hahaha. And why would they do that?"

- Isn't that because China recognizes your great capabilities?

"You're saying nonsense! We have to be more self-deprecating, especially during times like this. We should never be arrogant when others show consideration toward us. Anyway, what's happening in South Korea?"

- The Director has sprung into action. The manager of the special forces team seems to have been directly summoned to the Chinese embassy as well, but we haven't been able to confirm that intel yet.

"Hmm! If so, then it seems China is earnestly setting plans in motion. Alright. Make sure to keep me informed about any further updates. I don't care if you haven't confirmed whether they're reliable intel or not.

- Understood.

Huh Ha-Soo hung up. He then loudly inhaled, which was far from how he had been acting lately.

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"Mr. President, you have to give it your approval," someone said.

"I can't."

“Mr. President!” Hwang Ki-Hyun called Moon Jae-Hyun with an unusually strong tone.

Go Gun-Woo and Kim Hyung-Jung were also in the room with Moon Jae-Hyun and Hwang Ki-Hyun.

“This is political manipulation. They pushed us into a trap that they themselves have set, and they are now blaming us for it. Director, how would you deal with the citizens’ pride if the Chairman of the National Assembly—someone who represents South Korea—falls for China’s trap? What would other countries think of us? This simply cannot happen.”

Hwang Ki-Hyun dropped his head at Moon Jae-Hyun’s firm response.

“I agree that this is an opportunity. However, that does not mean we should push Chairperson Huh Ha-Soo into China’s trap. As South Korea’s president, I believe that there’s something more important than staying in power. And I’m certain that things like that are what makes South Korea grow and develop,” Moon Jae-Hyun added.

Hwang Ki-Hyun raised his head, seemingly at a loss for what to do. Looking at Kim Hyung-Jung, he asked, “Where’s Kang Chan right now?”

“He’s currently at the Namsan Hotel,” Kim Hyung-Jung quickly answered.

Chapter 160.2: You Dare Try to Avoid It? (1)

When Kang Chan realized that Seok Kang-Ho was waiting for him, he immediately left the embassy and headed to the hotel. He could’ve told Seok Kang-Ho to come to the embassy instead, but Kang Chan wanted to tell him what transpired today over a cup of tea.

On his way to the hotel, Kang Chan briefly told Kim Hyung-Jung where he was going, but it seemed Kim Hyung-Jung didn’t have much time to talk.

Kang Chan went into the lobby and ordered coffee. A few minutes later, Joo Chul-Bum approached and greeted him—appearing faster than the hotel could serve Kang Chan his order. After exchanging short greetings with him, Kang Chan sent him back. Seok Kang-Ho arrived soon after, and Kang Chan told him about what happened in the embassy as he drank coffee.

“What’s going on? Does that mean they’ve killed Huh Geuk?” Seok Kang-Ho asked afterward.

“Wouldn’t that be the case? It’s not like they can just say, ‘We should let him live,’ after I’ve sent Manager Kim over.”

“Ha! Those fuckers are weird.”

“I don’t feel right about this, though. There’s something going on, but I feel like I’m being kept from learning about it. I’m getting the same feeling from Ambassador Lanok appointing himself as my guardian.”

“Well, at least everything worked out, right?” Seok Kang-Ho commented.

“As of right now, yes.”

Kang Chan didn't feel relieved, but it was true that the cause of his worries had at least disappeared.

“Then let's not think about this anymore. This outcome is a hundred times better than you killing Huh Geuk.” Seok Kang-Ho said, then began to look upset. “Did you think that I won't be able to guess how you're feeling? The look in your eyes says it all. Why are you acting like this?”

“Is it that obvious?”

“The look in your eyes says, ‘Congratulations, Huh Geuk died.’”

Both of them burst out laughing when Seok Kang-Ho played innocent. It felt as if they had just quickly brushed past an emergency.

“Let's go on a trip,” Seok Kang-Ho suggested.

*Do we even have the time to do that?*

Kang Chan thoroughly considered Seok Kang-Ho's suggestion.

*Buzz— Buzz—Buzz—. Buzz— Buzz—Buzz—. Buzz— Buzz—Buzz—.*

While deep in thought, Kang Chan's phone rang as if to say, ‘How dare you have useless thoughts?’

“Hello?”

- Mr. Kang Chan, it's Kim Hyung-Jung. Do you have time right now?

“Yes. I don't have anything special going on.”

- Can you meet me at my office in Samseong-dong, then?

“Sure.”

Kang Chan hung up and stood up from his seat. He then told Seok Kang-Ho, “We've been summoned.”

“This actually feels like we're going to work.”

“We should get this over with as fast as we can. This is getting old.”

They headed to the parking lot and got in the car. As soon as the engine started, they drove off.

“Maybe Ambassador Lanok offered to be your guardian because he wants you to make a proper debut in information warfare,” Seok Kang-Ho said.

“Maybe, but I'm honestly not sure. It only made me vaguely think that I'll be able to grow stronger. However, since this involves government affairs now, I should probably set more specific and accurate goals. I seriously can't help but feel as if something is happening that we're not aware of.”



Seok Kang-Ho nodded, then pouted.

“Tsk! Instead of thinking about this too much, we should just deal with this in our own way. It doesn’t matter if it’s Huh Geuk or other bullshit. We can just twist the necks of anyone who bothers us. It’s not like they’re going to surrender even if we tell them to, right?” Kang Chan asked.

“Phuhuhu.”

They drove to their destination in a good mood. Not long after, they arrived at Samseong-dong and immediately went up to Kim Hyung-Jung’s office.

Kim Hyung-Jung had a grave expression as he opened the door for them. Kang Chan and Seok Kang-Ho went inside. To their surprise, they found Jeon Dae-Geuk and Hwang Ki-Hyun also sitting in the office.

“Welcome,” Jeon Dae-Geuk said.

“It’s a pleasure to meet you again, Mr. Kang Chan,” Hwang Ki-Hyun said.

The atmosphere was uncomfortable.

Kang Chan greeted them and sat down with them. Afterward, Kim Hyung-Jung brought over big cups filled with drinks.

“You did really great,” Jeon Dae-Geuk told Kang Chan.

“I didn’t do anything—Ambassador Lanok and Yang Bum were the ones who decided what to do.”

“No, that was only possible because you were there.”

It was quite tricky to respond to things like this, so Kang Chan remained silent and had a sip of the drink that Kim Hyung-Jung offered him instead.

“Mr. Kang Chan, I actually got another offer from Mr. Yang Bum after I confirmed the death of Huh Geuk at the Chinese embassy,” Kim Hyung-Jung said, his expression still unusually dark. “He told me that China is planning to purge the people who are abusing their powers in their country, which is also why they took care of Huh Geuk. For that reason, they relayed fake information to Chairperson Huh Ha-Soo. They told him that you refused to apologize.”

Even though Jeon Dae-Geuk and Hwang Ki-Hyun were likely already aware of what was being said, they still concentrated on what Kim Hyung-Jung was saying.

“China’s plan is simple. They judged that Huh Ha-Soo is passing over not only South Korea’s military secrets to the United States but China’s secrets as well, so they want to take this opportunity to make a sweeping arrest of Chairperson Huh Ha-Soo and those close to him. At the same time, they will purge the people in their country who had been secretly communicating with Chairperson Huh Ha-Soo,” Kim Hyung-Jung continued.

Kang Chan had a hard time understanding what Kim Hyung-Jung was saying. After all, this was far from what entailed planning an operation with a map spread out. Hence, he only listened in silence.

“Unfortunately, the President has refused the offer,” Kim Hyung-Jung added.

Kang Chan smirked, then quickly changed his expression.

“What’s wrong?” Jeon Dae-Geuk seemed curious about why Kang Chan smirked.

“I can see why the President would refuse. If I were in his shoes, I probably would have also declined the offer. After all, accepting it means we’ll be moving exactly according to China’s wishes.”

Hwang Ki-Hyun exhaled softly. “The reason the President refused is a bit different than yours. Regardless, it brings the same result.”

During times like this, it was best to just wait.

“Mr. Kang Chan, the National Intelligence Service actually also want to make a sweeping arrest of the people who secretly hoarded South Korea’s military secrets with this opportunity. Even if the NIS didn’t want to, breaking our relationship with China will have dire consequences, so we were hoping that you could act as a channel for exchanging information with China,” Hwang Ki-Hyun continued.

“That’s a bit vague. What exactly do you all want me to do?”

“We can’t announce that Huh Ha-Soo secretly hoarded military secrets yet because the evidence we have right now is weak. If the opposition insists that we’ve been doing political manipulation, then there’s a high chance that the citizens will listen to them. No matter what we say, the people will find it hard to believe that the Chairman of the National Assembly sold off South Korea’s military secrets.”

“So you want me to find evidence?” Kang Chan asked.

“Not exactly. We simply hope that you’ll execute a purge in China, and give us any evidence you find from it that points toward Huh Ha-Soo.”

Kang Chan didn’t find Hwang Ki-Hyun’s request that hard to do.

“I’ll discuss this with Ambassador Lanok first. I’ll give you all an answer as soon as possible,” Kang Chan said.

“That would be great. We have already told Mr. Yang Bum that the President has refused the offer, though.”

“Mr. Kang Chan,” Hwang Ki-Hyun then called out, seemingly having solidified his determination.

“If we succeed in building the Eurasian Rail, the world’s balance of power will change based on each country’s economic status. It wouldn’t be wrong to say that China is already carrying out a change for the next generation. However, they have chosen to reorganize authority rather than eliminate unlawfulness and corruption, which is what we’re doing. Anyway, when we were facing a difficult time, you appeared and helped us connect to the Rail. We would like you to help us a bit more so we can keep carrying the hope that you have given us.”

“Understood.”

Kang Chan already had his foot in the door anyway. Moreover, he did not just decide to become stronger. Rather, Lanok also told him that he would be his guardian. Hence, Kang Chan thought he should use opportunities like this to learn about matters that he still had no idea about.

“I’ll be taking my leave now.” Hwang Ki-Hyun stood up. Kim Hyung-Jung sent him off.

“Please sit back down,” Jeon Dae-Geuk said.

“How are you feeling?” Kang Chan asked.

“If you’re that curious, then you should give me a call! You forgot about me, didn’t you? You’re just wondering how I’m doing now because we’re right in front of each other.”

Kang Chan didn’t dislike this gentleman even when he complained.

“The way you talk makes me think you have made a full recovery,” Kang Chan commented.

“I was born with the ability to heal quickly.” Jeon Dae-Geuk reached out to his cup and took a sip from it. “Choi Seong-Geon often calls me and asks how you’re doing. You’re strangely difficult to talk to. You should give him a call when you have time.”

*He wants me to call Choi Seong-Geon to ask how he’s doing?*

Just thinking about it made Kang Chan shake his head.

Amid their conversation, Kim Hyung-Jung opened the door and went inside.

“Manager Kim, do we only need evidence for Huh Ha-Soo?” Kang Chan asked.

“What do you mean?”

“I was wondering if, even while I’m in another country, you can still take care of everything as long as I reveal evidence that shows that Huh Ha-Soo was going to hand over military secrets.”

“We can certainly do that.” Kim Hyung-Jung looked at Kang Chan, his expression showing his curiosity about why Kang Chan asked that question.

“I didn’t ask because of any particular reason. I was just curious.”

“We’re more than capable of doing that if the announcement is made in China, the United States, or Japan,” Kim Hyung-Jung added.

Kang Chan nodded.

*What would Lanok have done to Xavier?*

Considering how things developed, the trip that Seok Kang-Ho suggested was now completely out of the window.