

Blackfield 81

Chapter 81.1: Let's Pinpoint Things one by one (2)

Kang Chan went up to Kang Dae-Kyung's room and found him leaning against the propped-up bed. Yoo Hye-Sook was beside him.

Kang Chan dragged a chair and sat next to Kang Dae-Kyung's bed.

"Go home and get some rest," Kang Dae-Kyung told Kang Chan.

"I'm okay. I should see mom when I can."

Kang Dae-Kyung smiled awkwardly. It seemed like how Kang Chan had acted yesterday and how he was acting right now were overlapping in front of Kang Dae-Kyung.

How scared could Kang Dae-Kyung have been of the knife fight that unfolded before his very eyes? He was just a person that had a normal upbringing and family. His child participating in that battle only made it worse.

Kang Chan carefully thought of a way to relieve Kang Dae-Kyung's shock. Rather than trying to relieve his shock, Kang Chan would have more confidence teaching Kang Dae-Kyung how to fight spitefully.

They soon got bored despite the TV trying its best to attract their attention. Kang Chan couldn't figure out what had to be done right now.

"I'm hungry. Should we order something to eat?" Kang Chan asked his parents.

"Do you want to?"

The couple didn't eat snacks often, so they didn't show special interest when they answered him.

Buzz— Buzz—Buzz—.

Kang Chan's phone rang, which he took as an opportunity for him to divert their attention. It was Michelle.

"Ello!" Kang Chan answered in French.

- Channy, are you in a predicament?

Michelle replied in French as well. Her tactfulness was amazing.

"I'm at the hospital. My father's been hospitalized."

- Why? Is he okay?

Her reaction was understandable. She didn't know that Kang Dae-Kyung got in a car accident yesterday, after all.

- If you're okay with it, can I go there?

"Where are you?"

- I'm at D.I. Which hospital is it?

The memory of her being on the verge of tears yesterday came across his mind. He also remembered his promise to have a beer with her today.

“Wait a minute.”

Kang Chan put down his phone and told his parents that Michelle was going to come here to see Kang Dae-Kyung. They appeared to have found the idea awkward, but they didn't look like they disliked the news.

Kang Chan told Michelle the name of the hospital, then hung up.

“We can treat her to lunch when she comes,” Yoo Hye-Sook commented.

Kang Dae-Kyung didn't know why Yoo Hye-Sook suggested that. After Kang Chan briefly told him that the daughter of Yoo Hye-Sook's friend got to participate in a drama...

Buzz— Buzz—Buzz—.

Seok Kang-Ho was the one calling Kang Chan this time.

“Yes, Mr. Seok Kang-Ho.”

- Are you with your parents?

This fucker was still loud even after reincarnating into a different body. Kang Chan lowered the volume of his phone so that his parents wouldn't notice that Seok Kang-Ho was speaking formally to him.

“I'm at the hospital because my father isn't feeling that good.”

Kang Dae-Kyung discreetly observed Yoo Hye-Sook's mood.

- I heard that he was discharged yesterday. Is he feeling very unwell?

“I was told that he has severe body aches. He's going to be discharged after a few days.”

- Is there anything we can do? If you were going to go to the hospital, you should've told me to bring the car in the morning!

Don't go overboard and just hang up the phone!

“Okay. I'll give you a call later.”

Kang Chan swiftly ended the uncomfortable phone call.

“My goodness! Your teacher really cares a lot about you. We should at least meet him someday,” said Yoo Hye-Sook.

“We can do that some other time,” Kang Chan replied.

If possible, they shouldn't meet Seok Kang-Ho. Kim Hyung-Jung and Kim Tae-Jin also called Kang Chan in order. He gave them similar answers, and everyone seemed to have tactfully understood what was going on. Lanok called him as well.

“Yes, Mr. Ambassador.”

- Mr. Kang Chan. Are you busy today?

“I’m at the hospital. My father has been hospitalized due to overwork.”

- I didn’t know. I’m sorry.

“Don’t be. Are you calling for an urgent matter?”

- No, I’m not. I’ll call you later.

Kang Dae-Kyung and Yoo Hye-Sook looked curious about who Kang Chan had talked to.

“That was the ambassador. He asked if I had time today, so I told him that I’m at the hospital. He then said he’ll just call me some other time,” Kang Chan told his parents.

“If you said that because of me, then you should’ve just made the appointment,” Kang Dae-Kyung said. He felt bad.

Rattle.

“Hello!”

What’s going on?

Even Kang Chan was flustered that they came here.

Yoo Hye-Sook quickly got up from her seat, and Kang Dae-Kyung forced himself up a bit more and leaned against the bed.

“We’re here because we heard that the President’s father is unwell. I’m Eun So-Yeon. We met at the ‘Chiffre’ presentation hall. And these are all D.I. actors.”

“Nice to meet you! Father, please recover quickly!” They cheerfully greeted Kang Chan’s parents as if they were chorusing. Yoo Hye-Sook and Kang Dae-Kyung seemed to have recognized Eun So-Yeon.

“Thank you for coming. Please have a seat. What should we do? There aren’t enough chairs!” Yoo Hye-Sook exclaimed.

“It’s okay. We have to go to the broadcasting station today to practice the script anyway. And here...” Eun So-Yeon handed over flowers, and behind her, the trainees held out boxes of drinks and a fruit basket[1].

“You guys shouldn’t have. Please have a cup of tea or eat these fruits with us at least before you go,” Yoo Hye-Sook offered.

“We got to film a drama thanks to the President, who’s been protecting us. And all of us here are a part of it. We’re not big yet, but even if we’ve become huge

stars, we still won't forget his kindness. That's why we've made a decision," Eun So-Yeon spoke politely. She then looked behind her.

"From now on, we'll make an appearance on all advertisements for 'Chiffre' and all advertisements that the President's father does in his business for free until we die!" the trainees yelled.

They had shouted their determination like elementary school students reading a book. Their voices filled the room.

"We still have a practice scheduled, so we'll go now. Father, please get well soon," Eun So-Yeon continued.

"Please get well soon!" The rest of the trainees yelled.

Eun So-Yeon bowed her head toward Kang Chan while looking disappointed, then left the patient room with the trainees.

It felt like a huge storm had just swept past the room.

"Was that young lady also affiliated with the company that you're in?" Kang Dae-Kyung asked Kang Chan.

"Yes. I forgot she was at the 'Chiffre' presentation hall."

Kang Dae-Kyung was flustered, and Yoo Hye-Sook was slightly blushing.

"My goodness! It was really nice to see them. They had such bright expressions," Yoo Hye-Sook commented.

Kang Chan just smiled. They definitely came here because Michelle told them to. Sure enough, Michelle arrived with flowers, a fruit basket, and a cake box not long after they left. She forcibly opened the door with the hand that was carrying the flowers.

"Welcome," Kang Chan said.

"Hello, mother?" Michelle was speaking in Korean, though she cleverly used a French accent. Even if he put her in the drama, her acting skills wouldn't lose to the current actors. Michelle hugged Yoo Hye-Sook and kissed her cheeks, then greeted Kang Chan in the same way.

Kang Dae-Kyung and Yoo Hye-Sook looked at Michelle with an expression that seemed to say she should definitely be here.

"Please sit. I actually felt bad for asking something unreasonable last time," said Yoo Hye-Sook.

Michelle looked at Kang Chan, so he asked her in French, "You're the one that sent Eun So-Yeon and the trainees here, right?"

"It wasn't unreasonable, mother," Michelle replied to Yoo Hye-Sook in Korean.

"Your Korean has improved a lot," Yoo Hye-Sook commented.

“It’s all thanks to Mr. Kang Chan.”

What a load of bullshit. Was she also acting when she was on the verge of tears yesterday?

Anyway, the atmosphere had completely changed. Michelle even brought disposable plates and plastic forks. The cakes were all in different flavors, all of which were delicious. She went above and beyond, almost as if she was their child, and Kang Chan was the one who came here to visit Kang Dae-Kyung.

Kang Dae-Kyung and Yoo Hye-Sook got absorbed in their conversation with Michelle. Kang Chan felt like bugs were crawling on his back when Michelle told them about him stopping Alion from exploiting Eun So-Yeon.

Yoo Hye-Sook became completely absorbed in the story about a scary person visiting them in the office and Kang Chan arriving and protecting the actors and employees so that they wouldn’t get scared.

Writing scripts were better for Michelle than acting. Kang Chan wondered how she could tell the story in such an interesting way despite taking out all the violence from it, including him breaking their arms. Later on, he remembered that she was originally an editor for a magazine company.

Kang Dae-Kyung looked like he could roughly guess how Kang Chan acted at that time.

Chapter 81.2: Let’s Pinpoint Things one by one (2)

At around 11 am, Kang Yoo Motors executives and employees visited them.

When they were taking out drinks and greeting each other...

Rattle.

Kim Hyung-Jung came into the room.

“Huh? Mr. Manager,” Kang Chan said.

Kim Hyung-Jung slightly bowed his head, then stood next to the door. As Kang Chan was wondering ‘what’s going on?’, about three to four men with their IDs clipped on their left chest came inside.

Damn it!

The last person to enter was Go Gun-Woo, the prime minister. Yoo Hye-Sook couldn’t even speak, and Kang Dae-Kyung struggled to raise himself up. Meanwhile, the Kang Yoo Motors executives and employees walked to the foot of the bed.

“Hello?” Kang Chan asked.

“Mr. Kang Chan, I happened to be in the area, so I thought I’d drop by. It wouldn’t be very disrespectful since I’ve met your parents before, right?” Go Gun-Woo asked respectfully, then he approached the bed.

“If a patient strains themselves, then that means I, the person who visited you, did something unnecessary. Please just sit comfortably.” Gun Gun-Woo told Kang Dae-Kyung, then looked around him.

The Kang Yoo Motors executives and employees bowed in greeting.

“They’re the executives and employees of my father’s company,” Kang Chan explained.

“Ah! Right, his company is Kang Yoo Motors. It’s nice to meet everyone. I’m Go Gun-Woo.”

The executives and employees went up in order and shook Go Gun-Woo’s hand while bowing deeply. After Go Gun-Woo shook hands with Michelle, who was standing next to Kang Chan, he turned around toward the bed, then said, “Father[1].”

“Yes, Mr. Prime Minister.”

Go Gun-Woo discreetly looked at Kang Chan, then answered, “Because of my shortcomings, I had to ask your young son to do something difficult.”

Kang Dae-Kyung looked blank.

“Watching their child go through so much has to be hard for any parent, but no one can replace your son and do what he’s assigned to do right now. I’m sorry,” Go Gun-Woo continued.

Go Gun-Woo turned around and looked behind him afterward. When he did that, the secretary took out a white envelope and gave it to Yoo Hye-Sook. It had a fancy phoenix pattern drawn on its front.

“The President sends his sincerity. He hopes that you’ll make a full recovery soon,” Go Gun-Woo explained why they gave her the envelope.

Yoo Hye-Sook and the Kang Yoo Motors executives and employees appeared to have blanked out as well.

“How’s the foundation coming along?” Go Gun-Woo asked his secretary.

“Its establishment is planned to be announced on Monday.”

Go Gun-Woo turned to Kang Chan upon hearing the secretary’s answer. “I’m sorry, Mr. Kang Chan.”

He was probably apologizing for the fact that Kang Dae-Kyung got attacked. They were in a situation where it would be easy for the people around them to misunderstand them regardless of how Kang Chan answered him, so he found it difficult to hastily answer.

“I hope you make a full recovery soon,” Go Gun-Woo bid farewell to Kang Dae-Kyung, then went outside. Kim Hyung-Jung used his gaze to say goodbye, then followed the prime minister.

The employees of Kang Yoo Motors were still standing at the foot of the bed.

“Mother?” Kang Chan called Yoo Hye-Sook, causing everyone in the room to snap back to reality. It was as if they had just woken up from a trance.

“Ah! Please have a seat,” Yoo Hye-Sook told the employees.

“It’s okay. We’ll get going now.”

The executives and employees refused Yoo Hye-Sook’s offer to have lunch before leaving several times, then respectfully said goodbye to Kang Chan on their way out.

“Lunch! That’s right—we should have lunch with Michelle,” Yoo Hye-Sook commented. It seemed like she hadn’t completely gotten herself together yet.

“Mother, what would you like to have for lunch? How about I go out and buy something from a nearby store instead?”

“You don’t have to do that—I’m not hungry because I had cake,” Yoo Hye-Sook answered.

Getting herself together took precedence over food. Michelle had the same thoughts, so she decided to eat lunch sometime later.

‘The Prime Minister has this much power, huh.’

Kang Chan nodded at his unfounded thoughts as Michelle made coffee. It smelled even better since they had just finished eating cake.

“Thank you, Michelle,” Yoo Hye-Sook said.

It felt like the warm coffee had calmed Kang Dae-Kyung and Yoo Hye-Sook down.

When lunchtime came, the peculiar smell of food exuded from outside the room.

Rattle.

Did the food get here? Kang Chan turned his gaze, only to find Heo Eun-Sil entering. The athletics club members and the bullies followed behind her.

Dumbfounded, Kang Chan just smiled.

“Hello?” One of the kids asked.

Thankfully, Kang Dae-Kyung and Yoo Hye-Sook were relaxed. The kids started to speak while glancing at Michelle, “We heard you’re unwell, so we decided to come here. We’re all having fun at school thanks to him. Please get better soon. And here...”

Cha So-Yeon sheepishly held out a box of drinks. Perhaps it was because she looked shy, but Yoo Hye-Sook took the drinks while profusely thanking her. Meanwhile, Heo Eun-Sil was blatantly looking at Michelle.

Everything that bitch did made Kang Chan tired.

“Please have lunch before you go,” Yoo Hye-Sook told the students.

“Our teacher said he was going to buy us lunch. We dropped by on our way to the restaurant.”

“Then please at least take drinks and fruits with you when you leave.”

“We’re going to a beef buffet, so we’ll be eating a lot there,” the students responded.

Seok Kang-Ho seemed to be buying them lunch. He clearly didn’t like being alone at home.

“Goodbye.”

After they said that, the kids left.

For the first time since Heo Eun-Sil appeared in Kang Chan’s life, they parted ways without a hitch. Still, he thought it would be better to be careful today.

Kang Chan drank the last bit of the cold coffee.

“Channy, what’s the name of the female student that looked at me because I’m pretty?” Michelle asked.

“Why do you ask?”

They were speaking in French.

“I think that female student is interested in you,” Michelle replied.

“What?”

“Oh, you clueless boy. How can you be so sharp when it comes to other things yet don’t notice something like that? That girl likes you. I think that she can’t bring herself to tell you, though, and that she feels wronged and frustrated. After watching you guys from the side, it seems like you weren’t aware at all. This is fun. She was cute.”

“That’s horrible. Don’t say something like that even as a joke.”

“It seems like your indifference is making her worried to death,” Michelle said something mysterious, then stared intensely at him. He thought of sending her away with a rough excuse, but the door soon opened again.

“Mr. President!” Kang Chan exclaimed.

Kim Tae-Jin and Suh Sang-Hyun walked in this time. Kang Chan introduced them to everyone.

“This is the first time I’m meeting you two. I’m Kim Tae-Jin.”

Kim Tae-Jin calmly asked them how they were doing, then showed his gratitude toward Kang Chan’s parents while saying that his company was getting a lot of help thanks to him. When he told them he decided to take this opportunity to meet them, Suh Sang-Hyun held out a fruit basket and an envelope.

Kang Chan’s parents refused persistently, but they reluctantly accepted it in the end because Kim Tae-Jin was asking them to take it so desperately. Afterward, Kang Chan introduced Michelle to Kim Tae-Jin and Suh Sang-Hyun.

“Have you had lunch?” Kim Tae-Jin asked Kang Chan.

“We had cake, so I’ll eat a little later. What about the two of you?”

“We actually have a lunch appointment, so we’ll be going now. Let’s see each other again next time. Please take good care of yourself,” Kim Tae-Jin left without doing anything unnecessary.

Suh Sang-Hyun glanced at Michelle so much even Yoo Hye-Sook noticed. He then followed Kim Tae-Jin out with a disappointed look on his face.

Kang Dae-Kyung and Yoo Hye-Sook looked so exhausted it was as if they had done something difficult. They should’ve just stayed at home. Fortunately, there shouldn’t be any more hassles now that most of the people who were likely to visit them already did.

“We’re really busy today, huh,” Kang Chan commented.

“Did you really help all of the people that came to visit today?” Yoo Hye-Sook asked. She looked like she had gotten herself together, at least a little bit.

“I met those people under different circumstances, so I decided to help them.”

Kang Chan examined Kang Dae-Kyung. He hoped Kang Dae-Kyung wouldn’t get hurt.

Rattle.

Stop it already! When Kang Chan quickly turned his head, two French agents came inside. It was Lanok.

Yoo Hye-Sook and Michelle followed Kang Chan and also got up from their seats.

“Channy!” Anne was the first to enter. She limped toward Kang Chan, hugged him, and kissed him on the lips.

Damn it! Damn it!

Her actions would be nothing out of the ordinary to Lanok, who was French, but it wasn’t something that someone should do in front of Korean parents.

“Doing that in front of parents in Korea is rude,” Kang Chan told her after gently pushing her away from him.

“Hello?” Anne looked at Lanok after she greeted Kang Chan’s parents with poor Korean.

Kang Chan introduced the two of them to his parents, and Lanok greeted them.

As Kang Chan introduced them to Michelle as well, the atmosphere grew strange. Anne and Michelle casually greeted each other—suggesting that nothing was wrong—but Kang Dae-Kyung and Yoo Hye-Sook still observed Michelle’s mood. Lanok recommended a national university in France to Kang Dae-Kyung and Yoo Hye-Sook, then continued on to say that he wanted to give them French nationality, if they were okay with it.

Kang Chan burst out with laughter after looking at Yoo Hye-Sook. It was clear that she misunderstood Lanok's words as him asking them to accept Anne as their daughter-in-law.

"I apologize for coming here without contacting you, Mr. Kang Chan. I was wondering what we should do since my schedule was too tight to find time to see you, but Anne said that she was going to see you even if she had to come alone, so here we are," Lanok explained.

"Channy, why haven't you called me even once?" Anne asked.

"I didn't because we've decided to eat next week."

Lanok looked happy about Anne's change, who used to only stay at home.

"Channy, I decided to change," the small-built Anne told Kang Chan with an attitude that suggested she wanted to brag.

She was acting that way because she only ever stayed at home, which was a distinct trait of loners. In his previous life, when the guys that had lived a lonely life before becoming a mercenary came into his crew and followed him around, they also showed the same look in their eyes as Anne's.

Kang Chan's eyes discreetly met Michelle's. She looked to be having fun.

"Mr. Kang Chan, what's your schedule for next week?" Lanok asked.

"I can just match yours."

"Then how about we have dinner around Tuesday?"

"Let's do that."

Their conversation ended there.

Lanok passed on an envelope to Kang Chan through an agent.

"Channy," Anne walked toward Kang Chan. He held her and patted her back.

"Phew."

When Lanok left, Kang Chan felt completely drained.

Yoo Hye-Sook checked Michelle's mood.

"Channy, did Anne also fall in love with you, by any chance?" Michelle asked.

"I only saw her once. When would she have had the time to fall in love with me? She's probably only acting like that because I came into her life while she was lonely. She's going to change in an instant once she meets someone she really likes."

Michelle smiled as if she found this situation to be funny. "You do know that someone among the agents likes Anne, right?"

"What?"

Yoo Hye-Sook nervously shifted her gaze between the two of them because she couldn't understand what they were talking about.

"I'm talking about the man right behind Lanok. The look in his eyes showed he was in love with Anne. Other people likely won't notice because his expression is so stiff, but he can't fool my eyes," Michelle explained.

Louis? Louis was looking at her that way? Why did this situation become similar to some kind of soap opera?

"So. You kissed another woman in front of me, huh?" Michelle then asked.

Kang Chan's heart sank while he was looking at her smile.

Chapter 82.1: Catching the Tail (1)

Things became peaceful after Lanok left.

"Channy, I'm going to stay at the hospital today. Go out with Michelle and have a cup of tea at least or something, then go rest at home. Come here tomorrow," Yoo Hye-Sook said.

"What are you going to eat for lunch and dinner?"

"You think I won't be able to take care of our meals?"

Michelle could be feeling uncomfortable for Kang Dae-Kyung and Yoo Hye-Sook.

"I'll see how things go and call you in the afternoon, then," Kang Chan said.

Michelle followed Kang Chan and stood up with him.

"Goodbye," Michelle said in poor Korean.

"Bye, Michelle. Let's see each other again next time. I'll be sure to treat you to a meal," Yoo Hye-Sook said.

"You understood that, right? Let's go," Kang Chan told Michelle in French.

"Goodbye," Michelle repeated and hugged Yoo Hye-Sook.

It was 2 pm when they left the hospital. Telling Michelle to leave like this wasn't polite.

"We should eat. Where should we go?" Kang Chan asked.

"Somewhere with a good atmosphere!"

When Kang Chan glanced at her, Michelle linked her arms around his. "Channy, let's drink beer."

"Right now? Is there somewhere that's open at this hour?"

The feeling of Michelle's chest on his arm was uncomfortable, but it didn't feel right to remove his arm because he remembered his kiss with Anne and how Michelle was on the verge of tears yesterday. They walked toward the parking lot and stopped in front of her car. It was a small and cute-looking imported car. Kang Chan thought about driving it, but he got in the passenger seat instead.

“Where are we going?” Kang Chan asked.

“You don’t have a place in mind, do you?”

“Yeah.”

Michelle drove the car out of the parking lot with a bright smile.

It was a Saturday, so the traffic on the Olympic Expressway was quite heavy.

“Channy, I don’t know about the young female student, but pay a bit more attention to Anne. That lady’s likely only thinking about you right now. Praise her determination to change and encourage her. When she’s stronger, let her know that there were people that kept looking at her. That security guard, for example. There aren’t only strong people like you in the world.”

“You’re not angry because of Anne?”

“I’m satisfied with you being uncomfortable.”

Kang Chan smirked.

“You’ve got the qualities of a playboy,” Michelle commented.

Michelle side-eyed Kang Chan with a mischievous look in her eyes.

“You don’t know how charming you are when you’re indifferent, do you?”

Michelle asked.

“You’re the only one who thinks that way.”

“Hmph.”

Michelle coyly turned her head. Her deep-set eyes, sharp nose, blonde hair, and even her breasts he sometimes wanted to touch...

What went wrong with her? Should I just sleep with her?

However, Kang Chan was afraid of what would happen afterward. He didn’t want to experience the emptiness he felt when he went on vacation to France ever again.

“Channy, about the group dinner with the drama production team...”

While they were talking about D.I., they got on the Jayu Motorway[1]. From there, they no longer experienced that much traffic. Their conversation had ended by the time they got off the Jayu Motorway. Not long after, they arrived at a large building made of logs.

They were surrounded by mountains, so there wasn't anything special in the area. Kang Chan liked the refreshing air that rushed toward him when he got out of the car, though. When he got out of the passenger seat and headed to the building’s entrance, Michelle rushed toward him and hugged him. She placed her head on his chest and put her arms around him. She was warm.

“Let’s stay like this for a moment,” Michelle said.

Sure, this much touching is okay.

Kang Chan stroked her back.

“I’m happy,” Michelle commented, then raised her head. Her eyes showed she was turned on.

Kang Chan didn’t know whether her suddenly throwing herself at him was right, but this wasn’t. When all he did was look at her, Michelle winked.

“Michelle, I’m uh... sorry, but...”

“It’s fine even if you don’t love me. Just understand me right now the same way you understood Anne so I can bear through this.”

The coquettish look in Michelle’s eyes showed she wanted Kang Chan.

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

At that moment, Kang Chan’s phone rang. He flinched, perhaps because it was after Kang Dae-Kyung’s incident had happened. Michelle stepped away from him while exhaling loudly, sounding disappointed.

Buzz— Buzz—Buzz—. Buzz— Buzz—Buzz—.

“Hello?”

- Kang Chan, we found them! The fuckers are in Bundang[2]. They’re staying in a villa-like house in the mountains, but I don’t know how many of them are there yet.

Kang Chan returned to his senses when he heard Oh Gwang-Taek’s excitement.

“Do you know the exact address?”

- Put ‘marinated grilled duck’ in Bundang on the navigation. We’ll find it if we follow the road right next to it. It’s the only house there. So, what’s the plan?

“Stay put, Oh Gwang-Taek.”

- Hey you fucker! I’m also a gangster! I also lived by fighting with knives! Don’t even try to exclude me from something like this or I’m going there first!

“Okay, okay! Then wait until I get there for now. Position your men somewhere else and go to the grilled duck place alone. Let’s decide what to do after we meet since there could be gangsters outside the villa.”

- I’m leaving right now, and I’m going to select twenty guys. I’ll see you later.

Michelle worriedly looked at Kang Chan who ended the call.

“I’m sorry, Michelle. Something really important came up.”

“Where do you have to go? I’ll give you a ride.”

Without complaints, Michelle went into the driver’s seat. There was still a lingering feeling from his conversation with her, but now wasn’t the time to think about it. Kang Chan inputted the restaurant

in Bundang that Oh Gwang-Taek had told him about, and they left immediately. He then called Seok Kang-Ho.

- Hello? Are you still at the hospital?

“Oh Gwang-Taek said that he found the people that caused the car accident. Put ‘marinated grilled duck’ in Bundang on the navigation and go there. Don’t forget to pack your kukri.”

- Alright. Are you on your way there already?

“Yes.”

- 10 minutes! No, I’ll leave in five minutes.”

It had begun.

Kang Chan didn’t know how far he would have to go from here, but he was thinking of ending things with this timely opportunity.

“What’s with that look in your eyes?” Michelle asked.

Kang Chan’s eyes seemed to have been burning up again. He had been momentarily swayed, so he hoped to arrive at Bundang after setting himself straight.

“Michelle, there’s actually a girl that I like,” Kang Chan confessed.

Michelle glanced at Kang Chan. “It doesn’t matter.”

“I know very well what I looked like to you when we first met,” She told him bluntly, “I actually lived like that. But I truly do like you. I understand why you like that young girl, but as I had asked you in the past, don’t push me away.”

Does she really like me?

“Date a lot of people because you’re still young and have no experience. I have met someone that I’m going to love wholeheartedly, so waiting for you while watching you from the side like this is enough to make me happy.”

“Aren’t you upset or angry?” Kang Chan asked.

“No, but in return, hug me the way you did a moment ago every now and then. I’m fully satisfied with that.”

Kang Chan strangely smiled. How could she possibly say something like that without reservation even though she looked like a barbie doll?

“It’s okay if we kiss sometimes, right?” Michelle asked.

“I’m not so sure about that.”

“That won’t do—that’s too cruel. You also kissed Anne, so what’s the problem with it? Give me the right to kiss you whenever I want twice a month.”

It felt like the male and female gender roles had somewhat changed.

“But your body was really nice,” Michelle commented.

That wasn't something that someone should say to a person about to go into a fight.

“Make the reservation for the company dinner. I'm doing something with the people that came to visit my father at the hospital earlier, so whether I can go to the company dinner or not depends on that prior engagement,” Kang Chan told Michelle.

“Did something happen? I feel like you changed somehow?”

“Not sure,” Kang Chan evasively answered. He did change his mindset when he decided that he was going to forget about Africa, but he couldn't think of a way to explain how he felt.

Kang Chan made Michelle stop the car somewhere he could see the restaurant. He then got out.

“Go back,” Kang Chan told Michelle.

“You're not doing something dangerous, are you?” Michelle had been turned on until just recently, but she was now asking with a bit of fear.

Kang Chan smiled softly, closed the door, and turned around.

The way up to the restaurant was uphill. The low mountain was in front of him, and with that as the background, both sides of the road were full of small trees growing wildly with vines twisted around the trunks.

When Kang Chan stepped into the restaurant's lot, a guy in the parking lot deeply bowed his head. Kang Chan frowned, but he had already received the greeting.

It would be better for Kang Chan to head inside the restaurant quickly instead of talking to the guy in vain and confirming that the gangsters had arrived. He should've met Oh Gwang-Taek and Seok Kang-Ho further down the road instead.

Chapter 82.2: Catching the Tail (1)

The restaurant's interior had a large hall made of ondol[1], and with that in the center one side had the kitchen and the other side had a room.

“Welcome.” The owner glanced at the restaurant's dining area upon seeing Kang Chan enter alone.

“Kang Chan!” Oh Gwang-Taek opened the door of one of the rooms inside the restaurant and called Kang Chan.

“Are you going to order?” The owner had followed Kang Chan to the door, then slightly tilted her head forward.

“Another person will be eating with us, but please give us one grilled duck.”

“Alright.”

Oh Gwang-Taek closed the door after ordering.

“How did you find them?” Kang Chan asked.

“Sit. Talk after catching your breath. Here.” Oh Gwang-Taek handed him a cigarette. “The fucker I recognized in the video is Cha Yang-Woon. He used to hang around with another bastard. They’re really close, and they even quit being gangsters at the same time when Cha Yang-Woon went to China. We recently heard that Cha Yang-Woon’s friend told people to tell him if they want to go to China, so we caught him, and he told us about this place. That house was also bought under his name,” Oh Gwang-Taek explained, then deeply exhaled cigarette smoke.

“What are you going to do if that fucker tells Cha Yang-Woon about us?”

“I have men with him right now in the van below the restaurant. We heard the fucker was also involved in the fight in Yongin.”

Kang Chan was relieved, which he hadn’t felt in a long time. Should they take care of the sons of bitches in the house first?

“What about the other gangsters in the video?” Kang Chan asked.

“I watched the video with a few guys, but we didn’t recognize anyone else in it, so they’re likely from China.”

“How much further up do we have to go from here?”

“I was told that the house is right above the restaurant. We can’t see it since the road is curved, but the fucker said that we’ll be able to hear it immediately if someone yells.”

Kang Chan smiled as if he was satisfied, and Oh Gwang-Taek shrugged smugly.

“Welcome.” Soon, they heard the owner greeting someone from outside the room.

“We’re here!” Oh Gwang-Taek said after opening the door, and Seok Kang-Ho came inside with a small bag.

Kang Chan told Seok Kang-Ho exactly what Oh Gwang-Taek had said.

“What are we still doing here? Let’s go there now,” Seok Kang-Ho said afterward and patted his small bag.

“Let’s wait for now and eat what we ordered. We’ll pounce on them when it gets darker and they’ve all gone home,” Kang Chan replied.

“I saw a van and a car below the restaurant, and unless they’re idiots, wouldn’t they realize that there are gangsters here the moment they see the kid standing in the parking lot?”

Kang Chan didn’t see the van or the car when he came here through the single path.

“Didn’t you come here from the other side? The car was parked beside a weird real estate building. I easily recognized it with a glance.” Seok Kang-Ho asked.

Kang Chan did see the real estate building. Either way, if the car was close enough for Seok Kang-Ho to recognize it, then it was likely possible for their enemies to do so as well.

“I was told that there are CCTVs?” Oh Gwang-Taek asked Kang Chan.

“There are security cameras?”

“I heard there’s two of them.”

While Kang Chan was wondering what they should do, the grilled duck was served.

“Enjoy the meal,” the server commented.

The thick pumpkin was burnt on the outside and had been split open with a knife. Inside, the cooked duck was steaming. The duck wasn’t important right now, though. What should they do?

‘The days are longer too since it’s summer.’

They couldn’t blow their chance now that they had unexpectedly seized it.

The gangsters at the house saw Kang Chan and Seok Kang-Ho’s faces in Yongin, and they already knew Oh Gwang-Taek. Still, it didn’t feel right to send a sloppy gangster there instead because he’d likely just ruin things.

“Yes, yes. Three grilled ducks for the house above? Yes. We’ll bring it up right away.”

The moment they heard the owner say that, their gazes alternated among them.

“We can go up to the house with the grilled ducks they ordered. That should work. We still have time, so we should eat our order first,” Kang Chan suggested.

Kang Chan used chopsticks to take off and eat a piece of breast meat from the grilled duck. A major reason why he had suggested that they eat before going up was that he had skipped lunch and was hungry.

“It’ll be uncomfortable no matter how I address you anyway, so let me just refer to you as Kang-Ho hyung-nim,” Oh Gwang-Taek said.

“Do what you want.”

“Please eat this.” Oh Gwang-Taek handed over one leg of the duck to Seok Kang-Ho. He then held the other leg and dug in.

After about twenty minutes had passed, Oh Gwang-Taek left the room first and then said, “Ma’am! About the ducks that the house above told you to bring...”

“Yes?”

“We’re about to go there, so just let us know when it’s finished.”

“I’ll be thankful if you do that, but what about the payment?”

“I’ll take care of it.”

“Alright.”

The conversation ended without a hitch. Kang Chan and Seok Kang-Ho washed their hands to get rid of the oil, then went out to the yard of the restaurant. They stood on the opposite side of the car so they wouldn’t be seen from the road just in case.

“Give me the kukri,” Kang Chan said.

Seok Kang-Ho took out two kukris from the small bag and handed one to Kang Chan.

Swoosh.

When Kang Chan grabbed the handle and unsheathed the kukri, its terrifyingly sharpened blade was revealed. He was satisfied.

“I’ll go up with the duck and open the door. Come up to the house then,” Kang Chan ordered Seok Kang-Ho.

“How would I know you’ve opened the door while I’m down here?”

“We’re on a mountain. You’re going to hear everything no matter what sound they make.”

“Let’s go there together.”

“Hey! It’s just three ducks. Those fuckers would catch on to us immediately if we go up together. I can pass through alone somehow since I’m also wearing a casual outfit.”

Seok Kang-Ho looked at Kang Chan’s clothes, then twisted his lips. Kang Chan definitely looked like a different person from when he wore a suit.

“Give me a cigarette,” Kang Chan said.

“If need be, break a window.”

As Kang Chan was smoking with Seok Kang-Ho, Oh Gwang-Taek came out of the restaurant with a paper bag that had a plastic string hanging on it.

“Captain,” Seok Kang-Ho called.

“What?”

“If I don’t hear anything for more than five minutes, then I’m just going to go up.”

“Okay.”

Kang Chan hid the kukri on his waist behind his back, then took the three paper bags from Oh Gwang-Taek.

“I’m going. Right! How much does this cost?” Kang Chan asked Oh Gwang-Taek.

“It’s 150,000 won. Hey! What’s the signal? Wait for a bit before going. I still have to call my men.”

“We’ve already planned everything out, so just follow Seok Kang-Ho. Put them in a call and tell them to go up the house once you hear me fighting.”

“Okay.”

“I’m going!”

Kang Chan inhaled, then followed the road up the house.

Past the restaurant, the path turned into a dirt track. Kang Chan thought people should’ve put concrete on it and turned it into an actual road. The ground was bare, so it had a long sunken line on either side of the narrow track. They were the distance of car wheels apart.

Step. Step.

Kang Chan walked while blinking to release the tension in his eyes. Having the kukri on his back felt great.

‘I see it now.’

Just like what Oh Gwang-Taek told him, the house came into view when Kang Chan went up a bit the mountain path. It was as if it was hiding on the left side. Rather than a villa, it was a common and old two-story western-style house.

Inside the barred gate was a parking lot that doubled as a garden, and to its right was the front door. The house also had a veranda on the second floor and marble stairs that led to the second floor from outside the house.

The time had come. Here, Kang Chan would find the people that ordered Kang Dae Kyung and Lanok’s death.

The gate came up to Kang Chan’s chest. He pressed the bell that was attached to it. The windows were frosted, so he couldn’t see inside the living room from where he was at all.

“Who is it?”

“I brought the grilled duck,” Kang Chan answered.

After a short silence had passed...

Beep! Rattle!

The door opened. Kang Chan got nervous for a moment because he thought that the sons of bitches were suspicious of him. He went across the yard without hesitation.

Kang Chan pulled the front door to open it, but it was locked from the inside.

“Wait!” Someone shouted. Kang Chan could hear the sound of the padlock turning.

Creak.

The front door opened. A mean-looking man held the door open with his foot, then held out his hand.

“How much is it?” he asked Kang Chan.

“It’s 150,000 won.”

Kang Chan handed over the three paper bags to the guy.

“Ah, you fucker. You should’ve given them to me after I’ve taken out the money.”

Kang Chan glanced inside the house as the man grumbled.

“Here!” The guy held out the money, and Kang Chan stared at his face.

“What are you doing, fucker?! Take the money already!”

A guy that had been sitting on the living room sofa leaned his upper body to the side. He then looked in Kang Chan’s direction. The moment when their eyes met, Kang Chan’s heart sank coldly. The look in his eyes showed that he was a professional at the level of the people that went to the hotel to try and kill Lanok. Plus, there weren’t just one or two of them here.

“Why is this fucker still isn’t taking the money?”

As the person that received the ducks was swearing, the guy on the sofa quickly got up. He recognized Kang Chan. No, they recognized each other.

“Move!”

The man yelled while running to the front door.

Whoosh! Slice!

Kang Chan pulled out the kukri and slit the neck of the person in front of him.

“Cough! Cough!”

Crash!

As his first opponent grasped onto his neck and bumped against the shoe shelf, Kang Chan ran and took a step into the entrance. The guy that had been on the sofa took a step forward from inside the doorway.

Pow. Pow-pow-pow-pow. Slice! Pow-pow.

Even though Kang Chan had sliced the guy's right elbow with the kukri, he still couldn't overpower him even a bit.

Bam! Stab!

Kang Chan and his enemy's elbows crashed against each other twice in front of their faces.

At that moment, other people moved quickly into the living room.

Chapter 83.1: Catching the Tail (2)

Bam! Stab!

Kang Chan positioned the kukri's blade up against the enemy's arm, preventing the enemy from rashly stopping Kang Chan's elbow.

Smack!

Kang Chan then swatted away his opponent's arm twice with his left hand and attacked with his right hand, moving it from side to side.

Stab! Stab! Stab!

The kukri's blade penetrated into the enemy's armpit, shoulder, and left side of the neck.

Splat! Bang-bang-bang. Crash.

Kang Chan's opponent gushed out blood as he pushed him back. Eventually, his opponent heavily fell backward.

As he did, another enemy went up to fight Kang Chan. It was as if he had been waiting.

Swish! Swoosh! Swish!

Kang Chan's situation could prove dangerous. Although he and his opponent were equipped with knives, Kang Chan had to use the entrance's hallway to force his opponents to fight him one by one. Things could swiftly take a turn for the worse if they started coming down from the balcony outside or if they were to open, enter, and pincer him through a window in the living room.

"Captain!" Seok Kang-Ho was loud.

Damn it!

Kang Chan discretely looked behind him.

Slice! Pit!

As he did, his shoulder got sliced twice even though he had moved his upper body back.

Swoosh!

Kang Chan ran away, seemingly heading for the entrance. A guy inside the house ran after him.

Swoosh! Swish. Swish. Swish.

Kang Chan swung his kukri four times to fend off the enemy.

Bam!

He then kicked the paper bag that had been dropped at the entrance. The enemy bent sideways to avoid the paper bag.

Bam! Bam!

Kang Chan kicked two more paper bags, then immediately threw himself at the enemy at the last moment. The enemy twisted his upper body to avoid the paper bag, then looked at Kang Chan with surprise in his eyes.

Slice! Slice!

Kang Chan deeply slit his opponent's neck and the area below his ear.

Splat!

The moment the man's blood started spurting, Kang Chan slammed himself against him to push through, making it seem like Kang Chan was hugging him.

Crash!

Swish! Swoosh! Swoosh!

Two more pounced on Kang Chan, one from each side. All three of them had bladed weapons, so they couldn't just recklessly crash into each other despite fighting at close range.

Kang Chan heard the sound of fighting from outside the house. Seok Kang-Ho and Oh Gwang-Taek and his gangsters were now battling the people that had gone down from the second floor through the stairs connected to the balcony outside. He felt as if he was running out of time.

Clang!

Kang Chan blocked the dagger of the enemy to his right with his kukri.

Slice! Slice!

The guy to his left sliced his waist, but Kang Chan managed to cut the wrist of the man to his right in return. As soon as his opponent's dagger fell to the ground...

Tatatata!

Kang Chan pounced on the enemy to his left as if he was running into his arms.

Kang Chan blocked his opponent's knife with his own kukri, then rotated his wrist and flicked the knife aside, following up with cuts to the opponent's wrist, forearm, and neck. However, the opponent to his right took that as an opportunity to stab him twice—one in his side and another in his armpit. Fortunately, since Kang Chan had sliced the guy's right wrist beforehand, his opponent's attack wasn't powerful enough to make him lose his grip on the kukri.

Bam! Pow! Pow-pow. Slice!

Gritting his teeth, Kang Chan turned around and stopped a guy from kicking him. He then immediately followed the block by slicing the guy's thigh. In response, his opponent moved his injured thigh away and looked at him with surprise.

He has time to do that?

Kang Chan immediately threw himself at him and used his kukri to cut him.

Slice! Slice! Slice!

Bang!

The guy that had his armpit, neck and the area beneath his ear sliced fell down.

Kang Chan kept hearing the people outside the house screaming and yelling. When he ran outside, he found more than ten gangsters already on the ground, bleeding. Seok Kang-Ho was holding on somehow.

Bang!

Kang Chan first ran over to and pushed Oh Gwang-Taek away with his shoulder, then fought the enemy in front of him.

Pow-pow! Stab! Stab! Slice! Slice!

Kang Chan had now realized what was going on. Except for the first two men he fought, their enemies lacked actual combat experience. Kang Chan slit his current opponent's neck, turned around, and pounced on another enemy. Meanwhile, three more gangsters screamed tragically while grasping onto their necks.

Kang Chan immediately swung his kukri, shoving the gangsters away.

Slice! Slice! Swing! Swing!

His opponent looked at Kang Chan while applying pressure to his neck, his eyes showing he couldn't believe what just happened.

Splat! Thud.

Kang Chan turned around, finding the blood-covered Seok Kang-Ho still in the middle of a fight. His opponent was the last of their enemies.

Kang Chan immediately ran over and cut the left shoulder of Seok Kang-Ho's enemy, who was swinging his knife toward Seok Kang-Ho. Kang Chan then consecutively slashed his neck and the area below his ear.

Thud.

"Who do these fuckers think they are?" Seok Kang-Ho asked, seemingly to insult them.

"Contact manager Kim and clear the first floor. I'll search through the second floor."

Kang Chan walked past Oh Gwang-Taek, who was just standing around stunned, and ran toward the second floor. He took the stairs outside the house to go up to the veranda, then immediately ran into the second floor.

"Tsk!"

Kang Chan frowned. There were around ten dead gangsters inside, their necks and the area below their ears sliced open. They were probably the people that had allegedly been called in from China

One of them was still wriggling, but it wouldn't be wrong to consider him as good as dead even if he was in the emergency room right now due to those neck and ear wounds he had sustained. After all, the moment an artery between those wounds was cut, it would shrivel up and become smaller than half of its original size.

There was one more room on either side of the second floor, the situations of which were even more horrible. Inside them, he found the people he had only injured during the battle were now dead. Someone had sliced through the bandages around them and slit their necks. Who did this, and for what?

Kang Chan went down to the yard. Seok Kang-Ho was walking out from the front door. He had ripped his clothes and wrapped the cloth around his arm and shoulder.

"We didn't find anything special on the first floor," Seok Kang-Ho commented.

"Give me a cigarette."

"Here."

Seok Kang-Ho's hand was entirely covered with blood, so Kang Chan took a cigarette, lit it up, and put it in Seok Kang-Ho's mouth for him.

"I think they're beginners," Seok Kang-Ho commented.

Kang Chan just nodded in agreement. He then yelled, "Oh Gwang-Taek!"

It seemed like Oh Gwang-Taek hadn't returned to his senses yet. His eyes were blank as he walked to Kang Chan.

"Here."

Kang Chan lit up the cigarette that Oh Gwang-Taek had reflexively taken from him.

Chk chk.

"Whoo."

There was nothing better than cigarettes at times like these.

"Have you contacted manager Kim?" Kang Chan asked Seok Kang-Ho.

"Yeah. He told us to stay put and not to contact anyone else since he's coming with the medical team."

Kang Chan looked around the yard. He was told that more than twenty gangsters came here, but amongst them, only four of them were standing right now, and that included Oh Gwang-Taek. He felt sorry for the dead guys, but in that situation, newbies had basically thrown themselves at professionals[1].

"Do you have another cigarette?" Oh Gwang-Taek asked Kang Chan.

Kang Chan wordlessly handed over a cigarette to Oh Gwang-Taek.

“Is this why you told me to keep out of this?” Oh Gwang-Taek asked.

Oh Gwang-Taek’s eyes were gleaming with anger, perhaps because he had come to his senses.

“Answer me.”

He looked threatening. It was as if he was about to attack Kang Chan.

“Oh Gwang-Taek, your men’s determination in knife fights wasn’t inferior, especially those like you. But this is a different kind of battle. Our enemies today were specifically made for fights like this. All they ever did were eat and train to kill others,” Kang Chan explained.

“Then what about you and Kang-Ho hyung-nim?”

Kang Chan glanced at Seok Kang-Ho, then looked at Oh Gwang-Taek again. Oh Gwang-Taek couldn’t even take a puff of the cigarette, even though he had asked for it.

“I asked what kind of people you and Kang-Ho hyung-nim are!”

“Both of us used to live in this kind of world. That’s all I can tell you,” Kang Chan answered Oh Gwang-Taek.

Oh Gwang-Taek looked straight at Kang Chan. He was surprised and angry. This was hard for him to take in. People in his situation would end up doing one of two options.

They either pounced.

“Whoo!”

Or they dropped their heads like Oh Gwang-Taek did just now.

Kang Chan bit on a cigarette, then held a lighter up to light it.

“Give me another one,” Oh Gwang-Taek held out his hand after throwing the cigarette that he had been holding to the ground.

Click.

“Whoo. What should I do? I feel sorry for the fuckers that got killed. What am I supposed to tell them now that they had been killed without even being able to fight back just to protect me?” Oh Gwang-Taek asked.

Things like this shouldn’t be touched. If Oh Gwang-Taek pounced on Kang Chan, then he would beat him up. But it wasn’t respectful to provoke a person that had lost their subordinates or someone they loved. They heard the noisy sound of a car engine and the sounds of people stepping on gravel. Soon, a van and an ambulance roughly came into their view.

Click!

The door opened, and the agents and paramedics spilled into the house.

Four of them ran into the house without a word, seemingly aware of what transpired here. The four paramedics split into two groups. They then examined the dead gangsters and treated the survivors’ injuries.

An agent and a doctor approached Kang Chan at the same time.

“We were told that the manager will arrive a bit later since he's at Samseong-dong[2] right now, so please get some treatment for now. We'll be transferring the bodies to the police hospital, filling up their death certificates, and handing them over,” one of them told Kang Chan.

“I'll take care of my injuries since it's not severe!” Kang Chan called.

Chapter 83.2: Catching the Tail (2)

“Oh Gwang-Taek!” Kang Chan called.

Oh Gwang-Taek obediently walked over when Kang Chan called him. Even when Kang Chan told him about how the bodies would be taken care of, he only listened silently. Meanwhile, the doctor started treating his injuries.

“Go ahead,” Kang Chan told the agent.

“Understood.”

When the agent walked away to issue orders to the others, Kang Chan sat on a yellowish plastic tub that had fallen on one side of the yard.

“You're not affected?” Oh Gwang-Taek asked.

Oh Gwang-Taek sat back against a big rock near him with his legs straight out in front of him. He then stroked his face with both hands.

“I know you feel angry and empty right now, Oh Gwang-Taek, but you need to get yourself together for now,” Kang Chan sounded quieter.

At that moment, another agent inside the house approached Kang Chan. “It's going to take some time to take care of the corpses upstairs, so we requested assistance. Is there anything else that you need?”

“We're fine here.”

The agent turned around and walked to the car. Seok Kang-Ho then came toward Kang Chan and plopped down onto a thin piece of marble floor. He had completely taken off his top and had bandages wrapped around his shoulder and chest.

“Kukris and bayonets are different. Kukris are meant to slice through your opponents. Don't insist on using one if you're just going to treat it like a bayonet,” Kang Chan told Seok Kang-Ho.

“Got it. Please get your shoulder and waist treated.”

“It's fine. I'd feel bad getting such a small injury treated even though so many people died.”

“You're still bleeding, you know.”

“I’m not getting it treated. Leaving my wounds like this makes me feel comfortable. I’ll watch how they heal first and get treatment only if I don’t recover properly, so just leave me be for now.”

Seok Kang-Ho turned his gaze while sighing, and Oh Gwang-Taek gave Kang Chan a strange look.

“Get treated,” Oh Gwang-Taek told Kang Chan.

“Too many people died because I messed up.”

“How is this your fault?”

“I ran in there without looking into the situation, and I failed to anticipate that there would be people in there that had gone through special training. Oh Gwang-Taek, I’m currently forcing myself to hold back because now’s the time to be cold, so just leave me be.”

Kang Chan’s eyes burned furiously as spoke, silencing even Oh Gwang-Taek. Kang Chan missed the hot coffee Michelle made for him in the past.

He probably missed its scent.

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

Kang Chan took out his phone and looked at it. Kim Hyung-Jung was calling him.

- Mr. Kang Chan, I’ll be there in fifteen to twenty minutes.

“I’m sorry for bothering you, but please bring something to drink when you come here. Doesn’t matter if it’s canned coffee or bottled water.”

- Understood.

Kang Chan sighed loudly and looked at the sky. Darkness was approaching as the sun set.

A moment later, three or four more ambulances arrived. All the corpses were soon taken care of.

“Stay at the hospital, Oh Gwang-Taek. You should stay by their side in their last moments,” Kang Chan said.

“Make sure to contact me once you find out who’s behind this. Otherwise—”

Oh Gwang-Taek knew what he was going to say won’t work on Kang Chan at all, regardless of what he said. He turned around and walked away while gritting his teeth.

They had thought that this was a rabbit burrow, but a badger full of spite had jumped out instead.

‘What were these sons of a bitches really trying to do?’

Two of their enemies had been properly trained, one had adequate skills, and about seven were lacking experience. The ones that had pounced on Kang Chan when they saw him went upstairs after realizing that Seok Kang-Ho arrived. They then slit the necks of those who were hiding. If

Seok Kang-Ho hadn't called Kang Chan, or if Oh Gwang-Taek was the only one who followed him, the enemies would've killed the two of them first before trying to kill Kang Chan.

Still, even if that was what happened, Kang Chan thought he wouldn't have died in this fight. However, Oh Gwang-Taek would've certainly been killed, and Seok Kang-Ho would've been in danger.

'What's this? What were they trying to do?'

Kang Chan blankly glared at the corner of the yard until an agent came toward him with a paper cup on top of a magazine.

"I got this from the restaurant below."

It seemed like Kim Hyung-Jung had ordered them to do this by phone.

Kang Chan took a sip of the coffee, then put it beside him since it didn't meet his expectations. As their surroundings got dark, a car came toward the house with its headlights on. Kim Hyung-Jung got out of it and immediately went toward Kang Chan. "Are you okay?"

"Yes."

Kim Hyung-Jung looked at Kang Chan's injuries and their surroundings.

"Let's get out of here for now, Mr. Kang Chan."

The medical team had already left, leaving only the National Intelligence Service around them.

"Can the three of us have a conversation for a moment, Mr. Kang Chan?" Kang Chan asked.

"Let's leave first—we should at least go to Yoo Bi-Corp."

Kang Chan shook his head. Kim Hyung-Jun stood with a hardened face for a moment, then ordered the agent behind him to "go down and stand by."

"Please sit here."

Kang Chan sat on a fallen plastic bucket, Seok Kang-Ho on a piece of the marble floor deeper into the yard, and Kim Hyung-Jung on a rock in the garden.

"It was Oh Gwang-Taek who had found this place," Kang Chan told Kim Hyung-Jung.

Kang Chan bit on a cigarette and lit it, then handed over the cigarette case and the lighter to Seok Kang-Ho.

"When I rushed into the house, there were about ten guys that had received special training. Two of them were top-tier, one was good enough, while the rest were so-so. If you weren't aware of this, then that means you were defenseless until they tried to kill someone, and if you were, then that means you've been

keeping information from me. Which one is it?" Kang Chan asked Kim Hyung-Jung.

Seok Kang-Ho glanced at Kang Chan after he bit on a cigarette.

"Close to twenty gangsters died," Kang Chan commented, smirked, then continued. "The 'Unicorn'? The development of South Korea? I'd be happy to help with that. But it becomes a different story if doing so means the people precious to me will keep getting attacked one-sidedly. You're well aware that my father's in the hospital right now. You visited him, after all. Who's next? It's probably going to be Seok Kang-Ho or my mother, right? After all, they probably wouldn't have tried to kill Lanok or the Prime Minister with just this amount of men, weak men at that."

"Mr. Seok Kang-Ho, will you give me a cigarette?" Kim Hyung-Jung held out his hand as if he was trying not to listen to what Kang Chan was going to say next.

Chk chk.

Holding the cigarette butt, Kim Hyung-Jung skillfully lit up the cigarette with a lighter.

"Whoo-oo." He looked at the cigarette as he turned it in between his fingers, then took another puff.

"We couldn't identify the people that attacked us at the golf club. No country has information on them. That's probably going to be the case for the ones that died here today as well. We couldn't do anything to identify them other than perform examinations on their teeth and test their DNA to get even vague information about them. We've concluded that they're North Korean special forces that had received secondary training in China before coming into South Korea through Japan," Kim Hyung-Jung explained.

When darkness descended, the mosquitos started to bite them, one by one.

"The information about Lanok's golf club schedule was most likely leaked by one of his people. China and Japan probably tried to kill Lanok first, then they tried to kill you because they think that you're a secret agent that France and our government have created," Kim Hyung-Jung continued.

This wasn't the answer that Kang Chan had wanted.

When Kang Chan twisted his head to the side with dissatisfaction and didn't say anything, Kim Hyung-Jung inhaled the cigarette that was close to being finished, then threw it to a corner.

"The National Intelligence Service is focusing on Yang Jin-Woo and Huh Sang-Soo since they're the two leading forces in South Korea that helped the North Korean soldiers come into the country," Kim Hyung-Jung told Kang Chan.

Kang Chan had never heard of their names before. Of course, he had no thoughts of leaving them alone, but was Kim Hyung-Jung saying that just knowing them would become a problem?

“As a member of the National Assembly on his fifth term, Huh Sang-Soo is in charge of national defense, and Yang Jin-Woo is the chairman of Suh Jeong Group,” Kim Hyung-Jung explained.

Suh Jeong Group? Kang Chan cocked his head to the side. Where did I hear that name? Suh Jeong?

When Kang Chan looked at Kim Hyung-Jung...

“It’s the parent group of Suh Jeong Motors, which had been completely destroyed because of Kang Yoo Motors,” Kim Hyung-Jung explained further.

“If so, then the reason they tried to kill my father...”

“It seems they wanted to take revenge for what had happened in the past while also giving you a warning. The truck driver that ran away from the accident in Yongin was previously affiliated with the Suh Jeong Transportation Company. Unfortunately, by the time we had found him, he was already dead.”

Kang Chan smirked.

Yang Jin-Woo? You son of a bitch.

Kim Hyung-Jung sighed. He looked worried.

Chapter 84.1: Prelude (1)

Kang Chan was thinking of going home in Seok Kang-Ho’s car.

The problem was his wounds. Seok Kang-Ho had bandages wrapped around his upper body, while Kang Chan was still bleeding out.

“Mr. Kang Chan, let’s get you treated now.” Kim Hyung-Jung’s honest words went against Kang Chan’s wishes, but he had been waiting and left Kang Chan’s wounds alone for far too long. They had to stop the bleeding.

“Let’s at least bandage around your wounds. Your parents are in the Bang Ji Hospital, so you should get preliminary treatment here first. We can also buy two shirts to change into.”

Kang Chan stood up because of Seok Kang-Ho’s suggestion.

They headed to the grilled duck restaurant and got on Seok Kang-Ho’s ‘Chiffre.’ They then merged into the main road, where a car and a van were waiting. Kim Hyung-Jung led Kang Chan to the van. An agent examined Kang Chan’s injuries under Kim Hyung-Jung’s orders.

“We have to stitch up your wounds,” the agent told Kang Chan.

“We don’t have the equipment to do that here, so just bandage it.”

The agent disinfected Kang Chan's wounds because of his attitude, then tightly wrapped the bandages around them.

"Great job."

When Kang Chan got out of the car, Kim Hyung-Jung and Seok Kang-Ho walked toward him.

"I'll go home in Mr. Seok Kang-Ho's car," Kang Chan told Kim Hyung-Jung.

"Mr. Kang Chan," Kim Hyung-Jung called him as if he had something to say, but just said, "understood."

After parting ways with Kim Hyung-Jung, Kang Chan and Seok Kang-Ho immediately left.

"Shouldn't you buy some clothes to change into?" Seok Kang-Ho asked.

"Let's go to my place. We can change there."

"Ah, right. No one's home, right?" Seok Kang-Ho commented as he nodded and observed Kang Chan's mood.

"What?"

"Ease up that look in your eyes. If other people see it, they're going to think you're going home to fight."

"Thinking that son of a bitch Yang Jin-Woo will get to laugh behind our backs because he succeeded makes it impossible for me to calm down," Kang Chan responded.

"We can't just run up to someone so famous even a three-year-old would know and twist his neck. Even if we could, we didn't find any clear evidence to justify it. That fucker probably did this with that in mind."

"Son of a bitch. He should just live in comfort and spend his money if he had that much. Why is he doing something like this? Is he crazy?"

"Kim Hyung-Jung said that he suffered a loss because of Kang Yoo Motors, right?" Seok Kang-Ho asked.

"Hey! That fucker was the one that butted in. And even if he suffered a loss, how much would it have been? Regardless, that's not even what's important!"

"What is, then?" Seok Kang-Ho asked again.

"What matters is that that fucker cooperated in attacking Lanok and my father to stop the 'Unicorn' project from happening. What I don't understand is how Yang Jin-Woo could be so quick to kill someone just because he couldn't get the distribution rights for Gong Te's automobile. If South Korea gets richer, that fucker Yang Jin-Woo is going to earn more money than anyone else anyway."

The traffic frustrated Kang Chan, so he lowered the window. Perhaps it was because of the cool air from the air conditioner, but he thought the air that rushed into the car was quite warm.

“Are we missing something?” Seok Kang-Ho asked.

“We probably are.”

Seok Kang-Ho didn't say anything else upon noticing the look in Kang Chan's eyes.

A French restaurant in a hotel in South Korea.

Yang Jin-Woo, who was in one of its VIP rooms, didn't pick up the fork even though he had an escargot dish in front of him.

Of the four people that met at the Japanese restaurant, only Huh Sang-Soo was currently missing.

“What did Assemblyman Huh say?” Yang Jin-Woo asked someone.

“He only told us to make sure to discard the data.”

“That's already done.”

When Yang Jin-Woo turned his gaze, the man sitting to his left answered while bowing his head.

“The perpetrator this time was Kang Chan as well.”

“General manager Kwak, what I want to hear from you is how we're going to take care of that crazy bastard,” Yang Jin-Woo said.

Kwak Do-Young had a big build and large and bright eyes. Even his hands and feet were big. He was so large he made the table and the dishes look that much smaller.

“We're being careful until we can reclaim the National Intelligence Service. We're searching through Kang Dae-Kyung, Yoo Hye-Sook, and Kang Chan's previous records that are available, but we're grappling with this issue since they haven't done any suspicious activities until recently,” Kwak Do-Young answered.

“General manager Kwak.”

“Yes, Mr. Chairman.”

Yang Jin-Woo took a sip of the water in a crystal cup, then said, “I think I already did everything I could for this country and its people.”

“Who wouldn't know that?”

“I feel the same way about this incident as well. I did everything that people asked me to do for them and the country. But if we still can't take care of one Red traitor for the Westerners even after I did that, then what was I enduring

these kinds of sacrifices for? Forget the traitor—I can't even touch the parents of that dirty fucker. What's with this situation?"

"About that, if you give us a bit more time, then—"

"The traitor has to be given a clear warning. I'll participate in the next plan if it means showing him that the world isn't easy enough for a breed of humans without a good background to act unruly."

Kwak Do-Young sighed with a groan. "Mr. Chairman, what you just said could upset the assemblyman."

The edges of Yang Jin-Woo's lips slightly curled upward. "I don't want to be disgraced by letting our people, who have been bought by the Westerners, call us traitors even though we've given it our all to feed and look after them. I'd much rather step out of this matter."

Looking troubled, Kwak Do-Young frowned. "I'll make sure to pass on to the Assemblyman how firm you are about your intentions."

"At least one of the parents that made such a traitor should be punished. They're no better than trash for opposing me and trusting their foolish child! I don't think Kang Chan will bat an eye even if one of his parents is killed, but still, I wish to see at least see his mother as a corpse."

"I'll pass on exactly what you said."

"I'll trust you, so I'll send the required funds by tomorrow." Yang Jin-Woo then turned his gaze. Cho Il-Kwon, the chief secretary, looked at Kwak Do-Young from over his glasses.

"Honey, would it really be okay if we take all of this?" Yoo Hye-Sook asked Kang Dae-Kyung. She was looking at the envelopes with a worried expression.

"Calm down. There's no way to return them either anyway. I'm way more glad about our son not going around doing bad things than about the money itself."

Yoo Hye-Sook looked like she didn't understand what he said.

"I'm talking about the Prime Minister saying that what Channy is doing right now is difficult and that only he is capable of doing it."

"I thought you were talking about something you're the only one aware of again."

"Like what? Channy is also devoted to you."

Yoo Hye-Sook smiled as if she was satisfied when Kang Dae-Kyung said that.

"Honey, what are you going to eat for lunch?" Yoo Hye-Sook then asked.

"Go home and look after Channy. You can just come back tomorrow."

“No.”

Yoo Hye-Sook stroked Kang Dae-Kyung’s hand after placing the envelope on one side. “I’m going to call Channy and stay here today, so just focus on getting better and getting out of here quickly, honey. I probably let you carry an extremely heavy burden alone. I’m sorry.”

“You’re saying nonsense.”

“You went through a hard time, didn’t you? I wouldn’t have known if you aren’t suffering from body aches like this.”

“What’s with you? If you’re that sorry, then kiss me!”

“Honey! What are you going to do if someone sees us!” Yoo Hye-Sook slapped Kang Dae-Kyung’s hand while pursing her lips right away.

“What’s wrong with it? It’s just the two of us here.”

“Are you going to stop with just a kiss?”

“Would I really think about doing something else in here?” Kang Dae-Kyung asked back.

“Jeez!”

Yoo Hye-Sook raised herself up while pretending that she couldn’t win against him, then kissed him. “Are you satisfied now?”

“I definitely am!”

Yoo Hye-Sook tightly held onto Kang Dae-Kyung’s hand. “I’m always happy and thankful because I met you, honey.”

“Why is my madam acting like this today of all days?”

“Maybe because you and Channy make me so happy.”

They tightly held each other’s hands.

On their way up to Kang Chan’s house, Kang Chan talked to Yoo Hye-Sook and decided to stay at home today. As soon as they arrived at the apartment, he handed comfortable clothes to Seok Kang-Ho, and Kang Chan changed after lightly washing up.

“Put the dirty clothes here. Let’s throw them out when we leave,” Kang Chan said.

He didn’t know how many clothes he already had to throw out because of how often he got into fights.

“What are you going to do for dinner?” Seok Kang-Ho asked.

“I should eat.”

“Let’s go to the baekban restaurant in Misari, then have a cup of coffee in the establishment in front of it afterward. It won’t feel right to smoke in here anyway, right?”

“Sure.”

Kang Chan and Seok Kang-Ho got out of the apartment.

“Are you thinking of killing Yang Jin-Woo?” Seok Kang-Ho asked Kang Chan.

“Yeah.”

Seok Kang-Ho nodded, seemingly expecting that would be his answer.

“They had tried to kill our people anyway. Regardless of the reason behind their actions, they’re not going to give up until they’re satisfied. And if they’re not going to give up, then we might as well do this our way,” Kang Chan explained.

“Have you thought about how you’re going to kill him?”

“Not yet. Gathering information about that fucker comes first, so there isn’t anything in particular that’s come across my mind.”

“It’s not going to be easy.”

“Right. I have to think about it for now.”

Kang Chan stroked his forehead with the hand draped over the open window.

Upon arriving at Misari, they had baekban. He wasn’t hungry, but when the food was served, he cleanly emptied the rice bowl.

They then went to the coffee shop they went to often and ordered two iced coffees. Afterward, they sat outside at a table that had a view of the river.

Click.

“Whoo.”

Coffee was served while they were smoking.

“I’ll meet manager Kim tomorrow to see if I can get him to give me information about Yang Jin-Woo. If he does, great. If not, I’ll forget just about it and kill Yang Jin-Woo with just the two of us. Keep that in mind,” Kang Chan told Seok Kang-Ho.

“Alright.”

Now that they had come to a decision, Kang Chan felt at ease.

Chapter 84.2: Prelude (1)

They came back to Seoul, then parted ways in front of the apartment.

He couldn't go to the hospital yet because there was still a lot of spite visible in his eyes. If he went there in this state, Kang Dae-Kyung and Yoo Hye-Sook would immediately ask what was wrong. He felt like he had received an order not to attack first, even though they didn't know when the enemy would attack because they were right in the enemy's sights.

Close to twenty gangsters had been killed. Kang Chan had always hated them and denied their lifestyle in general, but they shouldn't have suffered such absurd deaths. If only they were a little bit more careful. If only he didn't let his guard down because the people involved in the scene of the Yongin accident were former gangsters that Oh Gwang-Taek had recognized.

Kang Chan didn't turn on the lights, even though the living room was very dark.

'You have to be cold-hearted, Kang Chan.'

Kang Chan exhaled deeply, then pulled himself together.

Buzz— Buzz—Buzz—.

Sitting absent-mindedly, his phone screen's light lit up the living room when he got a text. Did this mean that he should turn on the lights?

Kang Chan flicked on the living room light switch and held up the phone.

[Where are you?]

It was Kim Mi-Young. At that moment, he felt sorry because he remembered his kiss with Michelle. He calmed down at least a little bit as he exhaled deeply.

Should I not call her? He was also scared he'd make a mistake he was getting furious at the moment.

Buzz— Buzz—Buzz—.

[I'm on my way home from hagwon.]

Kang Chan smirked when the image of Kim Mi-Young trudging home while looking crestfallen came across his mind. He hesitated for a moment but pressed the call button anyway.

- Hello?

"Are you done with your hagwon?"

- Yeah!

Kang Chan felt as if Kim Mi-Young was his younger sister again today. For some strange reason, when he heard her voice his spiteful mind calmed down a little bit.

"Would you like to meet up for a bit?"

- Can you do that?

Kim Mi-Young's voice had a hint of cuteness. How could he say no when she was this happy?

"I'll go out right now."

- Okay.

Kang Chan trudged down the apartment after hanging up.

As he was going out of the entrance, Kim Mi-Young was already at the front gate. She ran toward him after she discovered him.

“You’re going to fall!” Kang Chan yelled.

Kim Mi-Young approached him while smiling brightly.

Jeez, you little kid![1]

Kang Chan looked around them. There were a lot of people on each bench because it was a hot day, and perhaps because it was a Saturday.

“Would you like to eat patbingsu?” Kang Chan asked.

“I have to go home early today.”

Kim Mi-Young looked around them as well. The stares from the people that were sitting seemed to make her uncomfortable.

“Let’s just take a walk instead, then.” Kang Chan asked again.

“Okay.”

Kang Chan took Kim Mi-Young’s bag and placed it across his shoulder, then leisurely got out of the apartment.

Kim Mi-Young covered her mouth with her hand and yawned.

“Are you sleepy?” Kang Chan asked.

“I’ve only been getting three hours of sleep per day nowadays because I’ve been studying French on the side.”

“Why are you studying that much? You can just finish the university entrance exam first before focusing on that.”

“I’m preparing to take the DALF[2] at the end of the year.”

“Already?”

Was this possible? Her preparation wasn’t to take the DELF, the basic level test, but to take the DALF test, which was for advanced learners only was going to be held in a few days?

“I’m studying hard because the certification is at the end of this year. I’m going to study abroad after finishing one semester in South Korea. I made a good decision, right?” Kim Mi-Young asked.

“That’s excellent!”

He was being sincere. If she could pass the DALF, the French qualification test, in only six months, then that meant she learned how to speak like a native in a year.

“Studying is so fun. I’m getting more of it done since I made a plan that would allow me to study French after studying the school subjects that I had targeted. I get a lot of energy when I think about living with you in France starting next year!” Kim Mi-Young exclaimed.

When Kang Chan smiled lightly, Kim Mi-Young smiled along with him.

“We’re going to be in France on my birthday next year. You can’t forget what you promised me,” Kim Mi-Young reminded Kang Chan.

“I won’t.”

“Huhuhu,” Kim Mi-Young laughed in response to Kang Chan’s answer. He expected her to become a bit more mature within the few days that he hadn’t seen her, but she felt like a proper high schooler again now that she heard her laugh.

Kim Mi-Young looks a bit thicker than Michelle since her chest and butt are bigger in relation to her waist... what am I doing?

Kang Chan shook his head to get rid of his useless thoughts.

A lot of the spite left him as he walked with Kim Mi-Young.

“I’ll study hard,” Kim Mi-Young said.

“Alright.”

When Kim Mi-Young turned her head, the look in her eyes tugged at his heartstrings with a bump. Perhaps it was because she was a child that studied with spite, but the look in her eyes showed she wasn’t going to shatter easily.

“Mi-Young, you’re going to enter a university in Seoul first, right?” Kang Chan asked.

“Yeah. I heard doing so will make it more advantageous for me to study abroad in France.”

Kang Chan asked that question just in case. After they circled around about half of the apartment complex’s vicinity, they circled around to the entrance through a shortcut.

“You should sleep more, just for today. Tomorrow is Sunday anyway, so you can study a bit more then. You look tired,” Kang Chan commented.

“Huh? Do I look ugly?”

At times like this, she was definitely a female adolescent student.

“That’s not it—I only said that because I’m worried about you.”

“Okay. I’ll sleep a little early today, then. bye!”

“Alright.”

Kim Mi-Young smiled brightly.

When Kang Chan waved his hand, Kim Mi-Young quickly ran off as if she was heading toward a goal that she had set. He wanted to sit on a bench if there weren't as many people, but there were still many of them since a lot of families had come outside.

Kang Chan returned home. A moment later, Yoo Hye-Sook called him. He looked after them by asking if they had dinner and if anything else happened. He then talked to Kang Dae-Kyung for a moment. Kang Chan thought everything was alright since he sounded calm.

But what happened to that fucker Oh Gwang-Taek? Even though they were gangsters, they died all too soon. If they went through the police hospital, then they'd certainly be at the funeral home. Hence, it felt uncomfortable that Oh Gwang-Taek wasn't calling him.

‘Should I call him?’

Kang Chan had been glaring at his phone, but he went into his room and lay down in bed instead. He fell asleep while feeling his injuries throb a little bit.

~

Kang Chan had been planning on waking up early in the morning and taking a shower, but he just washed his hair and his face since the bandages wrapped around his waist and shoulder were severely damper than he had expected.

As always, omelets were the best for the morning. This damned dish was okay when he ate with Yoo Hye-Sook or Kang Dae-Kyung, but it tasted so horrible now that he was trying to eat it alone.

Kang Chan changed as he thought about going to the hospital. He was going to have to throw out his clothes again because the ones he had worn yesterday had dried bloodstains and were now black.

Yang Jin Woo, you son of a bitch! I should've searched for your face on the internet.

Kang Chan got changed and went down to the apartment. He put the clothes in a recycling bin before taking a taxi.

If the Bang Ji Hospital didn't recognize Kang Chan, then that would be very suspicious.

The doctor on duty examined Kang Chan's wounds more calmly than Yoo Hun-Woo. He then disinfected, stitched, and wrapped bandages around them.

“I don't think your wounds will be that big of a concern since you received good first aid. Please get a shot and take the prescribed medicine,” the doctor told Kang Chan.

“Thank you for your hard work.”

After Kang Chan got the shot, he went up to Kang Dae-Kyung's room with the prescription in his back pocket.

Rattle.

“Oh my! Channy!” Yoo Hye-Sook exclaimed.

“How is father doing?”

“All good! He’s a lot better now. Have you had breakfast?”

“Yes. I made myself an omelet.”

Kang Chan examined Kang Dae-Kyung first, then looked at Yoo Hye-Sook. “Mother, Have you had breakfast?”

“This hospital is weird. They served us an abundant meal, like a special meal. They even gave me food as well. They’re not trying to amp up our hospital bills, are they?”

Kang Dae-Kyung and Kang Chan burst out with laughter at the same time because of what Yoo Hye-Sook had said.

“There wasn’t anything else, right?” Yoo Hye-Sook asked Kang Chan.

“Yes. Nothing happened.”

Kang Chan’s heart warmed up as he was looking at Yoo Hye-Sook.

“Chan, can you stay at the hospital for a bit by any chance?” Kang Dae-Kyung asked.

“Yes, father. Why do you ask?”

“I plan on sending your mom home so she can get some rest. She keeps saying that I shouldn’t be alone like the other patients since I’m the one suffering from body aches. Honey! Since Channy is here now, go home and get some rest. Come back after.”

“Please do that. Get some rest while I’m here,” Kang Chan added.

“Okay, Channy. I’ll go home, take a shower, and change clothes. I’ll return afterward. Until then, look after your father,” Yoo Hye-Sook left the room after stroking Kang Chan’s shoulder.

“Have you had tea?” Kang Chan asked Kang Dae-Kyung.

“Your mom made it for me. Feel free to drink something if you want to.”

“I’m fine.”

He was going to crave cigarettes if he sloppily drank instant coffee.

“You’re worried about me, aren’t you?” Kang Dae-Kyung asked an unexpected question, then stared at Kang Chan. “When did you grow up so much that you can now worry about me?”

Kang Dae-Kyung elevated the head of the bed and leaned against it. He then stroked Kang Chan's head, tousling his hair.

"Don't worry about me. If what you're doing is right, then keep doing it. Seeing sincerity in the eyes of the people and students that visited me is enough for me, so don't needlessly worry about me. If you have to, then ask for my help whenever. I can do that for you, right?"

Kang Chan couldn't even answer. He only blinked.

"I thought that you were all grown up, but seeing you like this makes me realize you're still young," Kang Dae-Kyung continued.

Kang Chan really liked Kang Dae-Kyung's touch.

"Chan."

"Yes, father?"

"I won't ask you why those people tried to kill me or how you found out about it. However, I hope there wouldn't be instances where your mom would get startled or injured."

"Yes. I'll stop at nothing to make sure of that."

Kang Chan thought that he had to kill Yang Jin-Woo as fast as possible.

Chapter 85.1: Prelude (2)

The doctor that had stitched up Kang Chan's waist and shoulder came by to treat them. The son hid his wounds, and the father hid the identity of his illness to appear healthy. However, neither did so with bad intentions.

Just as Kang Chan was thinking about calling Kim Hyung-Jung, the latter called him instead just at the right time.

- Mr. Kang Chan, how's your father doing?

"I'm at the hospital, and he's a lot better, thanks to you."

- Do you have some time to spare in the afternoon?

"I'm not sure. I'm in my father's room right now."

Kang Dae-Kyung, who was in front of Kang Chan, gestured that he should go.

"Yes! I think we can meet up."

- Then please give me a call when you're leaving the hospital.

"Will do."

When Kang Chan ended the call, Kang Dae-Kyung looked at Kang Chan as if he was curious about the phone call.

“It’s manager Kim. He wants to see me today,” Kang Chan told Kang Dae-Kyung.

“You should go. No matter how important of a role you took on, you shouldn’t disrespect adults.”

“Alright.”

It felt good that his father was worried about these things for him.

“Did you know that your mom has become dramatically popular among graduates nowadays?” Kang Dae-Kyung asked.

“Mom’s popular?”

“Yeah. People found out what you did for us at the hotel, and how you gave the daughter of her friend a chance to appear in a drama. They also heard that you got admitted to a university in France and a university in Seoul. Your mom’s been feeling as if she’s walking on clouds lately.”

Kang Chan smiled slightly, and Kang Dae-Kyung smiled in turn after thanking him.

While they were talking about random topics, Kang Chan suddenly remembered Yoo Hun-Woo’s advice.

“Father, can you really move on already despite having gone through something like this? You’re not curious about how I found out?” Kang Chan asked.

“Honestly, I’m curious, but I think it would be best for you if I forget what happened that day. If I ended up discovering what you do, I feel like I’d stop you or interfere. Knowing you and I are safe is enough for me. Still, don’t try to manage everything by yourself. If serving the country proves difficult, then you can complain to me sometimes.”

“Alright.”

“Come here. I probably won’t get to do this anymore when you get older.”

Kang Chan awkwardly went in-between Kang Dae-Kyung’s arms when the latter opened them.

Pat. Pat. Pat.

Kang Dae-Kyung patted his back while only their shoulders were touching.

“The look in your eyes on that day is still vivid in my mind. I’m honestly scared, but I’m enduring it, so don’t ever think you’re alone. Open up to me whenever you’re tired or if things become difficult, okay?” Kang Dae-Kyung said.

“Okay.”

“Don’t get hurt.”

Rattle.

Even before Kang Dae-Kyung could finish talking, the door opened.

“Why did you come here so early?” Kang Dae-Kyung asked Yoo Hye-Sook.

“I was worried that Channy would find this difficult.” Yoo Hye-Sook smiled pleasantly at them. “Phew, our Channy has been consoling his dad. Give me a hug as well.”

Kang Chan hugged Yoo Hye-Sook, who had wrapped her arms around his neck.

“I love you, Channy. I love you so much,” Yoo Hye-Sook said.

Kang Chan couldn't even respond. He had never thought that this kind of happiness existed in this world and that it would become his.

Yoo Hye-Sook peeled some fruits with the knife she brought, and they all ate together for the first time in a long while. For lunch, they had the bossam that Kang Chan ordered.

“Honey, I'm going to be discharged tomorrow,” Kang Dae-Kyung told Yoo Hye-Sook afterward.

“But the doctor said you should rest for about a week, honey!”

“I don't have to—I already feel great after a good night's sleep yesterday. This room is a bit uncomfortable as well. I'll tell the director tomorrow about my wishes, and I'll get discharged if he says that it's okay. I'll rest for a day or two more at home, so don't worry.”

Yoo Hye-Sook glared at Kang Dae-Kyung with suspicion, then nodded after adding the proviso “we'll decide after hearing what the director has to say.”

“You do know you have to go to the Foundation office next week, right?” Kang Dae-Kyung asked Yoo Hye-Sook.

“Why should I? You take care of it.”

“Why shouldn't you? Drop by for even just a moment since it's an officetel[1] that's beside our office. There should be a female employee there.”

Kang Chan listened and watched them talk about the Kang-Yoo foundation until almost 3 pm.

“I'll be leaving now. I'm thinking about meeting the manager,” Kang Chan told his parents.

“Okay, be quick. I'm going to be discharged tomorrow, so make sure to go home swiftly, okay?” Kang Dae-Kyung asked.

“I'll call you after seeing how things go.”

“Be careful out there, Channy,” Yoo Hye-Sook said.

Kang Chan left the room.

Kim Hyung-Jung unexpectedly said that he wished to see Kang Chan at the office in Samseong-dong. Kang Chan could just take a taxi to that place, though, so he didn't find it that troublesome.

Kang Chan arrived at the building in fifteen minutes. He went up to the fifth floor, and, the moment Kang Chan stood in front of the door, the door opened with a clank.

"Please come in." Kim Hyung-Jung was inside.

"Did I miss a CCTV while I was coming up here?" Kang Chan asked.

"But isn't this a special office without one?"

Kim Hyung-Jung led Kang Chan to his room, which was located further into the office.

"Didn't you say that you submitted a letter of resignation?" Kang Chan asked again.

"Let's talk over tea. Would you like coffee? Or a cold drink?"

"I'd like both."

"That's a wise choice."

Kim Hyung-Jung smiled and left, then returned with two coffees and two drinks on a tray. "I got some cigarettes as well."

A cigarette pack was on the table. It was missing three to four cigarettes.

"I didn't smoke a lot since I thought that I also have to take care of my mental health," Kim Hyung-Jung explained.

Kang Chan smiled lightly in response. They both took out cigarettes.

Chk chk.

"Whoo, cigarettes are amazing," Kim Hyung-Jung commented.

Kang Chan didn't know what he was talking about, but it looked like Kim Hyung-Jung needed time. In moments like this, just watching him and giving him that was the best thing to do.

"We found circumstantial evidence that thirty people that are a part of the North Korean special forces have gone over to China," Kim Hyung-Jung started to explain.

"Did they come over to South Korea through Japan again?"

"They seemed to have initially expected to eliminate Lanok and execute the rest of the terrorist attacks with only the people they sent into the country last time.

They're probably in a hurry as well, though, since those people all got KIA'd, including their surviving members, thanks to you."

Kang Chan waited for Kim Hyung-Jung to continue after taking a sip of the coffee, thinking the latter hadn't said his main point yet.

"Seven of our agents in Berlin laid down their lives to obtain this information."

Kang Chan exhaled softly. The number of lives sacrificed here was not unlike what would have happened in a local war.

"We also caught the movement of China's Intelligence Bureau while we were chasing Cha Yang-Woon, who came into the country from China. Thanks to that, we've ascertained where the North Korean special forces soldiers went," Kim Hyung-Jung added as he extinguished his cigarette on the ashtray. He then looked at Kang Chan. "The President has approved of launching a preemptive attack on the North Korean special forces soldiers that are in Mongolia."

Kang Chan sat blankly. He never would have expected this.

"This issue can cause a war, so we should also move on from this after completely getting rid of our identities. I returned to the National Intelligence Service to do that. My fingerprint, pictures, and every record about me right now have been changed or deleted. Regardless of where I'm caught or who's searching for me, they won't be able to find me."

Why is Kim Hyung-Jung telling me this?

"The President said he's not going to just watch the enemies commit merciless terrorist attacks on our territory and that neglecting you while you're making sacrifices for the country doesn't sit right with him either. He wanted me to pass on his sincerest apology about what happened with your father."

"How many people are going to Mongolia?" Kang Chan asked.

"Mr. Kang Chan, everything that happens from here on out will proceed in absolute secrecy. In about a week, my successor will contact you. This is the best thing that this country's commander-in-chief and I can do for you."

Kim Hyung-Jung's calm smile looked very cool.

"Can I ask you for information about Yang Jin-Woo?" Kang Chan asked.

When Kang Chan said that, Kim Hyung-Jung brought over a USB from his desk and handed it to him. "I thought you'd ask, so I wrote down everything about him—from his surroundings to suspicious circumstantial evidence related to him, his movement paths, security, and his funds—and stored them in here. I personally collected all of the intel in it."

Kim Hyung-Jung was already prepared for death. He was thinking that this was the best he could do and felt that he had no choice but to die at the end of it. Kang Chan cocked his head.

“Mr. Manager, why are you so sure of your death?” Kang Chan asked.

“Do I look like I am?”

“Please don’t dodge the question.”

Kim Hyung-Jung inhaled deeply as if he was strengthening his resolve, then said, “We weren’t able to secure a retreat route.”

What kind of stupid plan is that?

“The target location is close to the boundaries of Mongolia, China, and Russia. We can get to it, but we have no means of returning after the war.”

Kang Chan smirked, then commented, “That also means we’ll ultimately have to fight Mongolian soldiers as well if a war breaks out after you enter Mongolia.”

“The border guards are near the target spot.”

“What about entering Mongolia?”

“That’s going to be done normally. Quite a lot of agents are coming with me.”

Kang Chan thought he understood what was going on. They’d pay someone to get them into Mongolia, but that meant there would be no way to help Kim Hyung-Jung once a war had broken out. If so, then they’d be left with death as their only option.

“Why are you going this far?” Kang Chan asked.

“This will serve as a strong warning to the force that’s trying to stop the ‘Unicorn.’ It’ll show the people that ordered others to kill your father our intention not to sit back and just watch anymore.”

Kang Chan only watched Kim Hyung-Jung because he was dumbfounded.

“Mr. Kang Chan, please look after the ‘Unicorn’.”

“You said it’ll take about a week, right?” Kang Chan asked.

“I can’t disclose any more information.”

“Does President Kim also know about this?”

“I’ve arranged this meeting with you because there’s the promise that I’ve made to you. I can’t force you, but I hope you’ll make sure only the two of us know about this. This is for the members and agents that have prepared to die with me.”

Kang Chan nodded, then asked, “Can I join?”

“No, you can’t.”

Contrary to Kang Chan’s expectations, it was a flat refusal.

“If by any chance something happens to you, then the reason why I intervened in this in the first place would disappear. Mr. Kang Chan, please look after the ‘Unicorn’.” That would be enough for me,” Kim Hyung-Jung explained.

The look in his eyes showed that he was prepared to die. It was the gaze of a soldier with a strong sense of duty.

Chapter 85.2: Prelude (2)

Kang Chan was thinking of eating the jjampong that he had before with Kim Hyung-Jung, but he left his office before dinner.

To someone prepared to die, a week would pass by so quickly that it would feel no longer than a day, especially if they had a family or a person they love.

On his way home, Kang Chan called Seok Kang-Ho.

“You have a suit jacket, right?”

- I’ve cleaned it and prepared it so I can wear it anytime.

“I’m going to go to the funeral home for Oh Gwang-Taek’s men. Do you want to come?”

- Should I wait in front of your house?

“I’ll be at the entrance of the apartment in twenty minutes.”

- Alright.

Kang Chan went up to his house and put on dress pants and a clean shirt, then headed out of the apartment.

Seok Kang-Ho was already waiting with his Chiffre’s emergency lights on.

“Where’s the funeral home located?” Seok Kang-Ho asked.

“I was told it’s in Sanggye[1].”

Seok Kang-Ho input the location in the GPS, then immediately left.

What should I do with this fucker? Kang Chan glanced at Seok Kang-Ho.

“What’s wrong?” Seok Kang-Ho asked.

“I’m looking at you because that suit doesn’t suit you.”

“Huh? My wife said to be careful of the young bitches that would be running after me.”

Kang Chan couldn’t help but laugh out loud.

“How’s your father?” Seok Kang-Ho asked again.

“He’ll probably get discharged tomorrow. I didn’t say anything because I didn’t think it was a bad idea. He was just at the hospital out of fear and because he was going through severe aftereffects due to the accidents anyway.”

“That’s a relief.”

This time, Seok Kang-Ho discreetly looked at Kang Chan.

“What?”

“Is something going on? What is it? Be honest with me,” Seok Kang-Ho pushed.

“There isn’t! I just feel down because I’m going to a funeral home with you despite how good the weather is today.”

“Why do I doubt that?”

“After dropping by the funeral home, let’s visit the hospital where the agents that got hurt in Yongin are confined.”

“Sure.”

They arrived at the funeral home after driving for about forty minutes. Starting from the entrance, it was swarmed with guys that, given their looks, could have just as well held signboards that said ‘I’m a gangster!’

Three or four people approached them when they entered the parking lot.

Kang Chan didn’t really want to deal with them, so he got out of the passenger seat.

“Where did you come from?” one of the people asked. He looked at Kang Chan while twisting his lips.

“Welcome, hyung-nim!” Another man urgently ran over from the inner part of the parking lot. Kang Chan didn’t know his name but remembered his face.

“You fuckers! You don’t know Kang Chan hyung-nim?” he asked the others as he arrived in front of Kang Chan.

Damn it!

The men in the parking lot all bowed, making those walking nearby look at Kang Chan in surprise.

The man quickly gestured with his head to help Seok Kang-Ho get out of the car. He then said, “This way, hyung-nim.”

Kang Chan and Seok Kang-Ho followed him down to the basement.

As they descended, Kang Chan remembered that the person they were following was the one who had called people for him when Seok Kang-Ho had been hospitalized because of a neck injury.

It seemed like they were using the entire first floor of the basement. While they were passing the hallway, they saw portraits of the deceased hung up in every partition and people that seemed to be their family members, looking stunned.

“No! Anything but this! Please!!” From far away, they heard the melancholic cries of a mourning old woman.

“Oh Gwang-Taek hyung-nim is inside this room, hyung-nim,” the guy told Kang Chan.

Oh Gwang-Taek was at the innermost partition of the room. When Kang Chan went in, the gangsters inside all stood up and greeted him.

“Oh, I wasn’t expecting you. Welcome,” Oh Gwang-Taek greeted Kang Chan and Seok Kang-Ho. He looked haggard and had his beard grown out. It looked like it had a mind of its own.

“Let’s sit. Hey! Bring us coffee,” Oh Gwang-Taek ordered one of his subordinates, then took out cigarettes. He bit on one then handed the rest to Kang Chan and Seok Kang-Ho.

“I made the incident appear as a car accident,” Oh Gwang-Taek told Kang Chan.

What am I supposed to say?

Oh Gwang-Taek looked at Kang Chan, then nodded. “I thought that you wouldn’t come, since you said so many times that you don’t like gangsters.”

“Do you need anything?” Kang Chan asked.

“Just look into the fucker that Cha Yang-Woon brought here.”

“Let’s talk about that after the funeral.”

Oh Gwang-Taek gritted his teeth instead of answering him. It didn’t matter what Kang Chan said. Oh Gwang-Taek was so full of spite that nothing could appease him right now.

Kang Chan sat at the funeral home for about twenty minutes, then left.

Kang Chan and Seok Kang-Ho then headed to the police hospital. When they went into the patient room that Kim Hyung-Jung had told him about, they found two agents beside their colleague, who had half of his body covered in a cast. One of the two agents had crutches, while the other had a cast on one of his arms. Seok Kang-Ho handed over a fruit basket.

“Please have a seat,” one of the agents offered.

“It’s fine. We can’t stay long,” Kang Chan responded.

“I’m sorry,” one of the agents said.

“Thank you. It’s because of you guys that my father is safe,” Kang Chan said, then walked out of the room. The agents bowed with awkward expressions.

“Where are we going now?” Seok Kang-Ho asked Kang Chan.

“Let’s have dinner and smoke somewhere comfortable. Is there something that you want to eat? My treat.”

“How about eel?”

“Sure.”

They headed to Gimpo. It felt like they were circling around the outskirts of Seoul.

After eating eel until they were full, they sat down at a specialty coffee shop.

“Feeling better?” Seok Kang-Ho asked Kang Chan.

“I’m not angry anymore.”

“You’re clearly hiding something.”

This fucker was now quick-witted as well.

“Hey, should I sleep with Michelle? Would I become a bit more generous once I relieved everything I’ve been holding in?” Kang Chan asked.

Seok Kang-Ho grabbed a cigarette while grinning, then asked, “See? You’re even changing the subject now. Stop doing that, Captain. Just tell me what’s going on so you won’t have to carry the burden alone.”

Kang Chan just took out a cigarette and bit it.

“Are you thinking of going to Africa, by any chance?” Seok Kang-Ho asked.

“No.”

“If that’s not it, then it’s fine.”

Kang Chan nodded.

Kang Chan went home at around 10 pm, and he fell asleep after he talked with Yoo Hye-Sook and washed up a bit.

On Monday morning, Kang Chan called Lanok.

- Mr. Kang Chan, is there a problem with tomorrow’s appointment?

“There isn’t, Mr. Ambassador. I’m calling you to ask you a favor before the meeting tomorrow. I don’t want Anne to know about this.”

- How much time do you need?

“One hour should be enough.”

- Please wait for a moment.

Over the phone, Lanok talked about his schedule with an employee.

- Mr. Kang Chan, I have time to meet you at 1 pm today, although it will be tight. Can you come to the embassy?

“Sure. I’ll see you then.”

After he ended the call, Kang Chan washed up, had an omelet, and headed to the hospital. Yoo Hun-Woo, who had been waiting for him, examined his wounds.

“They look okay. You’ll even be able to shower starting tomorrow,” Yoo Hun-Woo said as he dismissively bandaged Kang Chan’s wounds, almost as if he was just putting a band-aid on him.

“Can my father be discharged from the hospital?” Kang Chan asked.

“Hmm! That should be fine, he doesn’t really need any special treatment. It’s safe to say he can get discharged as long as he’s no longer afraid and has calmed down.”

“He’s going to ask about being discharged later when you see him in the in-person rounds.”

“I’ll explain it to him well.”

After he finished getting treated, Kang Chan went up to Kang Dae-Kyung’s room and found him in a much better state than the day before. Yoo Hun-Woo arrived not long after Kang Chan, and they decided that Kang Dae-Kyung would get discharged.

Kang Chan returned home with Kang Dae-Kyung, then immediately headed to the French embassy. An agent had been waiting for him at the front door. He accompanied Kang Chan to Lanok.

“Mr. Kang Chan!”

“Mr. Ambassador.”

Kang Chan was happy to see him. They greeted each other according to French customs. Kang Chan then sat on the seat that Lanok pointed at.

“What’s going on?” Lanok asked.

“Mr. Ambassador, is this room safe?”

Lanok glanced at Kang Chan, then gestured with his eyes to the agent that had been waiting in front of the door. The agent closed the door, and calm classical music filled the room.

“We’ve blocked nearly all frequencies that are used for wiretapping. Even if someone placed a mic outside, the music would be louder than us, so it would be difficult to catch the conversation. What’s wrong?”

After Kang Chan took a sip of the tea that Lanok recommended, he picked up a cigarette. While the classical music was being played, Lanok, who was sitting with his long legs crossed, listened to what Kang Chan had to say.

“Is that really necessary, Mr. Kang Chan? From my perspective, I find it incredibly reckless,” Lanok said afterward. He had straightened his posture and was looking at Kang Chan.

“I know it’s a difficult favor, Mr. Ambassador, but I can’t just sit on my hands and watch this unfold.”

Lanok looked like he couldn’t believe what he was hearing.

“I’ll give you an answer to your request at tomorrow’s dinner,” Lanok said.

“Understood.”

They stood up from their seats. Lanok’s expression remained extremely grim.

Chapter 86.1: Things Went Wrong and Got Messed Up (1)

On Monday afternoon, Kang Chan came home, had dinner with his family, and spent time with them watching TV. If he had to insist on picking something special that happened, then it would be the phone call that Yoo Hye-Sook received about their application to launch a Foundation having been approved. In his spare time, he looked at all the materials about Yang Jin-Woo that were on the USB, then checked the important parts.

But even if he could understand the other things, he really couldn’t understand how Yang Jin-Woo could provide monetary support to six separate women.

‘He’s a weird fucker.’

Cha Yang-Woon only saw them once every two months at most. He didn’t even sleep with them often, yet he was still providing them with the best apartments and paying their enormous living expenses.

Compared to his short height, he had a solid build, small eyes, and a big nose. He had a strange expression that made him look as if he was looking down on others.

‘Just you wait.’

Kang Chan slowly examined the materials as his eyes shone.

Kang Dae-Kyung had decided to rest until Tuesday. He looked like he was itching to go out after he had breakfast, but he couldn’t win over Yoo Hye-Sook’s determined eyes. Kang Chan was greatly relieved when he saw Kang Dae-Kyung acting that way.

On Tuesday afternoon, Kang Chan headed to the meeting place in Bang bae-dong.

They were meeting at a restaurant that specialized in French cuisine, but it was much smaller than he had expected.

“This way, monsieur Kang.” An agent personally led Kang Chan from the entrance.

“Channy!” Anne got up first, and Lanok followed after her.

Kang Chan didn't expect them to be here already.

"You're here early," Kang Chan commented.

"I needed time to speak with Anne privately."

"Did I intrude into that conversation?"

"Not at all. You're right on time. Now! Should we have a simple drink before the meal?"

With Lanok's suggestion, Kang Chan and Anne held up their glasses. After Lanok drank the wine, he gestured for the food to be served.

Anne was the star of the day. It was great to see her going on about the handful of stories that she had about her school days, the absurd driver shot that Kang Chan had shown at the golf club, and the change she went through since that day, all with a bright face.

Lanok looked delighted, and Kang Chan enjoyed listening to her as well.

The dinner lasted two hours, during which no other customers entered the restaurant. When Lanok gestured with his eyes, a server brought over cigars and cigarettes, an ashtray, and a lighter on a silver tray.

"This is today's foremost service," Lanok commented.

Kang Chan smiled satisfyingly, and the three of them leisurely enjoyed the cigarettes.

"Mr. Kang Chan, Anne has decided to act as a hostess of the embassy from now on," Lanok said.

"Really? That's amazing."

When Kang Chan looked back at Anne, she brought her face closer to him while smiling widely.

Damn it! I shouldn't have pretended to be happy. Left with no other choice, Kang Chan quickly kissed her. The smooch was loud but passionless.

"I have to go in a little bit, Channy. There's a social gathering with special guests from Africa, and I have to join them for tea," Anne said afterward, wanting to be praised by him. Kang Chan told her that she was incredible, then gave her a thumbs-up several times. True to her word, Anne got up from her seat thirty minutes later.

Anne hugged Kang Chan and lightly kissed him. He had been worried about her, but at this rate, it seemed she'd be able to swiftly pull herself together.

Those who wanted to be recognized followed the person that recognized them. If someone stood by her, continuously watched over her, and consoled her, then she would soon grow attached to them instead. When Lanok looked around their surroundings, all of the agents went outside of the restaurant.

“Mr. Kang Chan, as a result of France’s Intelligence Bureau directing all of their strengths into your request, it’s been confirmed that the mission’s target location is at a hill near Sükhbaatar[1] and the Selenga river[2],” Lanok said.

“Thank you, Mr. Ambassador.”

Lanok offered a cigarette to Kang Chan, then lit up another cigar again. “This is reckless, Mr. Kang Chan. Please rethink your decision.”

“I heard there were thirty North Korean special forces soldiers in Mongolia. If we eliminate them, the surrounding countries, including Japan and those that oppose South Korea, would have no choice but to slow down and observe our behavior for a while.”

Lanok shook his head. “There’s really no reason for you to go there in person for that.”

Kang Chan breathed deeply, then looked at Lanok. “This is my fight, Mr. Ambassador. It happened because I asked you to include South Korea in the ‘Unicorn’ and because we decided to move up the announcement date. If I look the other way, who knows how many people will die this time? Our enemies this time don’t care who they kill for their goals as well, which is the reason why you and my current parents got mixed into this in the first place.”

“Didn’t you say that the specialized team is leaving for Mongolia from South Korea? If needed, I’ll look into a way to help them escape.”

“Considering there are thirty North Korean soldiers in Mongolia, then we’ll be deploying around the same number of people as well, Mr. Ambassador,” Kang Chan replied. “The gun is aimed at me and you. I can’t let those men die just because they’re trying to buy us time or prevent us from getting killed.”

Lanok deeply inhaled the cigar, then slowly exhaled. He appeared to be stalling on purpose.

“Everyone has their own duty to take care of. As far as I can tell, your current role isn’t to go and fight in Mongolia. Rather, it’s to take center stage and ensure the ‘Unicorn’ project can be achieved.”

It seemed like Lanok had already made up his mind, seeing as how he didn’t say anything else and just glared at the wine glass on the table. Kang Chan also didn’t plan on backing off, but he didn’t plan on begging either.

“Thank you for providing me with the mission’s accurate location. I’ll join the Korean team, and I’ll contact you when I come back,” Kang Chan told Lanok.

There was a limit on how much Lanok could do. Help like this couldn’t be given by force.

“Mr. Kang Chan.” Lanok had raised his gaze from the wine glass to Kang Chan. “If things go south, this situation can escalate into a war.”

“Mr. Ambassador, the enemy country ran rampant in South Korea with guns blazing. If we just fall behind them, even the agents around you will keep being

sacrificed. Battles like this will never end unless the opponent gives up or achieves their purpose.”

“Hmm.”

Lanok straightened his cigar, then rubbed it on the ashtray. “I know your secret, and I trust you, so I’ll disclose something to you. The Intelligence Bureaus of each country are assessing you as a secret agent that’s created by France and the Korean government.”

Kang Chan had already heard that, but Lanok likely had a reason to tell him about it again.

“Mr. Kang Chan, all of my friends whom you met a while back in Loriam are the head of their country’s Intelligence Bureaus.”

Damn it! That meeting was only composed of big shots?

“I might not be a director of any Intelligence Bureau, but if by chance things go wrong and you, God forbid, get captured by the enemies in Mongolia, or if you leave evidence behind, then Europe as a whole won’t be able to free itself from taking responsibility for that.”

Why is this conversation suddenly heading that way?

“You and the team will have to infiltrate Mongolia and kill the members of a specialized team. However, there’s a high chance that doing so would cause this to develop into a world war. After all, China and Japan would do whatever it takes to stop the ‘Unicorn’ from happening, even if it meant fighting another war.”

Kang Chan bit on a cigarette while laughing feebly. In the end, there was no way to save Kim Hyung-Jung.

“Mr. Kang Chan, we’ll cooperate as much as possible to help them get back home. We’ve got plenty of ways to help since Mongolia receives nearly all of its resources from Canada and the United States. Plus a European company is producing and selling goods there.”

Kang Chan was frustrated, but it was difficult to force Lanok not to interfere in this anymore.

“I’ll be leaving now, Mr. Ambassador, ” Kang Chan said and deeply inhaled. He was frustrated and felt like he’d explode if anyone messed with him. When he got outside the restaurant, the French agents urgently went inside.

“Phew!”

Kang Chan slowly walked along the street.

“Phuhu.”

Kang Chan wanted to sigh, but he laughed instead. Why was he this angry? There have already been too many deaths, and now more than twenty people will go to Mongolia just to add to that

number. He was angry for having to just stand by and watch that happen despite being completely aware of their fate.

It was currently around 10 pm, so the roads were crowded. If he bumped shoulders with someone like this, it would become hard to handle. To avoid that situation, Kang Chan walked around and looked a secluded place.

It took him quite a while before finding an underpass that was only big enough for one car to barely go through. It also had a sign that stated he'd reach the riverside of the Hangang river if he went across.

When Kang Chan headed to the underpass, the Hangang river swiftly came into view.

There were quite a lot of people since it was summer, but the riverside was big enough to accommodate them.

Kang Chan perched next to the stairs that went down to the river. He got angry, his pride got hurt, and he was ashamed.

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

Lanok was calling him.

“Yes, Mr. Ambassador.”

- Mr. Kang Chan, let's take the time to rest tomorrow, then meet again two days from now.

“Understood.”

- A person on center stage has to be capable of enduring a bit of pain.

“I'm not sure about that yet.”

- Please don't be in too much distress. You have much greater things ahead of you.

“Thank you for saying that.”

After he ended the call, Kang Chan took out a cigarette and bit it.

Chk chk. Chk chk.

“Whoo-oo.”

Chapter 86.2: Things Went Wrong and Got Messed Up (1)

Kang Chan could hear the nearby people's boisterous laughter. They had spread out a mat, sat around in huddles, and were drinking alcohol. Kang Chan shook the cigarette and extinguished it, then put the cigarette butt in a garbage can. As he looked at the river, he felt as if he could breathe easily again, at least a little bit. Amidst the noisy surroundings, he turned his head when he felt someone approaching him.

Kang Chan smirked.

“What are you doing?” Someone asked Kang Chan.

“Did you put a tail on me? As far as I can recall, all of my security guards were changed to Yoo Bi-Corp employees.”

“I used the tracking device on your phone to find you.”

Kim Hyung-Jung perched next to Kang Chan, then bit on a cigarette and lit it.

“Did it bother you that I met with Lanok?” Kang Chan asked again.

“That’s not it. I came here to see you in person. Should I buy canned beer? We should have some on this riverside to liven things up.”

“Go ahead.”

Kim Hyung-Jung went to a shop. He soon came back with a convenience store bag.

Chk!

“Here!” Kim Hyung-Jung handed him a canned beer, then grabbed another for himself.

Kang Chan felt much more refreshed after drinking it.

“Let’s have a toast, Mr. Kang Chan,” Kim Hyung-Jung suggested.

Kang Chan just watched him in response.

“I’m leaving tomorrow,” Kim Hyung-Jung continued.

Didn’t he say that he was going to leave in a week?

“I’ll be back. Please look after the ‘Unicorn’ until then.”

“Can you even come back?” Kang Chan asked.

Kim Hyung-Jung took a big gulp of the beer, then took out a cigarette and offered it to Kang Chan.

“I’m glad to be a part of this mission.”

“Mr. Manager, more than twenty agents and members of the Foreign Legion are going there. Don’t ever assume everyone’s going to be happy about their deaths. Do you think your sacrifice will instantly make the enemies leave the ‘Unicorn’ alone? They’ll keep coming for the project.. Are you going to keep sending more people to their deaths whenever that happens?” Kang Chan continued.

“This is the best that we can do right now, which is why I’m asking you a favor. I want to make South Korea stronger for the next generation. That would stop people from ever daring to do things like this again. If the ‘Unicorn’ is connected, we’ll be able to buy good weapons with the enormous wealth that’ll come with it, and we’ll be able to adulate the agents like kings and ask them to turn South Korea into a very powerful nation. That’s why I can go there smiling.”

Kang Chan almost fell for Kim Hyung-Jung’s words. However, he soon shook his head and argued, “this isn’t an operation. Entering a dangerous location fully aware that no matter what you do in there will result in your death is not an operation. It’s suicide.”

“Mr. Kang Chan.” Kim Hyung-Jung held out his beer toward the river. “The Selenga river is so long that I heard it goes along the border.”

In front of Kang Chan, who was looking at him with suspicion, Kim Hyung-Jung smiled strangely. “This originally isn’t part of the operation, but I plan on going along the border to get to Russia, climb the mountain, and head to Kazakhstan. Please help me when I arrive there.”

“How are you going to contact me?” Kang Chan asked.

“Let’s use a satellite phone. That should be enough to have a toast with me, right?”

Kim Hyung-Jung didn’t seem like the person who would lie about something like this.

Kang Chan clanked his beer against Kim Hyung-Jung’s and took a big gulp.

“We need Lanok’s help in Kazakhstan,” Kim Hyung-Jung told Kang Chan afterward.

“He already promised to help with that matter.”

“I knew he would. After all, you didn’t have any other reason to meet Lanok at the embassy yesterday aside from asking him for help in this operation.”

Kang Chan looked around them.

“There isn’t a country that neglects a special security target. You can trust us because it’s on a different level than simply trailing you,” Kim Hyung-Jung reassured Kang Chan.

“It seems like this phone is the problem, then?”

“If you throw that away, then I’ll have to write a detailed explanation.”

They both smiled.

“Thank you, Mr. Kang Chan,” Kim Hyung-Jung said seriously while looking straight at Kang Chan.

“That came out of nowhere.”

“France has given us more detailed information than what we had been aware of. Our guess is that France’s DGSE is making a move, and they urgently handed over the intel they gathered to us through France’s branch office between yesterday evening and this morning.”

“You and the members returning safely is far more important than things like that.”

“I’ve found a way to survive because of the information they recently gave us. It included the Mongolian border guards’ locations, shifts, and even the path we should follow while going up the river.”

Tsk! Kang Chan suddenly felt very apologetic toward Lanok.

Ah, shoot! He had been holding onto Kim Hyung-Jung for too long.

“You should go, Mr. Manager. You should spend time with your family as well if you’re going to go to Mongolia tomorrow,” Kang Chan said.

“I should, shouldn’t I?” Kim Hyung-Jung stood up without complaints. “Let’s go. I’ll give you a ride.”

“It’s okay! Please go home quickly. I’ll head home after having another beer. I doubt I’ll be able to sleep like this anyway.”

Kim Hyung-Jung nodded, then walked up to Kang Chan. “I’m glad to have met someone like you.”

“Please tell me that after you’ve returned alive. If you don’t come back, then I don’t care if it’s the ‘Unicorn’ or whatever. I’m throwing it all aside and running to you.”

Kim Hyung-Jung held out his hand after smiling in a cool way. Kang Chan held onto it tightly, enough for his hand to hurt. After Kim Hyung-Jung swallowed dryly, he turned around, headed to the parking lot, and got in his car. Kang Chan stared blankly at him as his car’s lights turned on and he drove away.

Kang Chan then smirked.

Kim Hyung-Jung gave him a military salute just as the car was turning around.

On Wednesday, Kang Chan loafed around at home all day. He didn’t exactly have it in mind to go out. After all, their current situation was chaotic because of what Kim Hyung-Jung was doing.

Kang Dae-Kyung went to work, and Yoo Hye-Sook left after saying she’ll be back after meeting a friend and dropping by the Foundation’s office.

‘Time to get to know you better, you son of a bitch.’

Kang Chan again put Yang Jin-Woo’s information on the screen and examined it as if he was going to memorize it. It wasn’t easy. To put it bluntly, he could easily run over and beat him up with Seok Kang-Ho if that was all he had to do. However, beating Yang Jin-Woo up was completely different from beating up gangsters or David from Alion. He didn’t want to start something that even the National Intelligence Service would have trouble covering up just so he could punch him a few times.

‘Should I actually incapacitate this man forever?’

Don’t do that. If Kang Chan did an awful job in finishing him, Yang Jin-Woo would spare no effort in getting revenge. Moreover, if that fucker desperately

tried his best to make them suffer even more than he did rather than just getting even, then it would only become burdensome in the future.

‘Should I kill him?’

That wasn’t easy to do either. If he suddenly killed the country’s best chaebol[1]?

Kang Chan shook his head.

“Phew! How can I deal with this son of a bitch in a way that would make me feel relieved and not worry about future troubles?” Kang Chan asked himself.

As Kang Chan was scratching his head...

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

Kang Chan held up his phone.

“Hello?”

- Channy! I’m going to get upset if you’ve forgotten about me.

That was right—Kang Chan had forgotten about Smithen.

“Weren’t you doing well with a girl? You can just call me if I suddenly come across your mind.”

- I’m living by myself nowadays.

“What about the girl with the big breasts?”

- We broke up last week.

I knew it!

- Channy, I received a weird offer. Let’s talk in person.

“A weird offer? What is it about?”

- I said that we should talk about it in person.

Was this fucker stringing him along? Now that he had thought about it, Smithen had become very relaxed.

“When can we meet?”

- Let’s have dinner tonight. Why not bring Dayeru with you?

“Alright. I’ll contact you after I talk to Daye.”

- Okay, Channy. By the way, I enrolled at a language institute.

“Let’s talk about that later.”

- Alright, Channy. Keep me updated.

After ending the call, Kang Chan contacted Seok Kang-Ho and set up a time to meet. He then called Smithen again. His schedule suddenly became hectic. He had to wash up, change, and call Yoo Hye-Sook to tell her he was going to go out. Moreover, he decided to meet Seok Kang-Ho an hour before meeting Smithen.

When Kang Chan walked out of the entrance of the apartment, Seok Kang-Ho was already waiting for him looking excited.

“What’s with you?” Kang Chan asked.

“Why haven’t you gone anywhere lately?”

“Hey! It’s only been two days since I last went out. My father hasn’t been well.”

“Please look after me as well. I’m lonely.”

Kang Chan usually smiled whenever he met this guy.

They headed to a specialty coffee shop near Smithen’s house.

“Speak of the devil,”[2] Seok Kang-Ho commented.

“Smithen knows how to string someone along by saying that he got a weird offer.”

“What’s the point in doing that when he’s just going to chatter about everything on his own anyway?”

They bought iced coffees and put them on the table. They then smoked cigarettes.

Kang Chan beat around the bush for a moment, then confessed what was going on with Kim Hyung-Jung.

“Were you thinking of going to Mongolia with him without telling me?” Seok Kang-Ho asked afterward.

“That’s not exactly true.”

“Hmph! No wonder you were acting so weird the other day! I should’ve known better when you changed the subject and said something about sleeping with Michelle and whatnot. I’m upset.”

“I said it’s not like that!”

“Fine. I’ll just let this slide, then. I don’t want to be narrow-minded. However, I have a favor to ask in return.”

“What is it? Just name it. Should I buy dinner?” Kang Chan asked.

“Please swear on the name of the God of Blackfield that from now on, you’ll never leave me out if something like this happens again.”

Kang Chan thought Seok Kang-Ho was taking this a bit too easily, but he soon turned to look at Kang Chan seriously.

“Captain, I’m letting this slide even though I’m very upset that you didn’t tell me. If I could, I’d probably be bawling my eyes out right now. Put yourself in my shoes. How would you feel if I talked about sleeping with other people for your sake, then suddenly disappeared without telling you that I’m actually heading to my death?” Seok Kang-Ho asked.

Tsk! Why does this fucker suddenly turn into a great speaker when talking about topics like this?

“Captain!”

“Okay. I promise.”

“Please do it properly.”

This fucker. I can’t believe he’s really doing this.

“Captain?”

Kang Chan sighed when he saw Seok Kang-Ho’s eyes. The only way to stop Seok Kang-Ho whenever he acted like this was to beat him up to death.

“I swear on the name of the God of Blackfield that I’ll include you in every operation from now on.”

Seok Kang-Ho grinned, which made Kang Chan feel as if he just made a big mistake.

Chapter 87.1: Things Went Wrong and Got Messed Up (2)

After Kang Chan and Seok Kang-Ho talked for about an hour, Kang Chan called Smithen.

- I know that place! I’ll leave right now!

Smithen answered excitedly.

“He said he’s coming,” Kang Chan told Seok Kang-Ho afterward.

“Son of a bitch.”

Kang Chan couldn’t help but smirk when Seok Kang-Ho swore out of nowhere. Why would he swear when he looked happy to hear that Smithen was on his way?

“Channy!” A moment later, Smithen arrived and clamorously waved his hand.

“Welcome,” Kang Chan told Smithen.

“Have you been great? And long time no see, Dayeru! Please stay seated. Let me just buy coffee.”

Smithen spoke in Korean. His pronunciation was alright. And by all accounts, he looked like a very relaxed Western man with his sophisticated clothes.

“Did you see that fucker’s eye?” Seok Kang-Ho asked Kang Chan after Smithen walked away.

“I told you he was putting in a prosthetic eye back then.”

“Ha! I didn’t expect it'd look that realistic.”

While Seok Kang-Ho was admiring the prosthetic eye, Smithen approached them.

“Your Korean has improved a lot,” Kang Chan commented.

“It’s thanks to Alice.”

Smithen was speaking in Korean again. Seok Kang-Ho still looked surprised.

“I also got into the advanced class in the Korean language institute,” Smithen continued.

“You’re talking to me informally, you fucker?”

“I’m sorry, Channy—I did that because I spoke informally with Alice, and it has become a habit. Can I smoke?”

“You don’t have to ask for my permission. Anyway, it seems like you’re doing well. I’m glad.”

“Whoo. How have you been, Channy?” Smithen asked.

“I’ve been doing okay. Right! What’s the weird offer about?”

“Oh, yeah! I got a weird offer!” Smithen dramatically responded while flicking the ash off of his cigarette. “They wanted me to sell my shares of Gong Te automobile’s Korean branch. They offered an unbelievable amount for it. Five billion won, to be exact.”

French and English words were mixed in between his Korean, but he spoke the language well enough for even Seok Kang-Ho to roughly understand what Smithen was saying.

“Who gave you the offer?” Kang Chan asked.

“Suh Jeong group? A lawyer from a law firm contacted me directly.”

Kang Chan was dumbfounded. “What did you tell them?”

“That it’s not for me to decide.”

Seok Kang-Ho glanced at Kang Chan.

“We were right. It’s that fucker Yang Jin-Woo,” Kang Chan told Seok Kang-Ho.

“It seems he’s just begging to be killed.”

“Am I missing something here?” Smithen asked. He was observing their mood while turning his head from side to side.

“Do you remember the people that tried to steal the contract with Gong Te, when Kang Yoo Motors was already in the process of importing the cars a while ago? They’re from Suh Jeong Motors,” Kang Chan answered Smithen.

“Ah! Suh Jeong! Huh? They’re the same name?”

“That’s right. They probably keep pestering us because they got ousted back then. Well, they offered you five billion won. You likely want to sell your shares.”

“No! Channy, I can’t just recklessly sell my shares. I have to get permission from the Gong Te automobile headquarters first.”

“How many shares do you have?” Kang Chan prodded.

“Twenty percent of Gong Te automobile’s Korean branch.”

Kang Chan was momentarily confused. Would the stuck-up Suh Jeong Group’s highly capable people and lawyers really offer to buy twenty percent of shares for five billion won without knowing that?

Kang Chan thought about it for a moment, then drank his coffee with a smirk.

“What’s wrong?” Seok Kang-Ho asked Kang Chan.

“They’ve probably wiretapped or are trailing Smithen to see who he contacts after telling this fucker that they’ll buy shares from him. We should all smile so we’ll look good in the photos.”

“Why would they do something like that? What do they have to gain?” Seok Kang-Ho asked again.

“Would those fuckers even guess what happened between us and Sharlan? They have to be trying to look into why things suddenly got messed up halfway through, right? Smithen, have you taken another woman to your house after you broke up with Alice?” Kang Chan asked.

Smithen couldn’t answer, seemingly anxious of how they’d react.

“Fuck you, you son of a bitch!”

“Dayeru, I’m just—”

“Be quiet. Settle for one woman, motherfucker.”

People looked in their direction with fascination when Seok Kang-Ho suddenly shouted.

“Let’s let this slide for now. It hasn’t been confirmed yet if a woman has done this. And even if we do look into it, we’re going to let it go once we find out anyway. Do you still meet with that woman?” Kang Chan asked.

“About that, Channy—”

“Are you seeing a lot of women right now?”

“Yes. Three, to be specific.”

“You’re seeing all three at once?” Kang Chan asked back.

“I take turns meeting them.”

Kang Chan couldn’t help but laugh heartily. He understood, though.

Smithen was good-looking, tall, and muscular due to his mercenary days. Moreover, he was the Korean branch manager of Gong Te automobile. He looked like the type that shallow girls would like.

Something suddenly flashed across Kang Chan’s mind as he was holding a cigarette.

He aligned his index finger to the middle of his lips, signaling both of them to be quiet, then ordered them to move Smithen’s shoes and phone somewhere else.

Upon seeing Kang Chan’s expression, Smithen obediently took off his shoes and put his phone in one of them. Seok Kang-Ho then moved it to the far end of the terrace.

“Smithen, are you confident you can seduce women?” Kang Chan asked afterward.

“For you?”

“Sure. Let’s say that it is..”

“If so, then I am.”

“I’ll give you a list of names. Can you sleep with all of them?”

“Who are they? Are they pretty, Channy?” Smithen eagerly asked as he leaned closer toward Kang Chan.

“There’s six of them, ranging from their twenties to mid-thirties. How’s that?”

“Please leave it to me, Channy!”

Seok Kang-Ho looked at Kang Chan with eyes that asked, ‘what’s he saying?’

“You fucker. Does your house require a password to enter?” Kang Chan asked.

“No, but I need the card in my wallet to get in,” Smithen answered.

“Have you ever given it to someone else?”

“Never. Someone suddenly barging in while I’m having a good time would ruin the mood.”

The fucker was putting on airs. Kang Chan called Kim Tae-Jin and told him they suspected that someone was wiretapping them. He then asked Kim Tae-Jin how they could solve this issue.

- Are you with the person in question?

“Yes. I’ve separated his shoes and phone from him.”

- I’ll send over two employees right now. Where are you?

Kang Chan told him the location of the specialty coffee shop and ended the call. He then asked, "What do you guys want to have for dinner?"

"Channy, do you have pictures of those women?" Smithen threw a question but flinched when he saw Seok Kang-Ho.

"Let's have pork ribs," Seok Kang-Ho suggested, ignoring Smithen.

"You sure?"

The two chose what to eat for dinner and talked nonsense for a bit. Soon, Yoo Bi-Corp employees ran over.

"Search through him, then look at his shoes and phone over there. Afterward, search his house while we're having dinner," Kang Chan told the employees.

"Understood."

The employees took out three phone-shaped devices and a detection stick from a bag. They then slowly scanned Smithen.

"There's nothing on him," one of the employees said afterward.

Since they were in a specialty coffee shop, Kang Chan carefully looked around to see if someone nearby was trailing them. Meanwhile, the employees used the detection stick to the shoes and the phone.

Be-ep.

An employee from Yoo Bi-Corp put his index finger in front of his mouth, then quietly headed to a car with the shoes and the phone.

"Oh! That's surprising," Smithen commented.

"I'm more surprised by you, you fucker," Seok Kang-Ho said.

"Dayeru! Stop swearing!"

"What are you saying? Fucking idiot!"

"Tsk! Stop it," Kang Chan told the two of them.

Seok Kang-Ho and Smithen stopped fighting.

About ten minutes later, a Yoo Bi-Corp employee returned with the shoes and the phone. "High-performance wiretapping devices were installed on both of them. It can record within two kilometers of downtown."

"I'm sorry to ask for this as well, but scan the house too. I'll give you the keycard," Kang Chan said.

"Understood."

When Kang Chan gestured with his eyes, Smithen handed over his keycard and told them his address.

“It’ll take about an hour. We’ll give you a call when we’re done.”

“We’ll be eating nearby. What are you guys going to have for dinner?”

“We decided to go somewhere nice after the job.”

The employees seemed friendlier than how they would treat an ordinary superior.

“We’ll be going now,” one of the employees said.

“Keep up the good work.”

When the employees left, the three of them went to a restaurant near the specialty coffee shop.

It was still early, so they were the first customers. They sat at a table inside the restaurant and ordered pork ribs. They didn’t have to worry about wiretaps anymore.

“Don’t let anyone else come into your house for the time being, Smithen. Protect it as best as you can, even if people from the maintenance office say they’re coming for an inspection. Okay?” Kang Chan asked.

“Alright, Channy.”

“The leader of the Suh Jeong group is Yang Jin-Woo. That fucker is harboring a grudge against me, Dayeru, and even you. And you’re going to suffer first if you behave carelessly since you’re an easy target. Be careful about that.”

Smithen grinned. His stomach seemed to have churned when Kang Chan said that he’d suffer.

“The list of women that I’m handing over to you tomorrow are all Yang Jin-Woo’s women,” Kang Chan continued.

Seok Kang-Ho and Smithen looked at Kang Chan with startled eyes.

“It appears he meets them once every two months or so, and he had bought them an apartment and pays for their living expenses. I’ll order the Yoo Bi-Corp employees you saw a moment ago to determine the women’s daily routine and give it to you, so make all of those women yours. Make them listen to whatever you say. Okay?” Kang Chan asked Smithen.

“You don’t have to worry, Channy.”

As the trio grinned at each other, their food was served.

As a savory scent rose up with a ‘chkk’ from the grill, Seok Kang-Ho made bomb shots with the soju and beer that they had ordered.

“Let’s have a toast, Channy. I’ll risk my life to succeed in what you told me to do,” Smithen said.

It wasn’t something that Smithen should risk his life for, but Kang Chan just held out his glass.

Kang Chan and Seok Kang-Ho heard about the women that Smithen had met while they were having dinner. He had been with quite a lot since Kang Chan had last seen him. It was clear that some of them likely approached Smithen on purpose. Those women seemingly would've had enough guts to install wiretapping devices on Smithen's phone and shoes, too.

"Does that mean those women thought I was stupid?" Smithen asked.

Smithen seemed to be more resentful about the fact that the reason why the women slept with him wasn't because of his charms, but that was none of Kang Chan's business. As they were becoming somewhat full, Kang Chan's phone rang. A moment later, the Yoo Bi-Corp employees came into the restaurant.

"We found four devices in different locations—the bedroom, living room, bathroom, and entrance. We've removed all of them. Here's the keycard," one of the employees told Kang Chan.

"You guys did great."

"We're just glad we could help, even in this way."

When Kang Chan looked at them suspiciously, the two employees politely said goodbye and left the restaurant.

Are they hiding something?

Even if they were, it was awkward to call them over and ask. So Kang Chan just let it go.

Chapter 87.2: Things Went Wrong and Got Messed Up (2)

They were currently intoxicated, so it was difficult for them to drive.

After sending Smithen home, Kang Chan and Seok Kang-Ho returned to the specialty coffee shop.

"What do you plan to do to Yang Jin Woo's women?" Seok Kang-Ho asked.

"I just thought of throwing a job at Smithen that he'll handle with a sense of duty. He's a fucker that goes crazy over women anyway. Who knows? One of the six women might spill secrets that we aren't aware of."

"That's true."

"We should retaliate, considering they even wiretapped Smithen."

"Phuhu, I'm looking forward to that," Seok Kang-Ho smiled strangely.

Kang Chan called Kim Tae-Jin and briefly explained what was going on with Smithen, then asked him to check the women's daily schedules.

- Do you have to go this far?

"Yes. They not only tried to kill my father but installed wiretapping devices in my surroundings. I'm thinking of slowly preparing to fight Yang Jin-Woo."

- Alright. Since you're going to do it anyway, might as well do it properly.

“Please put an employee in charge of this matter and have them contact Smithen directly. I’ll tell you the addresses of the women later.”

- Don’t send that information through email or other means. Tell me on a phone call instead.

“I’ll do that.” Kang Chan ended his call with Kim Tae-Jin.

“Does he still not know what’s going on with manager Kim?” Seok Kang-Ho asked Kang Chan.

“I think so?”

“Ha! He’s a scary person. What time would he have left? In any case, wouldn’t we get the gist of the results tomorrow?”

“Probably. Lanok did ask me to see him tomorrow, so the results should be ready by then.”

“That sounds about right.” Seok Kang-Ho nodded to himself, drank the coffee, then continued. “The break is going to end in ten days.”

“Already?”

“I’m disappointed as well. If I was told to just train with the kids while working out like right now, then I would do it for years.”

Kang Chan was relaxed deep down. Once his school and the Ministry of Education had gotten the acceptance letter from France, then that would be the end of his life as a high schooler!

On Thursday, Kang Chan started to run in the mornings again.

He thought he could run a bit more now that he had gotten used to running quite a bit, but he wasn’t planning on being a track and field athlete. Running just this much was enough.

Honestly, Kang Chan felt uneasy. He also regretted his actions. The thought that he shouldn’t have sent Kim Hyung-Jung alone even if he had to cling to Lanok kept haunting him.

Kang Chan had breakfast, then thought about going to school, which he hadn’t done in a long time. He gave up on the idea, however.

Instead, he called Kim Tae-Jin and Smithen and told them the names and addresses of the women, then asked them to do the trivial task of seducing the women. Kang Chan kept breathing deeply because he was frustrated. To stop having useless thoughts, he exercised in his room without any equipment, causing him to sweat like a pig.

After he washed up, he had Bibim-guksu[ref] Bibim-guksu, or spicy noodles, is a cold dish that’s made up of very thin noodles and spicy seasoning. It’s one of the most popular traditional noodle dishes in Korean cuisine, especially in the summer[ref/] that Yoo Hye-Sook had made for him for lunch.

Is there anything that I should do?

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

Kang Chan urgently picked up his phone.

- Channy, are you busy today?

“I have a dinner engagement. Why?”

- It’s about the company dinner. The other actors all happened to be available today.”

“I’m sorry to say this, but you’ll have to take care of it like how I told you last time. Contact me if something urgent happens, though.”

- Alright. This appointment is sudden anyway. Is there anything else going on right now?

“Not really.”

- Then give me a call if it ends early, by any chance. Everyone would love it if you drop by, even if for just a moment.

“Alright.”

Kang Chan inhaled deeply after he ended the call with Michelle.

Honestly, he couldn’t guarantee that all of the members would survive every battle. This also applied to him. What increased their chances of returning safely was a thorough operation and the capabilities of those joining the operation.

Damn it!

However, Kang Chan didn’t know what they were capable of, and the operation had been hastily planned.

It wasn’t like he wasn’t aware of Kim Hyung-Jung’s determination or the feelings of the people that ordered this operation to be done. It was obviously difficult for him to participate in all operations of this kind as well.

‘Trust him. I have to trust that he’ll come back alive.’

In situations like this, he thought that the people that sent their cherished members to the battlefield were really incredible.

Buzz— Buzz—Buzz—.

His phone rang at that moment. After Kang Chan glared at it sharply for no reason, he held it up.

It was Lanok.

“Hello?”

- Mr. Kang Chan, have you calmed down a little?

“I’m sorry for yesterday, Mr. Ambassador. I heard that you helped us, but I didn’t call you because we’d be seeing each other today anyway.”

Kang Chan first told him what he had in mind because his voice sounded no different than usual.

- If you're available this evening, would you like to have tea with me?

"Of course I'm available. Where should we meet?"

- The Namsan Hotel would be good. Please go there first and book a room. I'm planning on going there after a work-related dinner, so we should be able to meet at around 9 pm.

"Understood, Mr. Ambassador."

Kang Chan hung up. He felt greatly relieved after talking to Lanok. If he knew that this was going to happen, then he should've at least gotten the contact information of Kim Hyung-Jung's superior. If he did, he would've known the results by now since they had a satellite phone with them. As he was smacking his lips, he got a call from Seok Kang-Ho.

"Hello?"

- It's me. Can you go to school for a moment?

"Why? What's going on?"

- A few of the people that you beat up on the roof a while ago are here to see you. I told them to wait.

"I'm on my way."

- Alright.

Kang Chan got changed. Since he couldn't stop this from happening anymore, dealing with it was much better than just pacing at home out of frustration. He even wished that those people would bring strong fighters with them.

Yoo Hye-Sook was still busy with phone calls. She had said that she was going to be busy until this week with work related to the Foundation and the reunion. He didn't know why they would persistently call when she already said she wouldn't do it.

Kang Chan tactfully said goodbye and headed to school. It didn't take that long for him to get a taxi since it was already the middle of the day. As he entered the school gate, he couldn't help but smirk. Even from far away, he could already see someone with a cast on his arm and people with gauze on their heads.

When Kang Chan approached them, they hesitantly stood up from their spots.

"You guys wanted to see me?" Kang Chan asked them.

Kang Chan knew his eyes were more fiery than necessary as he was going down the stands. Why was he filling up with spite?

Kang Chan didn't have to act like this. Whatever the reason, he came to school because the men that he beat up said that they wanted to see him. There were three of them in total.

"What do you all want?" Kang Chan asked again.

"Sit."

Alright, I'll sit.

Kang Chan sat on the stand, then put his arm over his thigh and looked at them. He didn't have a good feeling about them since they looked seedy and had gauze and bandages wrapped around them.

"We're going to come to school for the second semester," one of them told Kang Chan.

Instead of responding, Kang Chan only listened. Keeping an eye on Kang Chan's mood, the guy continued, "we heard from Eun-Sil and Ho-Jun."

"So what do you want?"

"We just wanted to tell you that we're planning on attending school again."

These fucking idiots are really doing this?

Why did they have to tell him that they were returning to school? They were the ones that were going to attend it and pay for it.

"I heard that you were waiting for us to return. Cut us some slack. We're going to keep to ourselves until we graduate," he continued.

Kang Chan was dumbfounded. He didn't know what Heo Eun-Sil had told them, but they clearly thought Kang Chan was going to attack them the moment they came to school.

"Stop saying nonsense and just be mindful of your actions," Kang Chan answered.

"We're good, right?"

"That's what I said."

The trio stood up hesitantly and sluggishly walked out since they couldn't gain anything. The sight was quite ridiculous.

Tsk!

Kang Chan had been blankly looking at the sports field when Seok Kang-Ho approached him.

"Huh? When did you get here? Have you seen the students that were waiting for you here?"

Kang Chan told him everything that happened a moment ago.

"It seems like Heo Eun-Sil lied again," Seok Kang-Ho commented afterward.

"Seems like it."

"Please don't worry about them."

"Why would I?" Kang Chan asked.

"What's up with your expression, then? Is it because of manager Kim by any chance?"

"Yeah." Kang Chan nodded.

“I can’t blame you. I also don’t feel comfortable about this. I couldn’t even work since this morning.”

“So you feel the same way, huh?”

“Both of us are probably acting like this out of worry. The Korean special forces are famous for their skills, aren’t they?” Seok Kang-Ho asked.

“That’s true.”

Kang Chan then told Seok Kang-Ho what he had talked about with Kim Tae-Jin, Smithen, and Lanok on the phone in order.

“In any case, we’re going to get the result this evening. How did Lanok sound?” Seok Kang-Ho asked.

“Like business as usual.”

“Phew! I feel like I’m turning into a nervous wreck as time goes on. Did I really grow attached to him even though I haven’t even seen Kim Hyung-Jung that much? Phew!”

Seok Kang-Ho sighed loudly as if he was spewing out his worries. “Let’s wait and see.”

They didn’t really have any other choice, but Kang Chan found it difficult to endure the frustration and anger boiling up inside him.

Chapter 88.1: Are You Going to Do This to Anne as Well? (1)

Kang Chan was glad he was with Seok Kang-Ho until that evening. After he made a reservation at the hotel, he had fried rice at a Chinese restaurant for dinner, which he hadn’t done in a long time.

“Let’s think positively,” Seok Kang-Ho told Kang Chan.

“Okay.”

“Phu,” Seok Kang-Ho laughed. He then stroked his face with his hands. “If you hear some news, please let me know right away.”

“Alright.”

Kang Chan parted ways with Seok Kang-Ho, then immediately headed to the hotel.

He took a seat facing the window in the lobby. Joo Chul-Bum, who accurately deduced that Kang Chan was on the premises, came over and greeted him.

“Please give us a call whenever you plan on coming here, hyung-nim.”

“Alright. Go and do your work. You’re probably busy,” Kang Chan responded to Joo Chul-Bum.

“Have you had dinner?”

“Yes.”

Joo Chul-Bum's actions weren't irritating. It seemed as if Kang Chan had grown attached to him. They saw each other often, after all, and he was friendly. Joo Chul-Bum then dropped by the counter before heading to the basement, turning Kang Chan into a coward that didn't pay for the coffee that he drank again.

Kang Chan exhaled and was looking out the window when his phone rang.

It would be weird if he didn't get a phone call from Oh Gwang-Taek while he was at the Namsan Hotel.

- Did you drop by the hotel?

“Yeah. I have an appointment.”

- You still haven't identified the fucker that called the shots?

“We're looking for him, so settle down and wait.”

- I know that I fall short. Still, don't exclude me. If that doesn't work, then I'll just sharpen your and Kang-Ho hyung-nim's knives.

Why wouldn't Kang Chan know how Oh Gwang-Taek felt?

“Alright. Right! I'm thinking of sending some money to your subordinates' families. How does that sound?”

- Don't worry about that. I actually signed over a store in a commercial building that's frequently visited by customers due to its location. I'll take care of this. Those fuckers protected me knowing full well doing so would kill them.

“Tsk! Anyway, I'll contact you if we find something and are going to make a move.”

- Please.

Kang Chan put down his phone and resumed blankly looking out the window. His phone rang about thirty minutes later. He told Lanok the room number and headed up the room. Lanok arrived about five minutes earlier than 9 pm.

“Welcome,” Kang Chan told Lanok.

They greeted each other like Frenchmen.

Since it was late at night and Kang Chan couldn't prepare anything else, he poured them water from the bottle that was provided with the room. They then bit on a cigar and a cigarette respectively.

“I apologize for leaving the way I did yesterday,” Kang Chan told Lanok.

“It's okay. That made me certain of how you think about those around you. Please don't worry about it too much.”

“Thank you for understanding,” Kang Chan said. He extinguished the cigarette and had a sip of water.

Kang Chan decided to wait for Lanok to talk for now since he had to have a reason to insist on meeting. Lanok did tell him over the phone that they should see each other today, but Lanok wouldn't have decided to set up an appointment to meet him just because he didn't have anything better to do or because he missed the hotel room.

“Mr. Kang Chan.”

He's going to talk about Kim Hyung-Jung!

Lanok had just called Kang Chan, but he still felt certain that the ambassador was going to talk about Kim Hyung-Jung. His heart raced, and he felt frustrated.

“The Korean specialized team has secretly penetrated into Mongolia, and they were hidden enough to not be caught despite being inside the radar of France's DGSE. They left Korea at around 4:40 am,” Lanok continued.

Kang Chan focused on Lanok as much as he could.

“It was hard to know their mission's results until I was talking to you on the phone, but at around 7 pm Korean time, the DGSE contacted me.”

After Lanok saw the look in Kang Chan's eyes, he immediately continued, “the operation failed. Among the twenty-five people that were deployed, about thirteen died. We haven't figured out how many are injured yet.”

“What about the rest?” Kang Chan asked.

“It hasn't been confirmed yet,” Lanok breathed in deeply before continuing. “but we believe that they've been captured.”

Damn it! So this is why I was so frustrated.

Kang Chan gritted his teeth. His eyes dropped to the ground.

After a moment passed...

“It's unlikely that they've actually been taken prisoner, however. If the enemies become aware that South Korea sent them, then as you worried, it's going to be difficult to clean up afterward. Completely aware of that, they probably chose death,” Kang Chan told Lanok.

“It seems like the Korean National Intelligence Service used too simple of a method. We're judging that the enemies got intel about them the moment the Korean specialized team entered Mongolia. The enemies had probably been waiting for them and pounced on them when they got the opportunity.”

Lanok drank water, seemingly avoiding Kang Chan's sharp eyes. He then said, “Mr. Kang Chan, you shouldn't get worked up.”

Kang Chan didn't respond.

“You're not supposed to rescue anyone. What you should do now is ensure the ‘Unicorn’ succeeds so that their sacrifices won't be in vain,” Lanok continued.

Kang Chan picked up a cigarette. Lanok was never going to cooperate in a rescue operation. Now that it had come to this, then the right thing to do was go to Mongolia for now on the fastest plane tomorrow.

“Thank you for letting me know, Mr. Ambassador.”

Lanok glanced at Kang Chan, who was exhaling deeply. “You’re thinking of leaving anyway, aren’t you?”

Lanok’s question made Kang Chan feel rather comfortable, so he just smiled in response.

He had already made a promise to Seok Kang-Ho. Seok Kang-Ho, Kim Tae-Jin, and Suh Sang-Hyun swiftly crossed his mind.

Lanok shook his head. He likely wouldn’t understand Kang Chan.

“Mr. Kang Chan, are you going to do this for me or Anne as well if we’re ever in danger?”

Kang Chan didn’t expect that question. What was he trying to say?

“Let me rephrase that. If we ever find ourselves in a dangerous situation, are you going to throw everything aside and come running to save us regardless of the consequences as well like what you’re doing now?”

Lanok was looking straight at Kang Chan, who was smiling softly.

“Yes, Mr. Ambassador. Honestly, I’m thinking of going to Mongolia tomorrow. I’d do the same for you or Anne if ever you’re placed in this situation. I’m thankful that you’ve been considerate, but I won’t be able to live with myself, even for just a day, if I ever turn a blind eye to someone waiting to be rescued,” Kang Chan answered.

Lanok sighed deeply, then replied, “I prepared a plane and twelve Foreign Legion members in the Osan airfield. I’ve also prepared enough military uniforms and weapons to arm ten more people.”

What is he saying?

Kang Chan ruminated about what he had just heard.

“After getting out of the plane at a military base in the suburbs of Darkhan[1], you’ll have to take a light aircraft or a helicopter. If things go out of hand now, China is certainly going to start a war.”

Lanok smiled brightly after he saw the look in Kang Chan’s eyes. “You’re going to protect Anne like this as well, right?”

“I’ll stop at nothing to save her!”

Lanok stood up from his seat. “There isn’t that much time. Since we don’t know what they’ll do to the captives, leaving as quickly as possible will give you the best chance of rescuing them. We’ve got two advantages, at least. The enemies can’t move their base yet, and they’ve likely let their

guards down after confirming that it's an independent operation done by South Korea. Now, do whatever it takes to come back alive."

"Yes, Mr. Ambassador."

Kang Chan tightly shook Lanok's hand that was held out. He quickly loosened his grip after seeing Lanok frown, but he unexpectedly didn't let go of Kang Chan's hand.

"You'll hear the detailed briefing inside the plane, but there's one thing that you have to keep in mind," Lanok continued. He was still holding onto Kang Chan's hand.

"Never bring this up to someone that won't be able to leave with you tomorrow, and if you're going to tell anyone, you have to do it in person and in a location that you haven't been to before. We'll assemble at 3 am and move by our van. I'll tell you the location in an hour by phone," Lanok added.

"Thank you, Mr. Ambassador."

"Thank me after you've come back alive. The chief manager of this operation is the God of Blackfield. I'll look forward to your safe return."

Lanok looked at Kang Chan with eyes that showed he was fascinated. "Do you really like doing this that much?"

"To save my people, I'd gladly go to hell."

After Kang Chan left, Lanok's assistant quietly walked out of one of the rooms inside. "It still isn't too late to change your mind, Mr. Ambassador."

Lanok shook his head, then turned around and looked behind him. "I won't have any regrets even if my political career ends with this operation. After all, if this succeeds, then a generation would open where the United States would have to obey France. Hence, this is also my fight. If you ever get the chance, take a closer look at Monsieur Kang's eyes and engrave it in your mind. Someone like that will change the course of events, regardless of whether they want to or not. Monsieur Kang could be the only person that the 'Unicorn' will acknowledge as its owner."

Lanok turned his gaze from his assistant, then continued, "erase all records if he fails in the operation."

"What should we do about the people that went with Monsieur Kang?"

"Check the total number of people in the van tomorrow. There's likely going to be two people including Monsieur Kang, so it would be best for two burnt bodies to be discovered in a car accident."

"Understood."

"This is for France. We have already devoted our lives to our country when we started the 'Unicorn.' If only Monsieur Kang was born in France."

Lanok looked at the door that Kang Chan went out of with a terribly subdued look in his eyes. "I would've been disappointed if he didn't go to Mongolia."

Chapter 88.2: Are You Going to Do This to Anne as Well? (1)

Kang Chan sat at a specialty coffee shop that wasn't that far away from the Yoo Bi-Corp building. From there, he called Kim Tae-Jin and Seok Kang-Ho and asked them to meet him at different times.

Kim Tae-Jin arrived first at around 10 pm.

"What's going on this late at night? The employees are investigating the locations that you sent, so we'll get the women's daily routine in approximately three days," Kim Tae-Jin told Kang Chan.

"You already told me that. I asked to see you today because I'm going to go to the countryside for about three days, starting tomorrow."

"Tomorrow? Is it for something important?"

"Yes. I hope you'll protect my parents a bit more intensively while I'm away."

Kim Tae-Jin cocked his head, then asked, "is there another reason why you have to ask me even though you know that the National Intelligence Service is guarding them?"

"I'm just concerned because I'm going to be far away from them."

"If what you're about to do is enough to make you act like this, then it should certainly be important. I'll assign as many people as possible to guard your parents for about three days."

"Thank you."

"Where are you going, and why are you so determined?" Kim Tae-Jin asked again.

"I'm planning to go and help someone I've taken a liking to. He seems to be in a predicament."

"It's suspicious that you're avoiding telling me the exact location. I don't know where you're going, but I should go as well if needed."

"It's not something that requires you to go. I'll be back shortly."

"What about Mr. Seok?"

"He's coming with me," Kang Chan answered.

"I can't believe that you're leaving me out. This is upsetting."

"Please let it slide just this once."

When Kang Chan smiled, Kim Tae-Jin stood up while smiling in a similar way. "I'll be going early because you said that you're going somewhere far. Have a safe trip, and contact me as soon as you come back."

"Understood."

Kim Tae-Jin left.

While Kang Chan was drinking his drink, Seok Kang-Ho arrived. "What did they say?"

As soon as he arrived, Seok Kang-Ho leaned his head closer to Kang Chan and pulled his chair forward.

"The operation failed. Among twenty-five, thirteen died. They believe that twelve of them have been captured as well," Kang Chan answered.

"Fuck," Seok Kang-Ho suddenly swore, then tightly gritted his teeth. "What are you going to do?"

"We're leaving from Osan tomorrow. Twelve Foreign Legion members are joining us, and we're going to receive the briefing on the plane. We'll assemble at 3 am and get a ride from Lanok's people."

Seok Kang-Ho understandably blanked out for a moment. Soon after, "Are you serious?"

"Why? Do you want to be left out?"

"I'd rather die!"

Seok Kang-Ho grinned at Kang Chan.

Buzz— Buzz—Buzz—. Buzz— Buzz—Buzz—.

[The third exit of the Sinsa Station][1]

Kang Chan got a text message just at the right time. He showed it to Seok Kang-Ho, then immediately erased it.

"Was someone here before me?" Seok Kang-Ho asked.

"I met President Kim for a moment to ask him to guard my parents more extensively."

"Then I can have that drink, right?"

"Just buy one."

"Please leave me be. I have to go home immediately after having just a sip," Seok Kang-Ho said, drank the rest of the drink, then bit on a cigarette.

"I feel strange," Seok Kang-Ho commented afterward. He appeared to be having mixed feelings. "This kind of operation carried no burden for me back then. But now that you actually say that we're leaving, my wife, daughter, and the kids are weighing on my mind a little bit."

“You should stay back. It’s fine.”

“I’m just telling you how I feel! Aren’t you affected?”

“It hasn’t settled on me yet since this decision is too abrupt and unexpected,” Kang Chan answered.

“Hmph! We just have to go there and save Kim Hyung-Jung, don’t we?”

“That’s right.”

Seok Kang-Ho’s eyes were glinting.

“Thank you, captain.”

“Let’s go home.”

“Please come out an hour early. Let’s have a cup of coffee together,” Seok Kang-Ho suggested.

When Kang Chan smirked, Seok Kang-Ho responded with a grin.

Kang Chan got in Seok Kang-Ho’s car and got out when they arrived at the entrance of the apartment. He then called Kim Dae-Kyung.

- Hello?

“Father, is mother next to you?”

- Yeah. What’s going on?

“I have to go to the countryside at around 2:30 am tomorrow. I’ll be there for about three or four days. I was hoping you could tell mom ahead of time since it could startle her.”

After a short silence...

- I forgot to tell your mom about that. It’s okay! I heard this in the hospital! I see. That was taking place tomorrow morning! I’ll tell your mom right now. When are you coming back?

Kang Dae-Kyung was quite loud.

“Thank you, father. I’m going home in ten minutes. I’ll just tell her that I’m going to a retreat.”

- You’re busier than me. Alright. I’ll explain it to your mother properly.

Kang Chan looked at the time as he was hanging up. It was 11:10 pm. He was going to leave at 2 am tomorrow, and even though he used “retreat” as an excuse—which likely wouldn’t work at all—Kang Dae-Kyung responded in a cool way.

Kang Chan wanted to talk to two more people, no matter what. He texted Kim Mi-Young first for the first time.

[Can you call me?]

It was already way past 11 pm. Even if she wasn't sleeping, it could be difficult for her to talk at home. However, since Michelle had said that there was a company dinner today, she was certainly going to pick up. At that moment, his phone rang.

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

It was Kim Mi-Young.

- It's me! Huhuhu.

“Did something good happen?”

- I'm just happy because this is the first time you've ever texted me first.

Kang Chan smiled brightly.

“Aren't you at home?”

- We had to practice for our written exam so we just finished. I'm on my way home now.

Hearing about the subjects that Kim Mi-Young was studying sometimes made Kang Chan feel like he was attending a different school.

“Can I see you for a moment?”

- Of course. How can I say no to you?

“I'm in front of the apartment. Where are you?”

- I'll be there in five minutes.

Kang Chan sat on a bench for a moment and soon saw Kim Mi-Young at the entrance of the apartment.

“Over here!” Kang Chan yelled. He waved his hand, and Kim Mi-Young quickly came toward him with a wide smile on her face.

“You must be tired,” Kang Chan said.

“I'm not. Today's a good day.”

“What are you happy about?”

“You texted me.”

“I texted you because you popped into my head on my way home.”

Kim Mi-Young smiled brightly.

“Did it really make you that happy that I texted you?” Kang Chan asked.

“Yeah. I was extremely delighted.”

Kang Chan thought she was cute, but he also felt bad for her.

He was happy he got to see her even though he just wanted to talk to her.

“You should go home now, right?” Kang Chan asked.

“I have about five more minutes to spare.”

“It’s late. Go home. Your mom is going to worry.”

It was a summer night. When his eyes met Kim Mi-Young’s, Kang Chan exhaled softly. He realized her eyes were very pretty.

Kim Mi-Young swallowed dryly.

Kang Chan knew what she wanted but now was not the time.

For the first time, the fact that he might not be able to come back from Mongolia if things went wrong felt real.

This could be the last time they see each other.

‘Have a good life.’

“You should go home. It’s been five minutes,” Kang Chan said.

Kim Mi-Young smiled while wrinkling her nose as if she was disappointed.

“Hug me!”

“Here?”

“Yeah!”

Kang Chan lightly hugged Kim Mi-Young. They stayed like that for a moment.

Kim Mi-Young smelled like green apples. Her scent faintly wafted toward him, which strangely made his heart flutter.

“I’m going to go to the countryside for about three days tomorrow,” Kang Chan said afterward.

“The countryside? Where?”

“Mr. Seok Kang-Ho know about it. I’ll contact you after I come back.”

“Okay. Have a safe trip.”

“Sleep early, okay?”

After Kim Mi-Young stepped away from Kang Chan, she quickly ran off. It seemed like she was shy and was feeling complicated.

“Whoo!”

He did the right thing. He should be fully satisfied with being able to unexpectedly see her in person.

Kang Chan sat on a bench and called Michelle. She answered after two rings, and he heard loud music before anything else.

- Wait a moment.

Michelle seemed to be going somewhere since the music slowly faded into the distance.

“It seems like the company dinner is still going strong?”

- It’s almost finished now. How are you doing?

“I have to go to the countryside in the morning. I’m on my way home to pack my things right now. The trip will take about three days.”

- That’s disappointing. Everyone has been waiting in case you come.

“I’m sorry about today. Let’s have another dinner with just our company when I return instead. We can all go to karaoke as well.”

- Okay, Channy! You said you’re going out in the morning, so go home quickly and get even just a bit of sleep. J’taime, Channy.”

“Okay. Work hard.”

After he hung up, Kang Chan immediately went up to his house.

“Channy!” Yoo Hye-Sook greeted Kang Chan. Kang Dae-Kyung soon came out as well.

“You two haven’t been able to sleep because of me, have you?” Kang Chan asked.

“I heard that you’re going out at 2 am? You must be tired. Is there anything we can do? Have you had dinner yet?”

“He’s going to run out of breath trying to answer all your questions,” Kang Dae-Kyung told Yoo Hye-Sook.

“I’ve had dinner, and I can sleep in the car on the way there. I was told that I don’t have to pack much luggage since they have everything there. They even have workout outfits and toiletries.”

“Why are you going to a retreat all of a sudden?” Yoo Hye-Sook asked.

“Honey, Channy should sleep for even an hour. He’s got to be tired,” Kang Dae-Kyung interfered and tried to stop Yoo Hye-Sook.

“It’s okay. If both of you are okay with it, then let’s order chicken. How does that sound?” Kang Chan asked.

“You want to eat chicken, Channy? Let’s order quickly, then. This is good. I’m also a bit hungry anyway.”

Kang Dae-Kyung smiled. He looked as if she found her ridiculous.

“What’s wrong, father?” Kang Chan asked.

“I told your mom I was a bit hungry a moment ago, but she—”

“Honey!”

Kang Chan laughed loudly. He then ordered chicken.

Kang Dae-Kyung and Yoo Hye-Sook both had worry in their eyes, although they were worried about completely different things.

When the chicken arrived, they talked about random topics over the food. Fortunately, Yoo Hye-Sook was happy enough to alleviate her worries. Kang Dae-Kyung would certainly take proper care of Yoo Hye-Sook even if they were to receive grave news.

Kang Chan felt apologetic toward them, but he couldn't ignore Kim Hyung-Jung, who could be dying right now.

He finished washing up and changing at around 1:45 am.

“I'll be back,” Kang Chan told his parents.

“Have fun, Channy. Take care.”

Kang Chan stroked Yoo Hye-Sook's back as she wrapped her arms around his neck.

He was about to head off to a place where he could return in the worst possible state. Kang Chan inhaled deeply, then let go of her hand.

“I'll be back,” Kang Chan repeated.

“Alright,” Kang Dae-Kyung answered with a brief nod.

Their eyes met for a moment.

‘You better be careful.’

‘Yes. I'll be careful.’

Kang Chan went out the front door pretending everything was alright.

Chapter 89.1: Are You Going to Do This? Even to Anne as Well? (2)

As he stood at the entrance of the apartment, Kang Chan discreetly looked up at his house.

It still didn't feel real that he was going to Mongolia. It could turn out to be an insane idea.

Kang Chan decided to think about just two things—that terrorist attacks were going to keep being carried out if they just left the enemies alone, and that abandoning their captured allies wasn't something that a comrade who fought with them should do.

He took a taxi to the Sinsa station.

“I'm here!”

Seok Kang-Ho, who had been waiting for him, approached him. “There's one place open over there. Let's go.”

Kang Chan walked to where Seok Kang-Ho had pointed with a smirk. It was summer, but he still missed hot coffee in the morning.

“Did you sleep?” Seok Kang-Ho asked.

“We ordered chicken. What about you?”

“I made love to my wife because it could be the last time I see her.”

Kang Chan went into the smoking room with a soft smile, opened a window widely, and occupied a table. A moment later, Seok Kang-Ho brought over two cups of coffee.

“It’s still not too late.” Kang Chan reminded Seok Kang-Ho.

“Why do you keep spouting nonsense?”

“Because I doubt either of us has fully realized what’s actually happening.”

“That’s tr—Agh! Hot!” Seok Kang-Ho yelled.

“Pull yourself together.”

Seok Kang-Ho rubbed his lips with the back of his hand, then looked into the coffee shop with dissatisfaction. “We’re going to feel better once we’re on the plane. I thought about it after making love to my wife, but I doubt I can endure staying back by myself. We’ve already decided to go, so stop saying things like that already.”

“Alright. I’ll stop.”

Seok Kang-Ho handed over a cigarette, smirking.

Chk chk.

“Whoo—Daye.”

“Yes?”

“I don’t trust a single part of this entire operation. The moment I think something’s even just a bit suspicious, I’ll start completely ignoring the basic operation. After the briefing inside the plane, we’re going to set up the final evac location in private. Keep that in mind.”

“Alright. I haven’t seen that look in your eyes in a long time. I’m glad I finally get to see it again,” Seok Kang-Ho commented.

The closer the time was to 3 am, the more real their departure for an operation felt.

Kang Chan slowly looked around his surroundings, finding light escaping from the occasional lit-up offices and apartments in the distance. He also watched the cars quickly driving past them.

‘I should’ve had pork cutlets.’

Kang Chan thought about Kang Dae-Kyung, Yoo Hye-Sook, Kim Mi-Young, and Michelle.

It had only been a short while, but quite a lot of things had already happened.

Kang Chan exhaled deeply. This felt completely different than when he was going over to France with not even a penny to his name.

He was in good physical condition—far better than when he was in Africa. He initially thought it was because his new body was still young, but it actually seemed related to how his regenerative capabilities had gotten better, like what Yoo Hun-Woo had said.

Fortunately, Seok Kang-Ho regularly exercised as well.

An hour passed by quickly. Soon, a black van stopped in front of the station.

“Let’s go,” Kang Chan told Seok Kang-Ho.

“Alright.”

The look in Seok Kang-Ho’s eyes changed completely to that of Dayeru’s.

Rattle.

When Kang Chan approached the van, its door opened.

“Please get in, Monsieur Kang,” an agent said while examining the van’s exterior.

They drove away as soon as the two got in the car and sat down.

At times like this, nothing had to be said. As Kang Chan was indifferently looking out the window, the van quickly sped through the road. They were so quick they arrived in Osan in thirty minutes.

When the driver, who was also an agent, presented his ID at the entrance, the door opened without anyone even examining what was inside the van. The van immediately headed into the runway and stopped in front of a plane. It was a C295, which was a cargo aircraft for military purposes[1].

The agent, who had been silent throughout the entire trip, finally spoke as he opened the door. “Good luck to both of you.”

Kang Chan smirked in response. He got out of the car and immediately boarded the cargo aircraft.

Unlike its cockpit, the C295’ fuselage was empty aside from two rows of rollaway beds on both sides of the wall.

The door of the airplane closed.

Twelve foreign legion members watched Kang Chan and Seok Kang-Ho while sitting in a line on the bottom row of rollaway beds. Gérard sat at the very left. When the two sat on the bed that was on the other side of Gérard, the plane’s propellers immediately began to spin.

“I knew it would be you!” Gérard yelled to Kang Chan.

“What did you say?!”

“I said I knew you’d come here!” Gérard repeated as the plane moved. He then glanced at Seok Kang-Ho, who was grinning and looked fascinated.

The military aircraft flew roughly for about ten minutes, maintaining its usual altitude, then the warning light flickered three times. Gérard walked to the center of the aircraft and yelled, “look at his face! This person here is the commanding officer of this operation!”

“For the sake of convenience, we won’t reveal our names! His codename is...” Gérard gave Kang Chan a dissatisfied glance, then continued, “the God of Blackfield! The person that came with him is—”

When Gérard turned his head, Seok Kang-Ho answered with “Dayeru!” Kang Chan didn’t even have the time to stop him.

“Damn it!” Gérard replied.

“Dayeru! What you should remember is that today’s operation is not an official operation! Anyone that wants to be excluded has until the plane lands to decide! Any questions?” Gérard asked afterward.

The members didn’t say anything. They only looked at Kang Chan and Seok Kang-Ho, both of whom were sitting across from them with determined eyes. Gérard then pointed to the back with his index and middle finger, and four members moved a box to the middle of the plane. The box was taller than a human.

Clank. Clank. Crrrrr.

After securing the wheels, a member opened both sides of the box’s doors. It contained military uniforms, military boots, firearms, and bayonets. The military uniform was yellowish in color and had no markings on it.

Kang Chan and Seok Kang-Ho wordlessly took out a military uniform and boots that fitted them. They took a rifle, pistol, bayonet, magazine, and bullets as well.

As they changed, Gérard glanced at Kang Chan, whose scars were clearly visible because of the lights inside the plane.

Now wearing military uniform, Kang Chan fastened a bayonet Bowie knife[2] to his right foot and his left thigh. This type of combat knife became famous when it was shown in the movie Rambo.[3]

Toward the back of the Bowie knife’s blade was a jagged section. The inside the handle was a fishing line and three or four needles.

They then armed themselves with colt 1911s[4]. Kang Chan attached one to the right side of his waist and his left leg.

Clank.

Seemingly intent on not leaving any traces of the Foreign Legion, they equipped themselves with Colt 727 assault rifles[5], which was also known as the ‘Abu Dhabi carbine’ since it was essentially an M16 remodeled according to the United Arab Emirates’ wishes.

Kang Chan then attached six magazines to his sides, which went all the way to his back, and one on each of his forearms.

Click!

Finally, he fastened a magazine on his gun.

When Kang Chan lifted his gaze after arming himself, Gérard, who looked dumbfounded, extended his hand.

Kang Chan took the beret from Gérard and wore it with the right side slanted downward.

Click. Click.

Seok Kang-Ho was no different than Kang Chan. Gérard handed over a beret with a dirty expression, and Seok Kang-Ho quickly grabbed and wore it. Gérard kept glaring at Seok Kang-Ho.

“What?” Seok Kang-Ho asked in Korean.

Gérard looked at Kang Chan suspiciously, then turned around. Kang Chan shook his head. The moment they got on the military aircraft, Seok Kang-Ho completely turned into Dayeru.

Gérard got armed with the members. About twenty minutes later, they returned the box in the center of the aircraft to its original spot.

“At 7 am local time, we’re going to get off the aircraft at the Darkhan army base and ride a helicopter to the Onon river[6]! We expect to arrive by 8 am. We’ll cross the mountain from there to reach the area of operation. The trek should take us about six hours.” Gérard explained.

The plan gave them time to conduct a reconnaissance and rest until dinner. After dinner, they’d be able to immediately proceed with a night operation. Hence, Kang Chan just agreed to it.

“What’s our evacuation plan?” Kang Chan asked.

“We’ll radio the headquarters after the operation, and they’ll immediately send a helicopter.”

Kang Chan cocked his head. They could easily get caught if they used a helicopter. However, he had no choice but to accept it for now. They still had approximately a full three hours left.

“Go up to your bed and sleep,” Kang Chan told Seok Kang-Ho afterward.

“The look in that fucker’s eyes is bothering me. It’ll give me a weird dream.”

“Why did you use that name as a code name in the first place?”

“It just came out. It’s cute to see a chick mimicking an eagle, though.”

“Stop talking nonsense and get some sleep.”

When Seok Kang-Ho received a look from Kang Chan, he laid down on a rollaway bed in the top row. After arming themselves, the Foreign Legion members also started to claim comfortable beds and lay down. The only people left sitting were Kang Chan, Gérard, and a member that looked to be the youngest out of everyone.

Kang Chan took out a cigarette from the clothes that he had taken off and bit on it.

Chk chk.

“Whoo.”

The cigarette smoke swiftly flew toward the back.

Except for the two snipers, nobody else had heavy weapons. It was difficult for Kang Chan to determine their exact capabilities, but he liked that they didn't have a daft look in their eyes.

Chapter 89.2: Are You Going to Do This? Even to Anne as Well? (2)

Kang Chan placed both of his arms over his knees, then leaned back against the wall.

Even though they were flying over as fast as they could, there was a chance they'd only find Kim Hyung-Jung's corpse. Kang Chan breathed out deeply while remembering Kim Hyung-Jung. He knew how betrayal made his blood boil.

It somehow felt like he returned to reality after having a good dream, yet on the other hand, he felt like he was still dreaming.

“Who!”

Kang Chan stepped on the cigarette to extinguish it, but when he raised his gaze, his eyes met Gérard's.

“Would you like a cup of coffee?” Gérard asked Kang Chan.

“That'll be great.”

When Gérard nodded, the young member that had been sitting with him went to prepare coffee. He soon wafted the peculiar smell of instant coffee as the member brought over three paper cups.

Kang Chan took a sip of the coffee, then bit on a cigarette again.

Chk chk.

“Who.”

Gérard was blatantly looking at Kang Chan.

“Get some rest,” Kang Chan told Gérard.

“I'll be okay with not sleeping for a day.”

“The members become anxious if the captain's nerves are on edge, so relax. However, if a situation comes where you feel like it's dangerous, then be on edge. Let them know if they can rest or if they should be nervous through your expression, the way you talk, and the aura you give out,” Kang Chan explained.

Gérard tilted his head and looked at Kang Chan.

Kang Chan finished drinking his coffee and extinguished the cigarette on the paper cup. He then put the cigarette butt that he had placed on the floor a moment ago in the paper cup as well.

He was starting to feel exhausted.

‘Should I get some sleep?’

Two hours of sleep would be enough.

Kang Chan looked at the rollaway beds while thinking of lying down.

“Do you know why I applied for this operation?” Gérard suddenly asked a question.

“Hey, Captain!” Kang Chan called and looked at him, smirking. “If you want to keep the chick next to you alive, then quickly put him to bed and get some sleep, even if it’s just for a bit.”

Kang Chan laid down on a cot and secured himself by pulling the magazine that was hung around both sides of his waist to the side as much as possible. He then covered his eyes with the beret. A moment later, Kang Chan heard Gérard saying, “go to sleep!”

Kang Chan soon fell asleep.

Karaang. Whoooosh!

Kang Chan opened his eyes to the sound of the plane’s propellers and the feeling of the altitude changing rapidly. After he shook his head and sat on the bed, he couldn’t help but smirk.

The time he had spent in Korea completely felt like a dream.

When Kang Chan raised himself up and brought back a bottle of water, Seok Kang-Ho then Gérard raised themselves up.

The lights of the cabin flickered twice.

“Phew!”

Seok Kang-Ho approached Kang Chan and tousled his hair. Kang Chan then opened the bottle of water and poured it out on Seok Kang-Ho.

After noisily washing his face, Seok Kang-Ho poured water on Kang Chan in return. Kang Chan washed his face as well and drank the remaining water.

Whoosh.

The paper cup that Kang Chan had placed beside him fell toward the other side and rolled away as the plane took a wide turn. Its engine rang out loudly, and the altitude fell rapidly.

Thud.

The wheels touched down on the ground. Kang Chan didn’t know who their pilot was, but the fucker had really bad flying skills.

Kagannng.

As it made a loud noise, the plane slowed down on the runway. It was as if it was screaming. Kang Chan quickly examined the members. It was easy to tell who was afraid during moments like this.

None of their expressions changed except for the youngest.

Brrrr.

The door of the plane opened. With Kang Chan’s nod, Gérard led the members and ran out.

The helicopter that was waiting for them was the CH-47 Chinook.[1] It was shaped like a sausage and had a propeller on the front and back of its body.

After Seok Kang-Ho boarded the helicopter, Kang Chan got on it last. The helicopter immediately rose up from the runway.

Two members distributed C-rations[2] to everyone. This wasn't something that they should refuse.

Kang Chan and Seok Kang-Ho cleanly went through the bread and biscuit, chocolate bar, and even the canned fruits that were inside the C-rations.

Ddu-ddu-ddu-ddu-

Over the deafening noise of the helicopter, Kang Chan shouted "Map!" toward Gérard.

Gérard seemed to have guessed what Kang Chan had said based on his mouth's movements. He walked toward Kang Chan while taking out a map from the left pocket of his top. "Why are you asking for a map now?!"

"We should tell the members when we're marching up the mountain!"

"Why?!"

Kang Chan glanced at Gérard. "Telling them where to hide in case of an emergency would be ideal! Why ask when you already know the answer!"

Gérard laughed, seemingly dumbfounded.

On the map that Kang Chan had spread out, the Onon river and the Sükhbaatar area had been marked in detail, and the location of the enemies had been stamped with a red dot.

"Captain!" Kang Chan called. When Kang Chan turned around and looked behind him, Gérard brought his head closer to Kang Chan's.

"This place next to this river shall be 'alpha'! The heart of this mountain is 'beta'! If we lose each other due to unforeseen circumstances, then just hide and stay near whichever of these two is closest to you at the time! I'll go find you no matter what!" Kang Chan explained.

Gérard took a deep breath, then asked Kang Chan, "Are all Korean people like you?"

"What?"

"I asked if all! Korean! People! Are like you!"

Kang Chan smirked, then gestured to Seok Kang-Ho with his eyes. "Daye and i Are going to form groups! If possible, put the members that can speak Algeria's languages into his team!"

"I'm going to go crazy!"

Calling 'Dayeru' as 'Daye' was a mistake. Gérard looked like he suddenly got slapped.

"Captain!" Kang Chan called.

Gérard didn't answer. He only looked back at him.

“Question what you’re curious and suspicious about later! Our first priority right now is the members’ lives, followed by this operation’s success! Your goal is to have all the members here right now in this helicopter when the operation ends! Got it?!” Kang Chan asked.

“Alright!”

“Have the rookie beside you no matter what!”

Gérard nodded as he tightly clenched his teeth.

Ddu-ddu-ddu-ddu-ddu.

It took them forty minutes to divide into groups and examine the terrain.

They saw a ‘Ger’[3] from time to time within the endless earth, but they couldn’t see anything now.

After about ten minutes, they saw a small river.

Kang Chan felt on edge, which hadn't happened for a long time. His eyes met Seok Kang-Ho's as he was turning his gaze, and Seok Kang-Ho grinned. His eyes were glinting. “Relax your eyes. You’re going to scare these people!”

Kang Chan could understand what he was saying based on his mouth’s movements. He smirked, then looked at the members. It looked like they were all nervous upon seeing Kang Chan and his senses on edge.

Ddu-ddu-ddu-ddu-

.

The helicopter took a wide turn and went farther away from the riverside.

Kang Chan quickly examined the terrain stretched out as far as the eye could see. It felt less rugged than what he thought the map portrayed.

The wind was cold, but Kang Chan liked it because it made him return to his senses.

“Captain!”

Kang Chan widely separated his index and middle finger and pointed to the back, which meant that they should be on the lookout for danger before they got out of the helicopter.

When the members looked at Gérard...

“From now on, the God of Blackfield will command the operation!” Gérard yelled, “The second group will receive Dayeru’s orders!”

Six members nodded in response to Gérard’s orders.

Ddu-ddu-ddu-ddu-ddu.

The helicopter gradually glided down to the ground.

Seok Kang-Ho glanced at Kang Chan. It seemed like he wanted to know how Kang Chan was feeling about this.

Whoosh.

The back door opened...

Bang.

And the helicopter landed.

The two armed guards nodded toward Kang Chan, who then gave Gérard an eye gesture.

“Let’s go!” Gérard yelled.

They rushed forward.

The sound of military boots and the ‘click’ from the weapons could be heard despite the noisy engine.

“Daye!”

Seok Kang-Ho ran out with Kang Chan’s second nod. After Kang Chan left, the two members that had mounted guard followed behind him. They were running at their full speed.

Standing in the middle of this plain and warily observing their surroundings was no different from just offering their necks to their enemy for target practice.

As they ran seven hundred meters, those who were nervous started to breathe faster.

People had to habitually run at least seven kilometers regularly to run seven hundred meters at their top speed in this kind of situation. Otherwise, they’d fall behind.

And people would say that the weights of the gun and weapons that they were holding and had hung around their shoulders weren’t that big of a deal?

A newbie would never know the feeling of such weight doubling up for every hundred meters they ran at full speed.

“Run!” Kang Chan yelled.

“Huff Huff! Huff Huff!”

Sure enough, the newbie was already out of breath. He was too nervous.

Kang Chan quickly searched through their surroundings. He couldn’t trust anyone.

He wasn’t even thinking of Lanok. If anyone that knew of this operation, even those that flew the helicopter and left just a moment ago, said anything, then Kang Chan would experience having a bullet go through his neck again here.

An enormous amount of money paralyzed everything about a person.

Kang Chan didn’t feel anything.

Seok Kang-Ho was running as well. He was the farthest away from Kang Chan.

“Captain!” Kang Chan called.

When Gérard glanced at Kang Chan, Kang Chan directed his fist to the front, straightened his index and pointy finger, and signaled for Gérard to go left and to go right.

They had now ran halfway toward their target.

Kang Chan ran to the new recruit's side and yelled, "Hey! You son of a bitch!"

He swore in Korean, but he managed to directly convey his emotions.

Startled, the newbie glanced at Kang Chan, then turned his gaze to the front.

Chapter 90.1: Long Fucking Day (1)

The members that had arrived first crouched at the bottom of the mountain, then glared at the top part of it. Kang Chan tightly grabbed the back of the neck of the new recruit who was about to fall. After letting go of the flustered squadmate, he sharply looked around them.

Meanwhile, the chick adjusted his posture.

"Go."

Gérard ordered three members to scout ahead with Kang Chan's brief command.

Before them was a long mountain range that looked as if it had multiple mountains overlapping each other. It was actually considerably far from them.

Sunlight occasionally peeked through the tall and straight trees. At some point, they heard a weird bird call that went 'beep' amid the wind and the patchy weed.

Kang Chan placed the string of the Abu-Dhabi carbine over his right shoulder and walked with his index finger on the trigger.

They were amid a cool mountain, so they didn't sweat.

Flap.

Birds flew above them.

Wheeng! Wheeng!

And they even heard the weird cry of a beast.

This was Mongolia.

A battle was bound to happen regardless of who caught them, and no excuse could stop it. They would either survive through a desperate escape or die in battle, leaving not even a trace of their existence on paper.

They very nervously marched forward.

Even though they had sent three men to scout ahead of the groups, they still didn't know when or at which side the enemy would come from.

The difference between training and an actual battle was whether or not they felt extreme nervousness. In a situation where they didn't know when or from where a bullet would go through their necks, most people would collapse after about six hours of walking.

A few members glanced at Kang Chan with suspicion. Unlike how he ran at full speed from the helicopter, they thought he didn't know a thing about marching. Their lives were on the line here, so he should be wary of his surroundings. However, he seemed to be carelessly marching without thinking about the consequences instead...

Rustle! Click!

Just then, they heard the sound of grass being pushed back from the right side of the woods.

Click! Click!

When the members flinched, Kang Chan had already pointed his rifle. By a narrow margin, Dayeru and Gérard followed suit and aimed their weapons as well.

What just happened?

Was it possible for a person to react like that? Especially against the specialized team of the thirteenth foreign brigade that was overflowing with pride?

Was that why they stood with Dayeru, Gérard, and Kang Chan and inserted the rest of the members in between them?

Rustle. Rustle.

After two more rustles, a shape of a blackish animal went down the mountain.

The silence returned.

If Kang Chan was their opponent, Dayeru and Gérard would've already been killed in that small difference in speed. The members would've been turned into corpses the moment they flinched.

When Gérard received a glance from Kang Chan, he mouthed, "I'm going to go crazy" to himself. He drew a circle in the air with his index and middle fingers and pointed to their front, signaling that the situation ended and to march forward.

It wasn't a world of difference, but they had to admit that Kang Chan's skills were on another level, even if only a little.

"Captain," Kang Chan called and stopped their march when the wind that touched their foreheads felt cool. They had been walking for about an hour.

"Gather around," Kang Chan continued.

Gérard obediently called the members.

They had to place at least the minimum number of sentries to guard them. However, Kang Chan gathered all the members.

"Give me the map," Kang Chan ordered again.

Gérard spread out the map on the floor.

“Look closely. This is where we are right now, and this is where we think the enemy’s base to be. If we go straight toward the back from here...” With his finger, Kang Chan pointed to a spot in the riverside. “This is location ‘alpha.’ And this place just over the mountain is ‘beta.’”

Except for Seok Kang-Ho and Gérard, the members looked at Kang Chan with faces that asked, ‘What’s he saying?’

“Regardless of what I yell out, just listen for the words ‘alpha’ and ‘beta.’ If I yell ‘Alpha, lima,’ then head to location ‘alpha,’” Kang Chan explained.

The members observed Gérard’s reaction when they showed Kang Chan they understood through their eyes, only to find Gérard unexpectedly calm.

“We’ll take a five-minute break. Guard our vicinity within a ten-meter radius,” Kang Chan ordered.

They stopped on the top of a slope in the middle of the mountain. Kang Chan decided to rest in this area since it posed no risk of being shot from behind the trees.

Gérard didn’t spout nonsense. He just called the three members ahead of them, then stationed four members in four locations that were ten meters apart.

While resting, Kang Chan plopped down to the ground and leaned back against a tree to get comfortable.

After Kang Chan, Seok Kang-Ho, and Gérard sat down, the others also found a comfortable place to rest.

Gérard looked at Kang Chan with a strange expression.

“What?” Kang Chan asked Gérard.

“If we keep going at this speed, it wouldn’t even take us four hours to get to the location.”

“What’s he saying?” Seok Kang-Ho asked Kang Chan.

“He’s saying that it won’t even take four hours if we keep going at this speed,” Kang Chan answered.

“Idiot. Is he planning on walking all day?” Seok Kang-Ho asked.

“What did he say?” Gérard asked Kang Chan.

Kang Chan chuckled. These two fuckers kept tiring him out.

“Do we have anyone that knows how to speak Algeria’s languages?”

These people were already curious about Kang Chan. Hence, when he asked them that question, the eyes of two of them suddenly sparkled. Moreover, when Dayeru talked to them, they answered looking surprised and happy. Meanwhile, Gérard sighed as he looked at Dayeru.

“Let’s go.”

When Kang Chan stood up, three members moved ahead first.

The atmosphere was very different than before they rested.

Kang Chan felt as if something was bothering him.

“Stop!” Kang Chan ordered, and the members quickly did as instructed. They then nervously examined their surroundings.

Having walked for three hours, they had gotten the hang of determining whether Kang Chan was walking leisurely or if he was nervous.

However, right now, Kang Chan was exuding bloodthirst.

It couldn't be explained with words.

Kang Chan ordered Dayeru, Gérard, and the members to go to their respective positions with his index and middle finger.

‘What's going on?’

Kang Chan slowly looked around them but found nothing noteworthy right now.

‘Is it nothing?’

Kang Chan couldn't explain his gut feelings.

It happened all the time in Africa and South Korea, but he didn't know when and what was going to happen.

About a minute passed.

Just as Gérard looked at Kang Chan with eyes that asked, ‘what's wrong?’, they heard people talking, moving, then stepping on rocks.

When Kang Chan got nervous, he heard the sound of his own breathing before anything else, which was the result of his training that had been repeated multiple times and the actual combat experience he had accumulated over the years.

Normally, people would instead get a headache while their cheeks burned or hear the sound of their hearts beating. This was why it was emphasized in every training session to listen to the sound of their breathing.

If they heard the sound of their heart beating or felt their head going blank due to nervousness, then there was a high chance that the opponent could hear them breathing.

This was happening to the new recruit right now. He had gone through adequate training, but he was lacking actual combat experience.

The sounds kept getting closer and closer.

Kang Chan couldn't understand what they were saying, but considering that their sentences were pronounced with fortises[1] and ended with sounds such as 'tu-deuk' and 'ba-teuk,' they were clearly speaking Mongolian.

Rather than cautiously, they were walking comfortably.

Kang Chan took out the bayonet that he had attached to his right foot. If he had to eliminate them, then he intended to do so without gunshots.

Dayeru and Gérard also took out their bayonets, having figured out Kang Chan's intention.

Three opponents walked past the area just below where Kang Chan and the members were hiding.

They had a rifle slung over their shoulders that looked to be a few decades old. Two of them had a mountain animal hanging around their waists. It was as big as a forearm and appeared to have been caught in a trap.

Kang Chan planned to run over and pounce on them before they could fire their guns.

There was a fair distance between Kang Chan and the trio. However, their voices sounded awfully loud perhaps because they were on a mountain.

'Just go.'

Kang Chan didn't want to kill these talkative people with dirty faces, however.

They kept walking, but one of the three glanced upward when they were right below Kang Chan without knowing that fourteen guns and three bayonets were seeking to kill them right above.

Their voices had grown fainter about three minutes later. After three more minutes, they couldn't hear them anymore.

Kang Chan shook his head when he received a look from Gérard.

People like them who hunted for a living had eyes and ears sensitive enough to be comparable to mountain animals.

After about five more minutes passed, Kang Chan slowly raised himself up.

They were leaving.

They walked for thirty minutes, then Kang Chan decided they should rest. "Captain."

Gérard now understood what Kang Chan wanted from the look in his eyes alone, so he immediately assigned four members to guard their perimeter.

They were halfway up the mountain, so they could easily look down and see in all four directions. It was also a great place to hide since it was packed with trees.

"We'll have lunch before moving onward," Gérard told the members.

"Understood."

The C-rations were swiftly distributed.

Chapter 90.2: Long Fucking Day (1)

Kang Dae-Kyung hadn't been able to concentrate on his work since this morning. Breathing felt laborious as well, almost as if his chest was tied tightly.

“Whoo!”

He breathed in deeply, but the frustration didn't go away at all. It felt as if something was taking up space in his lungs, keeping him from getting enough air.

The hardest thing he had worked at since coming to the office at 9 am was fiddling with his phone.

‘Wouldn't it be okay to talk to him just this once?’

Kang Dae-Kyung couldn't bring himself to press the call button, however. He was worried that Kang Chan was talking to someone important, like the Prime Minister, who even came to visit him personally in the hospital and asked him to allow Kang Chan to continue working for the country.

The salespeople had even become more energetic recently because the executives that had shaken hands with the Prime Minister told stories about what happened when he visited.

“Whoo-oo!” Kang Dae-Kyung exhaled, then gave the cigarette that was on top of an employee's desk a subtle glance.

‘You're okay, right?’

He needed to trust Kang Chan. He had to.

Kang Chan was still a high schooler, but that son of his performed acts that Kang Dae-Kyung, an ordinary person, couldn't even understand. Stories about parents that ruined their genius child were very common. In fact, there were just as many of them as there were geniuses.

Kang Dae-Kyung had to endure even though he was worried and wanted to keep Kang Chan by his side. For his son, he had to suppress that desire and watch him. That was what an ordinary father should do.

Kang Dae-Kyung recalled how Kang Chan swung a knife while blocking the front of the car. He could be acting like this because of how Kang Chan looked at that moment.

Kang Dae-Kyung would never forget the look in his son's fierce eyes when Kang Chan glanced back at him while swinging his knife at his opponent.

In the middle of that terrifying battle, Kang Chan even managed to ask him if he was okay. He seemed to be saying that Kang Dae-Kyung had to be okay and was pleading for him to endure everything.

‘Okay. I'll endure this as well. I'll put on a strong front and endure everything, so you also shouldn't worry about our family. Just...’

Kang Dae-Kyung recalled when they went into the Namsan Hotel to meet the Gong Te automobile executives, when Kang Chan returned home with a cake to congratulate him for completing the contract, and when he hugged Kang Chan at the hospital.

‘Just come back safely.’

Kang Dae-Kyung hit his tight chest with his fist.

They spent ten minutes having lunch.

“Are we resting for twenty more minutes?” Gérard asked Kang Chan.

“If you want to.”

Gérard chuckled with a strange expression.

In Africa, Kang Chan rested for twenty minutes after having a meal, if possible. They also frequently had early meals if they found a good place to eat. He had multiple reasons for doing so.

Being faced with a tense situation right after eating could cause a really loud a loud ‘growl’ to emerge from someone’s stomach. Being full could also cause them to lower their guard. Moreover, it was dirty, but some even had to look for an appropriate place to defecate while clutching their stomachs.

“Is that fucker bullshitting again?” Seok Kang-Ho asked Kang Chan.

“You’re fucking worse!”

Dayeru quickly turned his head when he saw Kang Chan’s expression. Kang Chan didn’t expect this fucker would adapt this fast.

Kang Chan then looked at the new recruit.

Among Westerners, some were unexpectedly soft-hearted. They also lacked guts and were a bit timid.

Most of them pretended not to be like that at all, but their eyes still showed fear.

Whenever new recruits got nervous, they would stiffen and their ability to make judgments would slow down.

That was why Kang Chan always went around with the new recruits behind him.

They didn’t notice it at first, but as time passed, they started to trust and depend on him. Afterward, they fired their guns with an easy mind.

From there, as long as they didn’t die, they would just come out of this with a scar from a knife like Gérard in front of them and frown to act tough.

That could’ve been why Kang Chan had run over more relentlessly to save him.

He couldn’t give up on someone that had trusted and depended on him. Even though it sometimes required him to slit his enemies’ necks like a demon thirsty for blood, Kang Chan couldn’t give up on someone that he had told to stay behind him. He would even do it all over again if he had to.

“I did good, right?” The last memory of one of his subordinates, who had brought him a water bottle and smiled, came across Kang Chan’s mind.

“Fuck.”

Seok Kang-Ho glanced at Kang Chan.

I should've stopped at nothing to save that son of a bitch.

Kang Chan sighed softly.

Kim Hyung-Jung's nose, left cheek, and the area around his right chin had swelled up. Moreover, the ends of his eyes, his cheek, and the area around his mouth were covered in blood.

Creak. Creak.

The string hanging from the ceiling made uncomfortable noises, almost as if finding Kim Hyung-Jung too heavy. He had already lost strength in his legs and couldn't even stop his knees from bending. He would've been rolling on the floor already if not for his two arms that were tied toward the ceiling.

"You stubborn fucking son of a bitch!" a man yelled.

Creak. Creak.

Kim Hyung-Jung had multiple cuts and splits on his upper body. He didn't have a top on, so his blood and bruises were all on full display.

"Tell us your name and the organization that you're affiliated with, and we'll let you go as we promised!" he yelled again.

The man violently and tightly grasped onto Kim Hyung-Jung's bangs, which were soaked with blood. "Well send you to China. From there, you'll be able to return to South Korea. I'm just asking you to tell me two things. Your name and the organization that you're affiliated with. Why do you have to keep stalling?"

The man harshly shoved aside Kim Hyung-Jung's head, then grabbed a long and thin awl. Just then, they heard someone yelling "Ugggh! Gaaah!" It was as if the person was yelling right next to them.

"See? He's having that much of a hard time in the room next to us. More importantly, once I pierce your finger with this, then you won't be able to grow a nail anymore. And if this follows the bones in your finger and pierces through to the other side, it would cut your nerves. Do you understand?" the man asked.

"Phew." When Kim Hyung-Jung exhaled deeply, his blood, mixed with saliva, seeped out and fell to the ground.

"Are you going to talk now?"

Kim Hyung-Jung reflexively shook his head.

"Fucking son of a bitch!" The man roughly snatched Kim Hyung-Jung's second finger on his left hand.

"Urgh!"

"Talk already, you fucking son of a bitch!" the man yelled again.

“Ugh! Arrgggh!” Kim Hyung-Jung gritted his teeth and continued to shake his head as if he was crazy.

They arrived in four hours, including lunchtime.

Kang Chan had thought that they’d only find a temporary barrack, but they instead found a small but proper military base. It even had wire fences as tall as a human.

Excluding the area where the main entrance was located, the military base was surrounded by mountains. In the middle of it were five cement buildings built around a sports field.

It also had a main gate and a guard post on either side.

Kang Chan examined the military base’s vicinity with a grave expression.

Twenty meters above it was a precipice that was entirely made up of rocks.

It didn’t matter what they did. This natural rock formation forcefully made them stand out immediately..

After examining the camp for about ten minutes, Kang Chan gathered the members together and said, “Starting from the left, we’ll label the buildings number 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. Radio operator!”

A member briefly raised his chin and nodded up.

“Snipers.”

Two other members raised their chins similarly in response.

“Captain, assign the snipers in teams of two. If possible, send them behind building number 2 and number 5. Make sure they’re perfectly camouflaged,” Kang Chan added.

“Understood.”

Gérard dispatched the sniper and one member to their places.

“Radio operator, how do we contact the headquarters?” Kang Chan asked.

“We’ll talk to them using satellite phones.”

“Can our telephone conversations be wiretapped or our location tracked?”

“There’s a chance that our location will be detected because we’re using a satellite.”

If so, then using a phone would be difficult.

When Kang Chan was shaking his head, Gérard came towards him.

“The rest of us should rest for now,” Kang Chan said.

Gérard nodded.

“Don’t forget to order some of our men to guard the perimeter.”

“I know at least that much,” Gérard answered.

While Kang Chan was smirking, Gérard ordered the members.

“We’re going to feel cramped,” Seok Kang-Ho commented.

“Tell me about it.”

Tsk!

No matter how urgently they came here, if it was this kind of military base then they should’ve given them more information.

“Let’s take a moment to think for now. Identify the number of sentries and when they’re relieved of their duty,” Kang Chan told Seok Kang-Ho.

“Alright.”

“We’re relieving the guards in thirty minutes.”

“Pay attention to important details. I’m better for tasks like this.”

Alone, Kang Chan headed to a place where he could look down at the military base, then leaned back against an appropriate rock and sat down on the floor.

He couldn’t think of any good ways to solve this matter right now.

They were going to fight against North Korean special forces soldiers. Plus there were at least thirty of them.

If they didn’t ambush the enemies, they’d be fighting a losing battle.

Snap. Snap.

Just then, he heard the sound of a thumb and middle finger being flicked.

Kang Chan quickly walked towards Dayeru.

“Didn’t that sound come from a human?” Seok Kang-Ho asked.

Kang Chan braced every nerve and concentrated for a moment, allowing him to hear awful screams, albeit barely.

“Whoo!”

“That was a human’s, wasn’t it?” Seok Kang-Ho asked again.

“They’re probably being tortured.”

“Ah, fuck,” Seok Kang-Ho swore.

Despite what was happening, they couldn’t leave right now.

If they dangled on a precipice in broad daylight, they’d be nothing more than cheap prizes that were hung up on a shooting gallery in an amusement park.

The enemies would take the lives of the members dangling on the precipice as prizes in two shots. They wouldn't be able to stop the opponents from killing the captives either once they had found out about their rescue operation.

On that day, with the sun so high up they'd have to bend their heads backward to see it, the wind carried another scream to them.