

Great Mage 771

[The Great Mage Returns After 4000 Years](#)

Season 2 Chapter 471

After the Great Fusion.

Almost everyone was caught up in the great chaos. It was a chaos that wasn't easily settled.

Encountering different worlds, different intelligent beings, and different civilisations. They hadn't even had the time to be curious or interested in those things. The Great Fusion had occurred suddenly and unannounced.

Panic, shock, and agitation mixed together, further fueling the flames of fear started by the chaos.

—The Heavenly Demon Cult.

Commonly referred to as the Demonic Cult, it was one of the fastest groups to put that fear to rest.

“Because of the Supreme One.”

The Demonic Cult's second most elite unit, the Slaughter Regiment's Captain, Danli Pung, recalled the figure of that being who had reached godhood.

It had already been decades since he'd gotten to know him and pledge his allegiance to him. Nevertheless, whenever he recalled the martial prowess he had displayed with his hand, his heart pounded, and cold sweat covered his forehead.

He was filled with excitement as if he was meeting him for the first time, but more than that, he felt joy. And at the same time, he felt overwhelming fame.

That's why it didn't matter where they were.

It wouldn't matter even if hell had been among the several worlds that had fused.

Because as long as the Supreme One was around, the cult members would never have to feel fear.

In other words, the reason the Demonic Cult was able to adapt faster than anyone else in this world that had gone mad, was because of the existence of a single being.

“Ahaha. How exciting.”

After conquering the Murim and putting the world beneath their feet, they gained the awe of all martial artists.

Then, the Supreme One basically lived in seclusion because there was no longer anyone who could challenge him.

When the Supreme One, who had been suffering from deep lethargy, came to this world, he said one thing. *Beings from other worlds*. Then, he burst out into a pleasant laugh as beings with extraordinary strength could be found in every direction.

And even among them, the Supreme One still reigned supreme. His unrivalled might hadn't been shaken in the slightest.

The cult members' adoration only grew more and more intense. Their faith was so strong that even if God himself were to appear to receive their religious belief, he wouldn't even be able to obtain a handful.

—That's why he found it hard to believe.

"Kuk."

"Urk."

"..."

That he had become numb with fear.

To be precise, he didn't expect to feel it outside of when he was in the presence of the Supreme One or witnessing his martial prowess.

But he found it hard to believe the current scene.

Four Regiment Captains had been killed at the same time. They didn't even get the chance to scream or show off their martial arts.

'Uh...'

He felt coldness rising from his fingertips.

Before he'd even realised, Danli Pung had taken a step back.

'How...?'

The Captains who had collapsed in pools of blood.

Their levels weren't much different from his own.

The beings known as the Captains. Those who had the toughest and most violent members of the Demonic Cult under their command. With a few exceptions, they were all ranked in the top ten when it came to strength.

And yet, they'd died like flies.

Danli Pung still couldn't believe their deaths.

The middle aged man who had calmly turned the entire area into a sea of blood. His power far surpassed the scope of Danli Pung's understanding.

"Th-, the Supreme One..."

He had to call the Supreme One.

Just as he had this thought.

"I, I have to call the Supreme One."

“Stop, you fool.”

He heard a cold voice. Danli Pung shuddered involuntarily.

Then he was delighted to see the man who had appeared from behind.

“Vice Cult Leader!”

A man with a ferocious appearance and a large cut across his face.

He was the second in command of the Demonic Cult, the Cowardly Demon, Kwak Yang-gun.

“Don’t you already know, Captain Danli? The Supreme One doesn’t like to move around when the sun is still up. If you bother him for nothing, you will die.”

“...! B-, but, that man...”

Kwak Yang-gun turned to look at the intruder, Yang In-hyun.

“I don’t think I’ve encountered such a skilled master even after the Great Fusion. Kuku. It seems I can finally stretch my legs after a long time.”

As soon as Kwak Yang-gun let out a grim laugh, Danli Pung’s heart sank.

Although he was just the second in command of the Demonic Cult, Kwak Yang-gun was one of the strongest beings in the world, capable of withstanding the Cult Leader’s sword for more than 100 seconds. In fact, there was no one who doubted that, had he not been born in the same era as the Cult Leader, he would have taken the position of Leader.

Moreover, this man, on his own, had managed to wipe out one of the Murim’s leading powers*. (*:This could be an individual or an entire group, so it’s not quite clear.)

When Kwak Yang-gun stepped forward, Yang In-hyun stopped walking.

Unlike Yang In-hyun, who remained expressionless, Kwak Yang-gun smiled and said.

“You. You’re from the Flower Mountain Sect*.” (*: Reminder Flower Mountain=Mount Hua)

“...”

“Were you trying to hide it? You probably were. You were obviously trying to avoid using your sword as much as possible. Your intentions are as clear as day. You probably tried to hide your swordsmanship as much as possible before reaching the Supreme One. How arrogant.”

Kwak Yang-gun’s smile became cold.

“Where do you think this is?”

“No one answered when I asked.”

Yang In-hyun spoke indifferently.

Instead, he tilted his head slightly.

“Will you answer me?”

“Kuku, Crazy bastard.”

Crunch.

A horrifying sound could be heard from Kwak Yang-gun’s finger joints. Then he took a stance.

“Draw your sword, intruder.”

Yang In-hyun paused at those words.

“Do you intend to use only martial arts in front of the Cowardly Demon Kwak Yang-gun? My body is hungry for a fight against a strong being like you, so don’t make this boring.”

“...”

“What I’m saying is use your best from the begin-”

Yang In-hyun drew his sword.

“-ing?”

Tuk.

And in that instant, Kwak Yang-gun felt a strange sensation before his vision spun rapidly. It was strange. He couldn’t move his body, almost as if he’d been paralysed.

‘Huh?’

His eyes were the only thing that could move. Kwak Yang-gun looked below him. There, he saw the figure of a headless man standing there.

It was his body.

Why was it like that? What was he currently experie-

His thoughts ended there.

Bang!

Kwak Yang-gun’s face exploded midair. His blood poured down like rain.

“Take me. To the one on the roof.”

Yang In-hyun’s gaze turned to Danli Pung, who was cowering in a corner.

“Or should I go on my own?”

* * *

“This is my private study.”

It was a small room.

With a desk, a chair, and a few books.

Even though he was just acting as a proxy, it could not be seen as the private study of the person playing the role of King.

Nevertheless, Jiudad had a comfortable expression.

"I like this place. Of course, it's a bit bland, but it's the only place in the castle where I can be free. Even if it's limited freedom."

After saying that, he walked over to the desk and took something out of a drawer.

"Nng?"

Pale let out a curious sound. Considering that it was something she was probably seeing for the first time, this reaction was natural. In truth, it wasn't something that Lukas was very familiar with either.

What Jiudad had pulled out was a greyish-white laptop. Which he then manipulated masterfully as if he was already familiar with Earth's modern culture.

"..."

The sight of someone from his home universe using a laptop was very strange for Lukas. A series of senseless scenes, like Iris drying her hair with a blowdryer, Kasajin running on a treadmill, Schweiser making a call on a cellphone, and Lucid driving a car, flashed through his mind.

Meanwhile, Jiudad moved a wireless mouse and played a video file.

"Please excuse the poor video quality. In truth, it's a miracle that I was able to secure this video record in the first place."

Then, the video started.

Crackle-

With a harsh sound, a blurry image appeared on the screen.

There were clouds of smoke everywhere, and the sounds of explosions mixed with the noise.

And screams as well.

Huge battleships covered the sky, from which countless small fighter jets poured out, indiscriminately attacking those on the ground.

And those responding... were the Knights of Luanoble.

"You must have seen it, the Aerial Fortress, Diark. It is one of the tactical weapons of the Great Galactic Alliance, and as you can see, they had a hostile relationship with Luanoble."

[Shoot... down... Don't... back down...!]

The scene displayed was one of a Knight, who appeared to be the commander, shouting desperately. But, from the start, it was a bad match up.

The Knights' swords could not reach the battleships which hung several hundred metres in the air, nor could they reach the fighter jets that flew at lower altitudes.

Several Knights who were near the Master rank were able to shoot down a few fighter jets with their swords, but it was only a handful of them. Moreover, the opponent also had a numerical advantage, so it wasn't possible to change the situation even after destroying several of the fighter jets.

"This is war."

"That's right."

A horrendous form of war. The one sided abuse didn't stop. And the only reason the abuses didn't become a massacre was thanks to the Knights' desperate struggle.

But that didn't last long either.

Humans were not machines. After swinging their swords for that long, they would naturally become exhausted. In fact, the movements of the Knights were visibly slowing down.

It was at that moment.

Hundreds of fighter jets exploded at the same time. Most viewers looking from this perspective wouldn't have expected this explosion, but Lukas was different.

'One strike.'

A single action performed by a single being.

Even Lukas couldn't hide his admiration for that amazing feat.

"The quality is really terrible."

Pale, who had been looking around for something to eat, had also become interested in the video. She whined as if she was disappointed by the low quality of the video.

Jiudad responded with an expression as if he was being blamed for nothing.

"I told you. It wouldn't be very good."

"Uah, it's frustrating."

Lukas' thoughts were similar to Pale. Because it was a video, it was difficult for him to gauge the other's skill level. And even now, as the battle reached its most violent part, the video quality seemed to become even worse, to the point that they could no longer clearly see the scene of the battle.

"Is that the one? The Heavenly Demon that you mentioned."

"That's right."

The Heavenly Demon wasn't exactly a reinforcement for Luanoble.

Technique's that flowed from his hand, no, the martial arts, carried a very bloody scent. With every strike, at least dozens of fighter jets were shot down, and the Knights near them also collapsed in pools of blood.

Not long after, he looked up at the sky.

Fwoosh!

Black rigid ki shot up towards the sky like a dark cloud, piercing through one of the battleships.

Chuuk-

And the battleship split in half. Kaboom, when this super large battleship that covered the sky exploded, the surroundings became bright as if it was the middle of the day.

Thousands of unmanned drones stopped working like puppets that had gotten their strings cut. From the sky, sparks, bits of machinery, and strange looking alien creatures fell like rain.

“...”

At this unbelievable sight, the Knight's became speechless. Some even dropped the swords they were holding.

“Oho.”

A glimmer appeared in Pale's eyes.

“For something like this to be on the outside...”

She didn't continue but Lukas understood what she was saying. Because he had a similar sentiment.

Then, just before the video ended.

Lukas caught sight of someone standing among the corpses, machine fragments, and debris from the fallen battleship. He couldn't see their face very well, but he did notice their unusually long hair that seemed to wrap around their body like a robe.

However, the impression they gave off was like a phantom.

“I'll tell you now, this is only a portion of his power. There were several powerful people who came to show off their strength after the Great Galactic Alliance, but no one was able to stand against the Heavenly Demon.”

“...”

“Why do you think I'm showing you this video?”

Jiudad said with a calm gaze.

“It's because I don't want you to fight him. Fights between powerful beings have a major impact on their surroundings... And I'm certain that you are also very powerful.”

“...”

“I do not want my people to become victims of your fight, The people of Luanoble are suffering enough already.”

Lukas spoke quietly.

“So that’s why the factions are divided. In Luanoble, there are those who follow the Heavenly Demon. That’s why you can’t impose sanctions on their excessive behaviour.”

“...”

Jiudad’s silence was an affirmation.

Lukas had roughly grasped the situation.

Just as he was about to open his mouth to make an offer that Jiudad wouldn’t be able to refuse...

Click-

The next video began to play automatically.

Lukas, who was about to speak, stopped. His eyes were affixed to the video as if they were nailed.

“...who is this?”

“Mm? Ah. Now that I think about it, you were interested in this guy.”

In the video, a man with dark blonde hair smiled as he waved to the public.

Jiudad muttered indifferently.

“That’s the Great Mage, Lukas Trowman.”

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He looked like him.

That was the first feeling Lukas had. Right. They weren’t identical. The man’s features merely stopped at the level of looking like Lukas. It felt like a clumsy imitation.

‘Who is this guy?’

That question couldn’t help but pop into his mind.

He was waving amidst the heart cheers of the public like a hero returning home after a great victory at war, or a politician carrying out an election campaign.

That experienced image, and the smile that hung on his mouth were unfamiliar... and a bit unpleasant.

“Did you say, Great Mage?”

“That’s right.”

“Is that what that guys’ calling himself?”

Jiudad looked at Lukas with a puzzled expression. Until now, this man hadn’t easily displayed his feelings, but this time was different. Although his expression and voice were still calm, Jiudad could sense a hint of discomfort in them.

Did they really know each other like he thought?

“That’s not it. It’s because of his heroic achievements and godly magic that made it necessary to distinguish him from the other Great Wizards.”

“...”

“There are many Great Wizards in this world now, but Lukas Trowman is the most unrivalled among them.”

For some reason, there was a bitter taste in his mouth. Lukas shook his head.

The title Great Mage had been exclusively his for a very long time. So it would be a lie to say he didn’t have any attachment to it.

However, he could no longer have any lingering feelings or obsession for that title. He shouldn’t. Lukas had already abandoned that name once before. In the Dump Site, when he had abandoned mana.

Bursting into anger here would be childish and pathetic.

“What are his achievements?”

“It seems you really don’t know anything about Lukas. That’s really strange. You knew so much about Luanoble...”

“...”

“Well, it’s fine.”

Although he might have felt annoyed by the one-sided questioning, Jiudad didn’t show any signs of it.

“He stopped the whirlpool of war that could have engulfed the entire world. It is safe to say that 90% of the reason this seemingly peaceful state is maintained is because of his contribution.”

There was an unmistakable hint of respect in Jiudad’s voice. Filled with complex, subtle emotions, Lukas continued to ask questions.

“How did he stop the war?”

“That’s simple. He risked his life to meet with representatives from each world and negotiate with them. He managed to persuade a majority of them, and because of that, The Dimension Alliance Council was formed.”

“...The Dimension Alliance Council?”

“In this world, which had expanded several tens of times since the Great Fusion, it can be called the institution that handles the role of legislative body... If the Dimension Alliance Council hadn’t been established, at this point, perhaps tens of thousands of people would be dying every day.”

He’d heard of the Dimension Meeting before. Perhaps it was a meeting that was periodically held by the Dimension Alliance Council.

After a moment, of silence, Lukas asked.

“Do you know about the Age of Light?”

“Mm?”

Jiudad’s expression became strange.

“I do, but why are you asking about it all of a sudden?”

“Among the heroes of that time, who is your favourite?”

“The Sword King. He will forever be a role model for every Knight.”

“...right. Sword King Lucid.”

Lukas muttered that name for a moment. It was very unfortunate that when he thought of him, the image that came to mind wasn’t the usual blunt faced man, but instead, an undead completely covered in black armour.

“There were heroes that stood shoulder to shoulder with him.”

“That’s right.”

“Tell me about them.”

“...”

For the first time, Jiudad sighed openly. This sigh carried many meanings. But there was no more rude behaviour after that.

As the guardian of Luanoble, he decided to focus on the power of the man in front of him instead of his strange questions.

In other words, no matter how dumb the question may be, he decided to answer sincerely.

“The Black Witch, Great Sage, and Magic Warrior King.”

“What about the Great Mage?”

“...why would you mention the Great Mage now? Ah, of course, his achievements are by no means inferior to those of the heroes from the Age of Light, but he was born in a different age.”

“...”

“There is nothing more pathetic than comparing the achievements of heroes of different eras.”

This was the most refined accusation of Lukas’ ignorance that Jiudad was capable of.

But Lukas was able to get a good understanding of the situation through that series of questions.

As he’d expected, things about Lukas, who had suddenly been forgotten, hadn’t been restored.

‘Then who is that man?’

Lukas looked at the man in the video once more... As expected, he couldn't tell anything from the video. He wondered if it was a deception with a spell, if he was wearing a mask, or if those really were his features.

He'd have to meet him in person.

...Of course, before that.

"In other words, that meant that Lukas is one of the greatest heroes of the Great Fusion era."

"That's right."

"Then why didn't you ask that guy to deal with the Heavenly Demon?"

Lukas asked a minor question.

Jiudad didn't answer and instead smiled bitterly.

"Did you determine that even the Great Mage can't deal with the Heavenly Demon?"

"Well. He might or might not be able to. However, that's not exactly why I didn't ask him for help. In this world, there are other organisations that can compete with the Dimension Alliance Council."

"Mm."

Lukas understood the situation.

"Is the Heavenly Demon a part of one?"

"Exactly."

It was possible for him to ask the fake Lukas for help, but if that managed to cause conflict between the Union Council and the organisation the Heavenly Demon was a part of, a war of unimaginable scale could break out. That was Jiudad's judgement.

'This man thinks about the safety of his people first.'

The reason he was answering Lukas's questions without trouble was because he wanted him to surrender to the Heavenly Demon without fighting back.

...A man willing to give up his pride for his people.

Lukas liked Jiudad.

"I have a proposal."

And he finally continued to say what he'd stopped before.

"A proposal?"

"It's simple. I plan to stay in this country for a while."

Or at least until he had a better grasp of the situation.

Swallow the last of those words, Lukas continued.

“It probably won’t be for long. Jiudad, promise that you will give me your full cooperation during that time. Of course, I will not do anything to harm the people of Luanoble or this land.”

“What are you talking about now?”

“If you accept my proposal, I’ll deal with the one called Heavenly Demon.”

“...”

Jiudad looked as though he’d heard a terrible joke. It was a face that seemed to be formed by numerous intermingling thoughts, but it was proof that he didn’t believe Lukas’ words.

Just as Lukas was about to talk again. He felt a chill on the back of his neck. When he looked back, his eyes found a spirit clinging to the back of his neck.

It was Metel.

[...]

Metel waved her hands as she tried to convey her intentions.

Then Lukas got to his feet.

* * *

The higher he went, the more enemies he encountered.

“Kill this bastard!”

“Don’t let him act arrogantly anymore.”

Nevertheless, this didn’t mean that the levels of the enemies had risen. In fact, it was clear that some of these people had a very poor grasp of the situation.

Most of the Captains and the Vice Cult Leader had already died downstairs.

They probably knew that too. And yet, they didn’t back down. Like moths to a flame, they didn’t hesitate to rush to their own deaths.

Their behaviour was so disgusting that Yang In-hyun had trouble suppressing his rising nausea.

Bang!

He waved his hand, causing his sleeve to flutter gently. The turbid wind pressure from that motion touched the bodies of the Demonic Cult members that were surging forward. Crash, the cult members lost their balances and rolled across the ground.

“...?!”

It wasn’t unreasonable for them to be shocked. After all, the lukewarm breeze that blew past them could not be described as a strong wind. The wind seemed to cover their bodies as they laid on the ground.

They struggled to get to their feet again, but Yang In-hyun calmly swept his finger across before they could. Suddenly, the ceiling collapsed, the piles of stone crushing their laying bodies. The dirty blood soaked the ground.

No matter how much they trained their external energy, if they were crushed by stones while in a defenceless state, then there would be no result apart from being turned into pools of blood.

“D-, don’t fight anymore... stop fighting...”

Yang In-hyun was dragging Danli Pung in one hand by his neck. His acupuncture points had already been suppressed, so the only things he could move were his eyes and tongue.

Nevertheless, his voice was so cracked that it was almost completely gone.

Yang In-hyun headed upwards through the destroyed ceiling. And he couldn’t help but feel that it was a more effective method than using the elevator or stairs.

At the very least, it would make it impossible for the being on the top floor to not notice his presence growing closer by the minute.

* * *

He knew the building was enormous, but the number of martial artists in it far exceeded his expectations.

Because of this, Yang In-hyun had no choice but to coat his hands in more blood than expected.

“...”

There was a man who witnessed the slaughter from right beside him. Of course, it was Danli Pung.

He was a member of the Demonic Cult. That wasn’t all. He was a Captain, in other words, he was an executive member who had dozens of elite cult members as subordinates.

For him, scenes filled with slaughter and bloodshed were familiar, and he had even created such scenes with his own hands.

Nevertheless, Danli Pung’s face had become pale as if he had witnessed a terrifying nightmare. His entire body shook like a leaf, and his face was covered with cold sweat.

This was because he knew.

How strong the Demonic Cult members who had died to this man were.

“Who... the hell...”

Yang In-hyun ignored Danli Pung’s voice. Then, he let go of his neck, which he had been holding tightly. To be precise, he threw him away.

It was only after Danli Pung’s face hit the ground that he was able to recover from his shock to some extent.

That was when he realised he was on the top floor.

“Ahh...!”

The surroundings were shrouded in darkness, but for a master on Danli Pung’s level, it was still possible to distinguish things to a sufficient extent.

Yang In-hyun also looked around. The surrounding was covered by a faint purple mist.

Apart from that, the giant floor was frighteningly empty.

Because of this, the large bed in the centre, which was large enough to allow five tigers to roll around comfortably, stood out even more.

Of course, Yang In-hyun had already noticed someone laying on it.

Danli Pung rushed towards the bed and prostrated himself.

“S-, Supreme One...! An intruder...!”

“...”

Ssss, the sound of breathing stopped.

It was then that Yang In-hyun realised.

Surprisingly, the being on the bed had been asleep this entire time.

Despite the fact that Yang In-hyun had been making such a racket on the lower floors.

The person on the bed raised their upper body. Their face, the gender of which could not be easily distinguished, was covered with a gloomy expression.

“...an intruder?”

But the voice was that of a man which seemed to carry a spell that made it hard to ignore.

“H-, he is incredibly skilled. According to the Vice Cult Leader, he’s from Flower Mountain...”

Suddenly, the man’s gaze turned to the ceiling. Despite still being in the building, it felt as though he was looking at the sky.

Yang In-hyun saw his eyes flash for a moment.

“The sun is still up.”

“H-, huh?”

That was Danli Pung’s last word. In the next moment, as if his neck had been cut, his head slipped off his shoulders before falling to the ground. There was a splatter sound similar to an overripe fruit falling to the ground.

Then, the man’s gaze turned to Yang In-hyun.

“You name?”

“Yang In-hyun.”

“This is my first time hearing it. That means you’re not a member of the Murim.”

“What’s your name?”

“Dok Go-yun.”

“Are you the owner of this building?”

“No.”

Dok Go-yun shook his head and said.

“It’s not just this stupidly tall building. Everything in the world belongs to me.”

His deep voice was calm as if he was just stating a natural fact.

Yang In-hyun didn’t think this attitude was a bluff. This man was qualified to say that.

“It’s too bad. If you had come an hour later, you might have had a happier death. Or you could have been my subordinate.”

An hour later.

“That’s when the sun sets.”

“Right. Mm. By nature, my mood is not good when the sun is still up. Especially when I’m forcibly woken up. It makes me want to rip everything around me to shreds.”

Ssk, Dok Go-yun got out of bed. He had been covered by several thin fabrics which trickled down as he got up.

When he stood to his full height, Yang In-hyun finally noticed his hair which was long enough to touch the ground. He was very tall, but he didn’t feel huge. This was probably because Dok Go-yun’s frame was quite thin.

Yang In-hyun glanced at him before drawing his sword first.

Dok Go-yun opened his mouth.

“It’s surprising that the Flower Mountain’s martial arts was able to create a master like you.”

“...”

“Mm. Perhaps it’s just that my perspective about old school martial arts is limited.”

“So.”

Yang In-hyun spoke.

“When will you come?”

“You’re yielding the first blow to me?”

Dok Go-yun chuckled.

“Interesting.”

For the first time, a smile appeared on his face.

“No. It doesn’t feel that bad. Really. That’s just the way martial artists are. After reaching a certain level, they have no choice but to consider themselves the strongest. They become no better than the blind. Even when the one in front of them is far stronger, they wouldn’t realise.”

Although it sounded ridiculous, it was true.

Even if the enemy might be stronger, it was difficult for them to realise that fact.

Perhaps it was because they would have to fight with their life on the line anyway, so their brains refused to acknowledge that fact.

Acknowledging the hopeless gap that existed between them and their enemy would be no different from directly erasing their odds of winning.

“I personally witnessed countless people who thought they were the strongest, and with these two hands, I made them aware of their mistake.”

“...”

“That’s why your attitude doesn’t make me feel bad.”

At that moment, Dok Go-yun stretched out his hand, and a pitch black turbid stream erupted from his palm. Taking a stance, Yang In-hyun swung his sword.

“Plum Blossom Honeysuckle(梅花忍冬). The first form is more monotonous than I thought.”

Jurk, Yang In-hyun slid backwards as if he was standing on ice.

Dok Go-yun shook his head slightly at this sight.

“I suppose that’s why it’s such a prestigious faction.”

Just as his voice was filled with blatant disappointment,

Yang In-hyun’s body was covered by the black turbid stream.

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Danli Pung.

There was something that this man, who had become a corpse, had misunderstood.

The Vice Cult Leader, Kwak Yang-gun, was without a doubt the second in command. But that didn’t mean that he was the second strongest in the Demonic Cult.

The Three Great Guardians of the Demonic Cult.

They didn’t have names. And their real identities were unknown.

Some of the cult members speculated that they were children who had inherited the blood of the Heavenly Demon, but they were executed soon after for insulting the Cult Leader. After that, the cult members stopped making unnecessary speculations and the guardians became a mystery that shouldn't be prodded.

Nevertheless, because each of them used the blade, dagger, and spear respectively, they were called the Sword Kill, Dagger Kill, and Spear Kill.

The three guardians protected the Cult Leader from the shadows. Individually, their powers were only slightly superior to the Captains, but when they attacked together, it was possible for them to overwhelm Vice Leader Kwak Yang-gun.

Of course, only a few people in the cult knew that fact. Even Captain Danli Pung, one of the executives in the cult, didn't know their power.

Even at that moment, the three guardians were looking at the ongoing situation while hiding in the shadows.

'It's over.'

This was what the Sword Kill thought, and the Dagger Kill and Spear Kill agreed.

The Demonic Cult's Esoteric Martial Arts(秘傳武功) Divine Legacy Skill(神技經學) Dark Cloud Fog(黑雲霧)

It was the internal strength released from a martial art known as the Mountain Destroying Black Wind(黑風滅岳).

The intruder was clearly quite strong. This was clear from the number of cult members he'd killed on his way up from the bottom. It would take the Demonic Cult at least ten years to recover from the damage it had suffered today.

'...a monster that we wouldn't be able to survive more than 100 seconds against even if we launched a sneak attack.'

They had never encountered such a skilled Swordsman in the Murim even in the past. He was probably one of the ten best Swordsmen in the 'Great Fusion World' where countless monsters existed.

However, it was a bad matchup.

The Dark Cloud Fog was the Heavenly Demon's most well known martial art.

Whoever was designated as an enemy, regardless of their martial arts or internal strength, would become a pool of blood.

At least they should.

"..."

But it wasn't long before the Spear Kill realised something strange.

He noticed that Dok Go-yun didn't stop releasing the Dark Cloud Fog and instead continued to release it endlessly. The pitch black gale had already been around for more than ten seconds. Even if the opponent had a body made of diamond, that was enough time to have ground them into a pile of sand.

Like the name suggested, the Mountain Destroying Black Wind was a martial art capable of destroying a massive mountain.

It was the Dagger Kill that grasped the situation first. This wasn't because his eyesight was better than the others. However, his position was better. His hiding place was the closest to Yang In-hyun.

"...!"

Yang In-hyun was standing there with his sword raised. After being pushed back two steps, his feet remained planted on the ground as if they were nailed in place.

There were no signs of struggle. It looked like he wasn't even trying to defend.

No. Much more than that... he looked relaxed.

Instead of a martial artist facing the Mountain Destroying Black Wind, Yang In-hyun looked like a mountain climber enjoying a warm spring breeze.

But as soon as he saw his eyes, the Dagger Kill's heart sank.

"...undoubtedly."

Swoosh, Mountain Destroying Black Wind, which had been raging unceasingly, stopped.

Pulling back his hands, Dok Go-yun said.

"You have the power to kill Kwan Yang-gun."

"..."

"This is surprising. It's been decades since I met someone who could compete with me..."

There was a mixture of excitement and joy in his voice.

"That's meaningless."

"What was that?"

"I said it's meaningless, Dok Go-yun, what is the point of such a competition?"

The retort came in a voice filled with indifference and futility.

"What does it matter to compete with power? Does it change anything if I'm stronger, or if you're stronger?"

"It changes everything. That's a simple principle, isn't it? After all, in the end, it is the strong that decides the order and means of things. Therefore, it is the criterion of power that determines everything. Anyone who has surrendered themselves to the martial path would know this. And..."

Dok Go-yun smiled brightly.

“Even if they don’t have hands and legs, a martial artist should always desire to be the best in the world.”

“You really.”

Yang In-hyun sighed.

“Are exactly the type of person that I hate.”

Bababang!

“...”

Blood splattered onto Dok Go-yun’s face.

“...what...”

It took him a short while for him to grasp the situation.

Yang In-hyun was standing with his sword drawn, and in front of him were three bodies.

It took Dok Go-yun a moment to understand that the bodies belonged to the Heavenly Demons’ Three Great Guardians.

“Their tenacity was magnificent. At their level, they shouldn’t have even been able to make a sound under the pressure of my sword energy... Was it something psychological?”

It wasn’t that Dok Go-yun was unable to grasp the situation. It was just that his mind was incapable of accepting what had just happened so quickly.

Just as Dok Go-yun had sensed his inevitable death, the guardians that had been hiding in the darkness appeared in front of him and used their bodies as shields.

And died. The Three Kills, who were more powerful than the Vice Cult Leader, had died so vainly.

It was only then that Dok Go-yun was able to move his body again. The fear that engulfed his entire body in an instant was pushed away by the humiliation that filled his stomach.

“Bastard...!”

Grrr!

Dark clouds covered his arms like fog, causing his skin to become black. Black Spirit Possession was the secret form of the Dark Cloud Fog which increased the user’s combat ability as well as their physical and mental strength by covering their body with dark ki.

Dok Go-yun had used this martial art less than five times. And this was the first time that he was doing so out of anger.

At first glance, it might seem that he’d lost his mind in rage, that wasn’t exactly wrong.

The Dark Cloud Fog was a demonic art, and all demonic arts were greatly influenced by the user’s emotional state. Therefore, it made sense that martial arts, which were used out of anger, would be stronger than usual.

Dok Go-yun's fingers shook with rage.

Yang In-hyun's sword,

Didn't contain anything.

Clang!

Nevertheless, when the fist and sword collided, it was Dok Go-yun that was sent flying.

In an instant, his body was turned into a ragdoll. Dok Go-yun spat out a mouthful of blood as he collided with the wall.

Pain that he was feeling for the first time coursed through his body. But instead of the pain, it was the mental terror that caused his body to become sluggish.

'The hell... is this...'

For Dok Go-yun.

Winning was just a natural process in a fight. That was what he was taught. Dok Go-yun had been assured that there was no being beside himself that could harm him.

That's how it should've been.

Tap.

Yang In-hyun walked up to Dok Go-yun with unhurried steps.

Gritting his teeth, Dok Go-yun used the Dark Cloud Fog once more. The black fog poured out like a waterfall and devoured his body. This caused his twisted bones to return to their original positions and the internal bleeding stopped for a moment. The pain also faded.

"That's a dangerous martial art."

Yang In-hyun spoke with deep admiration.

Dok Go-yun once again took a stance as he said.

"Do you have any idea what you're doing?"

"I'm just about to kill a frog in the well."

"...kuku. Right. I'm not sure about that."

Yang In-hyun noticed that Dok Go-yun's tone had changed. Was he hiding his true feelings? It felt a bit different from that.

"Then I'll change the question... Do you understand the weight of what you're doing?"

"The weight of what I'm doing?"

"Do you think our Demonic Cult is the only force ruling in this place? The Great Galactic Alliance, Demon King, Archlich. And... the Murim. All of those neighbouring powers are our allies."

“...”

“That means that the breath of the Demonic Cult has already reached a level of being able to affect heaven and earth.”

When Yang In-hyun’s steps stopped, Dok Go-yun’s smile widened.

“Now you understand. To kill me is to become the enemy of the entire world.”

“...”

“You wouldn’t be able to sleep comfortably for a single day. Hunters from every organisations in the Murim would-”

“Kuku.”

In the end, Yang In-hyun couldn’t hold it in any longer.

“Kukuku, ha, hahaha. Ahahaha.”

He burst into laughter.

For Yang In-hyun, who rarely expressed emotions, this was the equivalent of laughing his head off.

However, Dok Go-yun, who heard this laughter, felt unknown shame, humiliation, and fear once more.

“Why are you laughing? Did you really lose your mind...?”

“That’s right. I haven’t been sane for a long time.”

With a smile, Yang In-hyun continued.

“And you, who dared to mention the Murim in front of me, will not be able to remain sane either.”

“What...?”

“Everlasting Plum Sword, First Move.”

“—”

When the colourless buds covered his vision, Dok Go-yun’s mouth fell open.

This... What was this scene...?

“Murim Annihilation.”

—There was no sound. It was as if his entire body was surrounded by smoke. Instinctively, he tried to swing his hands, but he couldn’t feel anything.

Then Dok Go-yun felt a chill penetrate his entire body.

“Ugh...”

Was this really... martial arts?

Was this really the same kind of technique as the Mountain Destroying Black Wind that he used? Was it really possible to perform such martial arts with a human body?

“I’ve never used a cow slaying knife to kill a chicken, but this seems like an opportune time.”

Dok Go-yun’s entire body was covered in blood as he collapsed to the ground. His body shook.

...He was alive.

He... was still alive.

However, his fighting spirit was dead.

This was also Yang In-hyun’s intention.

If he really wanted it, the body of this man in front of him would have been completely destroyed without leaving a single trace.

“...this place.”

Yang In-hyun opened his mouth.

“Isn’t the top floor.”

“...”

Dok Go-yun’s trembling stopped.

“Upstairs, there is still one more floor left.”

“...kuk, kukuku.”

Then Dok Go-yun forced out a laugh.

“Right. Since you already know, there is no need to hide it anymore... You are right. This place isn’t the top. And I’m not the Heavenly Demon.”

Yang In-hyun’s expression was still indifferent.

“I’m just a double. He is the one controlling everything from the shadows. Did you say your name was Yang In-hyun? You’re obviously strong, but you won’t be able to defeat him.”

Dok Go-yun spoke with a relaxed expression.

“Because I’m just his double. It’s now your turn to be the frog in the well.”

“...”

“I’m really looking forward to it. That moment when your face becomes distorted with despair-”

What happened in the next moment was something even Yang In-hyun couldn’t have predicted.

The ceiling collapsed and someone appeared in the dust.

Yang In-hyun's expression changed. The one who appeared was none other than Lukas Trowman. After being silent for a while, Yang In-hyun finally asked.

"...why from above?"

"I came in a hurry. But it seems I was too late."

Responding briefly, Lukas looked around. He wasn't alone. In one of his hands, he was holding someone by the throat.

Yang In-hyun looked at the man, no...

He looked at the corpse and asked.

"Who is that?"

"Well. He got in my way as I was entering the building..."

"Did you kill him?"

"Unfortunately, he wasn't weak enough for me to subdue him quickly. I was in a bit of a hurry."

"..."

Dok Go-yun couldn't believe the sight that was unfolding before his eyes. In truth, it would be more accurate to say that his brain refused to accept it.

...That being.

That being, no that man, in the hand of the blonde haired man was clearly...

"By the way, where is that guy called the Heavenly Demon?"

"Why?"

"I made a deal with the representative of Luanoble. I need his head."

"...mm."

...The one called Dok Go-yun.

In truth, he was the real number two of the Demonic Cult. He was a figurehead put in place by the cautious Heavenly Demon. Nevertheless, his martial prowess was not a lie. If the Heavenly Demon wasn't around, he was strong enough to destroy the Demonic Cult on his own.

In the first place, if he didn't have that kind of martial arts, there was no way he could have claimed to be the Heavenly Demon. In fact, the real Heavenly Demon had generously passed on his most well known martial arts skills to Dok Go-yun so that he wouldn't be suspected.

But despite all of his teachings, hellish training, and restricted life, Dok Go-yun had only one ambition.

To survive.

To live a long life, no matter what.

This situation was confusing, but one thing was clear.

If he didn't say anything, he would definitely be taken for the Heavenly Demon.

At that moment Dok Go-yun's judgement was extremely fast and accurate.

"That sir, no that guy is the Heavenly Demon!"

Dok Go-yun threw himself on his face at Lukas' feet.

"Thank you for rescuing me from that evil guy! Great Sir!"

[The Great Mage Returns After 4000 Years](#)

Season 2 Chapter 474

"Did you say this guy is the Heavenly Demon?"

"That's... right."

"Then who are you?"

Lukas' gaze turned towards Dok Go-yun. As soon as his terrifyingly emotionless eyes stared at him, Dok Go-yun gulped drily. It felt like a scythe made of ice was hanging above the back of his head. Of course, Dok Go-yun couldn't sense any energy from this dark blonde man, but that was the same for Yang In-hyun.

"I'm just the Heavenly Demon's double...!"

He raised his head and shouted at the top of his lungs. He tried to make his voice as pitiful as possible. Pride? Give that to the dogs. You can't have pride or anything if you're dead. In order to survive, Dok Go-yun could even lick between the other's toes.

Lukas' gaze lingered on his face for a while. Then, the cold feeling that he had on the back of his neck spread to the rest of his body. Goosebumps rose on his arms.

This chill was different from what he felt when he faced Yang In-hyun.

Then, after a while, he felt the gaze leave him and turn towards the corpse in his hand.

"..."

A somewhat puzzled face.

What was he thinking about now? Why was he puzzled?

He needed to figure it out. He literally needed to figure it out for the sake of his life.

From now on, it would be a battle of wits. If he was able to figure out this guy's thoughts by even the slightest amount, it would be enough to increase his chances of survival by several times.

Firstly.

'These two are acquainted.'

He'd learned this from their conversation and attitudes.

Of course, it wasn't clear to him which of them was stronger. But that didn't matter. Dok Go-yun would probably be unable to estimate that.

All he needed to pay attention to was the fact that both of them were capable of taking his life.

'Who is it?'

Of these two, who could he plead to to increase his chances of survival?

Dok Go-yun's eyes rolled back and forth as his thoughts bounced around.

Then, as he realised that both of these men were emotionless as if they were made of iron, he became filled with despair.

This despair soon dissipated.

Clang!

He heard the sound of something colliding.

That sound came from very close by. In fact, Dok Go-yun realised the sound had come from behind him.

When he turned around, he saw Yang In-hyun standing only two steps away from him.

The sword.

The sword in his grasp trembled slightly. As if he had just swung it and it collided with something...

"...!"

It was only then that he realised the situation.

Yang In-hyun had just attacked him.

But he'd failed. Because someone else had interfered.

Who was it?

That was obvious.

It could only be the blonde man that arrived after.

"Why?"

Yang In-hyun spoke with an expressionless face. That was all, but Dok Go-yun felt like his heart sank.

"How many did you kill?"

Lukas ignored the question.

Then, without getting angry at the fact that his answer was ignored, Yang In-hyun answered.

"One hundred and twenty five."

"You didn't have to kill that many."

“Is that a problem? In any case, they will either go to the afterlife or enter the cycle of reincarnation to be reincarnated later.”

“...”

The conversation unfolding before him was not at a level that Dok Go-yun could easily understand.

It felt as if he was eavesdropping on a secret conversation of Evil Gods that he shouldn't hear.

“The concept of death is not something that should be taken so lightly. I'm sure you know that.”

“What do you mean?”

“Why aren't you considering the ones they left behind?”

Without any change to his expressionless face, Yang In-hyun replied.

“That's not a funny joke. They belong to a Demonic Cult. People who take the responsibility of regularly carrying out slaughters. I'm sure there are many people who would be happy they died.”

“...this place, is not the World of Void.”

When he heard those words, Yang In-hyun paused for the first time.

“What is it that you hate so much? What the hell is making you so upset?”

“...”

“Do you really hate the Murim world that much?”

Huk-

It felt as if thousands of candles had been blown out at the same time.

Yang In-hyun's aura changed completely.

Lukas realised that the killing intent wasn't directed at Dok Go-yun, but himself.

“...Lukas Trowman.”

A deep sigh.

“That remark crossed the line.”

After that, Lukas called upon void.

The reason for this was the faint intention that he could sense in Yang In-hyun's voice.

In an instant, he entered the minimal time zone.

In that same moment, he saw the tip of a sword right in front of his nose. Lowering his head, he dodged it before spreading his palm towards Yang In-hyun who was now close to him. Void spread out in the form of magic.

It took the basic shape of beads that seemed to be shaped by gathering particles of light. They didn't contain even a hint of killing intent or threat. They just looked like a few floating light bulbs.

But Yang In-hyun didn't dare to take these beads lightly. He withdrew his outstretched sword and, in an instant, the beads of light surrounding his body were sliced apart.

Suddenly, Lukas' chin shot up. As he was cutting the beads, Yang In-hyun moved forward a bit and took the chance to launch a kick from Lukas' blind spot.

Despite the dizzying pain from his chin, Lukas didn't lose his concentration. He clenched his outstretched hand.

Ssss-

It was at that very moment that Yang In-hyun had a strange feeling. The particles of the beads that he'd definitely scattered before, were gathering once more.

'Did I not cut them?'

No, that wasn't it.

Even if their forms were intangible, there was no reason why Yang In-hyun's sword couldn't cut them.

He could only speculate about the possibility of this situation.

'From the start, every particle was a spell.'

In other words, Lukas Trowman had created thousands or maybe even tens of thousands of little spells and clumped them together to form the beads. The beads that had been sent to Yang In-hyun numbered at least in the dozens, and when he swung his sword, they'd simply matched the timing and separated.

This had caused Yang In-hyun to believe that he'd cut the spells with his sword.

'...what the hell goes on in this guy's head?'

Yang In-hyun couldn't help but feel a bit startled by this. After all, this was not something he'd be able to do even if he had ten brains.

The particles gathered once again and wrapped around his right wrist. Passing the sword in his right hand to his left, Yang In-hyun cut the clump of light. This time, he clearly perceived 'every particle'.

But at the same time, he felt a chill on his back.

He lowered his head almost instinctively. Together with the feeling of something brushing past his head came that of a few strands of hair being cut.

Immediately afterwards, he felt a cold pain in his back. Almost as if a giant ice hammer had slammed into his spine.

Yang In-hyun stopped his slightly leaning body. Supporting his weight on one toe, he turned around to face Lukas, but Lukas was no longer there.

'...spatial movement.'

Yang In-hyun frowned. A troublesome ability. This was especially true when entering the minimal time zone.

Instead of looking at Lukas, Yang In-hyun slightly lowered his sword. This was a request to truce revealed through action instead of voice.

"..."

Lukas accepted the request.

Although there was a possibility of it being a trap, the man named Yang In-hyun was not a person who would resort to such cheap tactics.

The instant the two left the minimal time zone.

Kaboom!

A huge explosion sounded.

"Urk!?"

Dok Go-yun's eyes went wide. There was a great tremor that shook his entire body.

This building? No. The scale was bigger than that.

'The entire city of Luanoble was shaking.'

Dok Go-yun quietly trembled at this revelation.

Then, he saw a huge amount of energy be shot into the sky from between Lukas and Yang In-hyun.

The ceiling disappeared without a trace, but the momentum of the energy didn't disappear as it continued to soar towards the sunset sky.

It was a pillar of light that could easily be seen from anywhere in the city, no, perhaps even from far away.

"..."

Dok Go-yun was speechless. He didn't have the slightest understanding of what had just unfolded in front of him.

From his perspective, the two had simply vanished for an instant before reappearing in completely different locations.

Then, there was a huge explosion that shook the city, and a pillar of light which stretched up to space and made his body tremble just from looking at it.

"Uh..."

Sweat poured down Dok Go-yun's body like a waterfall.

What was that? What just happened? Was he still alive? What the hell was that scene just now...

—He'd completely missed their movements. This wasn't a theory.

Without a doubt, whatever had just unfolded far exceeded Dok Go-yun's range of cognition. That fact brought untold horror to Dok Go-yun.

Lukas' gaze shifted to the broken ceiling.

With the scarlet sky as the backdrop, the mass of energy that was still moving was like a shooting star. A star shining so brightly it could be seen even through the glow of sunset.

"You're really thoughtful. Now that I think about it, you were called humanity's saviour in the past."

"..."

Yang In-hyun shot out in a sharp voice.

The mass of energy that had just disappeared into the sky was the aftermath of the short exchange between Lukas and Yang In-hyun. If it had been left as it was, the aftermath would have turned the surrounding area into powder.

So as soon as he left the minimal time zone, Lukas gathered the aftermath, compressed it, and fired it towards the sky. This was a technique that would have been impossible if he didn't have some control over the power of space.

That was what Yang In-hyun was referring to.

He didn't seem to understand why Lukas cared about Dok Go-yun and the residents in this city.

'I didn't want to consume void in a place like this.'

Lukas held back the desire to sigh. It couldn't be helped. He couldn't respond to Yang In-hyun without void.

"Why are you complicating things?"

Yang In-hyun's voice was a bit calmer. Perhaps it was because he'd taken the time to think. Or perhaps it was because some of his anger had been relieved in the brief fight.

"Don't stop me from killing him. Then I promise I won't touch the other martial artists here."

"You can't."

It was at this moment that Dok Go-yun was certain of which of these two men he needed to survive. Faster than the speed of light, he prostrated himself in front of Lukas.

"Great One, please spare me...!"

Paak-

Lukas hit the back of Dok Go-yun's head hard, stopping him from talking.

"Urk..."

Still, since he was tough, he didn't lose consciousness, but he did lose control of his body for a moment and collapsed on the ground.

'Wh-, what was that?'

A strange energy seemed to circulate within his body. Because of that, it became difficult for him to even lift a finger.

A voice echoed from above Dok Go-yun's head.

"Step aside."

"..."

"It would be wise to make the right decision. Is protecting one man worth more than antagonising me?"

Of course it wasn't worth it.

Lukas knew. Just how difficult and scary Yang In-hyun would be if he turned him into an enemy.

'I know well.'

He'd learned by using his life as tuition.

"Then can you promise? That if you kill this man, you won't kill other martial artists you meet in the future."

"..."

Yang In-hyun didn't answer.

This was just as Lukas expected.

"I can't keep looking on. This isn't about me having deep thoughts about this world, or respecting the lives or martial artists."

"Then?"

"Your arbitrary actions will create variables. And those variables might interfere with my plans."

This was an issue that needed to be clearly addressed now. If he let it pass here, then there was a chance that they would clash again in the future for the same reason.

So if they were going to clash, then it was better for it to be sooner rather than later. While the power Lukas possessed was still close to his full strength.

"...I see."

Seemingly understanding that Lukas wouldn't back down easily, Yang In-hyun raised his sword once more.

...He couldn't deal with Yang In-hyun using ordinary magic.

In other words, the longer the fight went on for, the more void he would end up using.

This was not a good fact. Because Lukas had many enemies he needed to fight.

The Demon King, Diablo, Lucid.

And as this was the Three Thousand Worlds, the Rulers also had the ability to exert their influence.

'It would be annoying if those guys sent Absolutes.'

Or, although the odds were slim, other ill-mannered enemies might appear.

So without delay-

[Kukuku.]

Just as he got ready to fight, the sound of laughter echoed in his head.

It had been quite a while.

Of course, he wasn't the slightest bit welcoming of this.

[Didn't you want to conserve your power? Lukas Trowman?]

'I just want you to keep your mouth shut. Do you have a habit of only talking when it's advantageous for you?'

The Lightning God burst into pleasant laughter. The rumbling sound echoing.

[That impression is wrong. If that was the case, I'd always be talking to you. I only talk when I feel like it...]

In other words, he was claiming that every moment was advantageous for him. This arrogance appeared naturally whenever he talked, this was why Lukas didn't like the Lightning God.

'So? Why are you suddenly talking in this urgent situation?'

[To make an attractive proposal. Lukas Trowman, aren't you trying to conserve your strength? I have a way for you to do so.]

"..."

It seemed that this guy was well aware of his situation. He might have also figured out something about void.

The Lightning God continued in a whisper.

[I can lend you my power.]

'What?'

[Even though it was in the imaginary world, you used 'Thorn' there... Kukuku. That's not possible simply by experiencing it.]

'...'

[That's why I'm curious. If you have my full support, how well could you utilise my 'Thunder' in the Three Thousand Worlds?]

Full powered support.

This place wasn't the World of Void, but the outside. Right. That might be possible.

'Cut it out.'

But Lukas refused.

[Why? I have no intention of using my power to control you. I'm not trying to erase the debt.]

'You expect me to believe that?'

[I'm certain you know. I do not lie.]

'However, it is possible for you to hide your real intentions. Just like when you forced me to come here then closed your mouth and stayed silent.'

[—]

'I will say this only once. I do not need to borrow your power. So you can quit it.'

[Kuku. Well if you ever change your mind...]

He focused on Yang In-hyun once more.

Now that even the possibility of the Lightning God interfering had been erased, there was no one who could stop the upcoming fight.

Creak-

...Except for one.

It was only then that Lukas noticed that there was a door there, but he couldn't spend much time focusing on the fact that he hadn't noticed it after so long.

"What are you two up to?"

With her head tilted, Pale appeared.

The collapsed Dok Go-yun couldn't help but stare at this young woman with wide eyes. He'd never seen a woman with such a funny hair colour in the Demonic Cult.

In other words, she was an outsider, so how did she get to the top floor of the building?

But the thing that surprised him most was what happened next.

"..."

"..."

The two monsters who had been facing each other with killing intent changed really quickly.

Not only that, the gazes that they had been sending towards each other, as if they wanted to kill each other with them, were quickly hidden away.

“Huh? What’s going on? The atmosphere is so strange. Did something happen?”

“...no.”

“Nothing.”

Lukas and Yang In-hyun responded shortly.

Pale made a puzzled expression for a moment before chuckling as if it didn’t matter.

“Ay. I thought you were going to fight again.”

With a murmur, she walked up between the two before standing with her hands on her waist.

The light from the setting sun shining through the ceiling illuminated her face, and Dok Go-yun was able to witness this scene from the front.

‘A-, an Angel has descended...!’

An Angel had come down from heaven.

And she’d interceded in the fight between the two monsters with only a few words.

It truly was a miracle.

Just as Dok Go-yun was staring at Pale with eyes filled with emotion and fascination.

She opened her mouth, allowing him to catch sight of her exceptionally sharp teeth.

“By the way, can I eat that?”

At first, Dok Go-yun thought he’d heard wrong, or misunderstood where she was pointing. He also thought that the word ‘eat’ might be a code for something.

Because what she was pointing at was the Heavenly Demon’s corpse.

For a moment, Lukas’ expression soured.

“That’s not something to eat.”

“Ah. You’re saying that again. There is nothing in this world that can’t be eaten.”

“No. Seriously.”

“It’s fine. It’s fine.”

“Wait-”

Ignoring Lukas’ restraint, Pale grinned as she walked over to the Heavenly Demon.

Then, after flipping his body around a few times, she opened her mouth and...

Crack.

Ate him.

Crack crack.

To reiterate.

She ate him.

Crack, crack crack...

And blood splattered everywhere.

“...”

It wasn't surprising that she was eating human flesh. Dok Go-yun was the man who led the Demonic Cult as the Heavenly Demon's proxy.

He had seen countless scenes that were far more terrifying and cruel.

But the fact that the human flesh being consumed belonged to the Heavenly Demon, coupled with the fact that the person eating him was the woman he'd thought was an angel just a moment before, and all the accumulated physical and mental damage he'd suffered until now, made it all too much.

Thud.

Dok Go-yun fell unconscious.

[The Great Mage Returns After 4000 Years](#)

Season 2 Chapter 475

The name of the mega building that housed the Demonic Cult's main forces was the Infernal Heaven

Of course, Jiudad knew about their garrison in the Infernal Heaven. Was it just 'knowing'? In fact, he also had a grasp of the approximate amount of power that the Demonic Cult possessed.

And he'd ordered some Elite Knights.

To never take their eyes off the Infernal Heaven.

Because of this, he had learned of the great commotion in the Demonic Cult before anyone else.

“An intruder?”

“Yes.”

“...”

When Jiudad received the report, the first thing that came to his mind was Lukas.

-I have a proposal.

-It's simple. I plan to stay in this country for a while.

-Jiudad, promise that you will give me your full cooperation during that time. Of course, I will not do anything to harm the people of Luanoble or this land.

-If you accept my proposal, I'll deal with the one called Heavenly Demon.

Because of what he'd just heard.

However, it wasn't Lukas. He had just left this place. It had taken at least a few minutes for the report to get to him, and it said 'about ten minutes ago, an intruder entered the Infernal Heaven'.

"What about the description?"

"They appear to be a martial artist."

"...mm."

Was it a power struggle within the Murim?

The Demonic Cult wielded considerable influence in the Murim, but that didn't mean that every martial artist worshipped them. There were several forces who didn't agree with the ideologies advocated by the Demonic Cult who had been suppressing their dissatisfaction until now.

In other words, it wouldn't be strange for some Master who was unable to suppress his anger to charge into the Infernal Heaven.

However, why at a time like this?

Rumble...!

"U-, urk!?"

"What?!"

When the entire castle began shaking as if there was a huge earthquake, Jiudad had a feeling of familiarity.

This tremor. It wasn't a normal earthquake.

He felt it before. Something very similar...

Where the hell- ah...

"The Great Fusion?"

This tremor was very similar to what he'd felt when the Great Fusion took place. That was the extent of what Jiudad could grasp, and it was a speculation that hadn't yet reached the realm of truth.

However, his intuition was sharp. It was true that space itself had cracked both at the time of the Great Fusion and now.

Running out of the castle, Jiudad climbed the tallest watchtower.

And witnessed.

"...!"

A pillar of light pierced through the roof of the tallest building in this city and disappeared beyond the sky.

“What... is that...?”

It felt like he was looking at a scene from a legend or myth.

It filled him with a feeling of overwhelming ecstasy and reverence. Then, as the pillar of light disappeared, Jiudad’s body was wracked by fear.

Something unbelievable was happening in Luanoble.

But the surprise wasn’t over yet.

Shuk-

Four figures appeared behind Jiudad. Two of them were familiar faces. Lukas and Pale, who had disappeared abruptly.

The other two... he was meeting for the first time.

One was a middle aged man with a neat appearance. And the other was a man with long hair and a fairly unisex appearance.

This was Jiudad’s first time meeting the long haired man, but he knew who this man was.

“No way, is that... the Heavenly Demon...?”

“I didn’t kill him. I thought he might be useful alive.”

Lukas’ answer woke him from his sudden daze. But his confusion only grew.

“N-, no. W-, wait a minute. I’m not sure I understand the situation. What the hell are you...”

They didn’t have to explain. Remaining silent was a privilege of the strong.

Therefore, it wasn’t necessary for them to mention the fact that the Demonic Cult had suffered a blow that would be difficult to recover from, and that it was the middle aged man named Yang In-hyun who was responsible for it or the fact that the real Heavenly Demon had died at Lukas’ hands and that this man with ridiculously long hair was just a puppet who had been acting as a proxy for the Heavenly Demon.

Thinking this, Lukas pushed Dok Go-yun towards Jiudad.

“Kuk.”

Dok Go-yun staggered and regained his balance. Although he’d come back to his senses not long after fainting, it seemed that he was still in shock.

“In the future, the Demonic Cult will have no involvement in the politics of Luanoble. Tell him about the restructuring. I’m sure he’ll give his full cooperation.”

“What is this... how...?”

“Let him explain, we’re going to go out for a while to have dinner.”

After saying that, Lukas looked at Pale and Yang In-hyun and hesitated for a moment before eventually saying to Jiudad.

“...um. Do you have money?”

* * *

Yet again, they left the castle and went out into the street.

By now, the sky had completely turned black. The night street was filled with vitality. The owner of Kalinka had said that most of the shops would be closed for the rest of the day, but that prediction was wrong.

The scents of fragrant foods came from every direction. As the day grew dark, the restaurants whose doors had been tightly shut began to open up one after the other.

‘...now that I think about it, this is still the first day.’

He’d come to the Three Thousand Worlds with Pale and Yang In-hyun, encountered the demon army, found out where they were, and finally wiped out the Demonic Cult organisation.

So much had happened and a day hadn’t even passed yet.

Although his body wasn’t tired, his head was aching. Shaking his head slightly as if trying to shake off his headache, Lukas looked around.

Then, he found the perfect shop.

Before anything else, he decided to walk in. As he expected, Pale followed him without a word. And Yang In-hyun stopped for a moment when he saw the shop sign.

“The Golden Flower Pavilion(金花樓).”

“...”

The insincere name, the slightly nostalgic atmosphere, and the smell of the food drifting from the inside... made Yang In-hyun speechless for a while.

By this time, Pale and Lukas had already entered the shop. Yang In-hyun followed them a step behind.

“Welcome!”

The Golden Flower Pavilion, a nighttime inn, had a boisterous atmosphere. The sounds of loud conversations, and the clinking of glasses filled with alcohol resounded continuously. Most of the windows were open, so the noise from the street was also mixed in.

And there were also many martial artists around. Looking at the shop assistant, Lukas said.

“Isn’t there a quieter place?”

“It’s quiet on the 5th floor, but you’d be charged for an extra admission fee.”

“That’s fine.”

“The price is a bit expensive...”

“That’s fine.”

Lukas mechanically repeated the same words. Subserviently, the shop assistant went upstairs first. Before following the shop assistant, Lukas turned his head slightly and shot a look at Yang In-hyun.

‘Will you follow, or will you turn this place into a sea of blood?’

...Even though he didn’t verbalise it, his intention was obvious. Yang In-hyun’s fingers wriggled slightly before he glanced over at Pale. With a delighted expression on her face, she stomped up the stairs.

“...”

His aim was so obvious that it wasn’t even funny.

Lukas was currently stimulating Yang In-hyun while relying on Pale’s existence. In reality, it didn’t seem like she wanted them to fight.

“Huu.”

Without a choice, Yang In-hyun could only follow.

As the shop assistant had said, the 5th floor was quiet. No, it wasn’t just quiet, it was tranquil. This was because there was no one there apart from Lukas and the others who had just gone up.

As they sat, another shop assistant approached them with a smile.

“What would you like to order?”

The shop assistant had a typical Russian face. The theme of wearing something similar to a flowy uniform looked quite funny on him.

“Do you have any menu recommendations?”

“The fried food in our inn is amazing. If it is your first time, I’d recommend the sweet and sour fillets(糖醋里脊) and chinese spring rolls(春卷).”

“Then with that...”

“If you have it with our Hundred Flower Wine(百花酒) you will experience an even deeper flavour.”

“Then together with that-”

Suddenly, Pale smiled and held out the wooden board that had all kinds of food written on it.

“I’ll have everything here.”

“Huh?”

“Give me everything.”

“Uh...”

“You can’t?”

“No. It’s not that, but...”

The shop assistant secretly looked over Lukas, Yang In-hyun and Pale. He was probably estimating whether they really had enough money to pay for that.

In all honesty, none of the three looked like they did.

Lukas decided to tip the hesitant shop assistant. He wasn’t sure how much to give, so he just gave them 10 dollars.

At that, the shop assistant’s face lit up.

“Please give me a moment. Your food will be served soon.”

After that, the shop assistant politely bowed and left.

Now, only Lukas, Pale, and Yang In-hyun were left at the table.

“You were mistaken.”

The silence was suddenly broken by Yang In-hyun’s voice.

“Coming to a shop like this wouldn’t make me feel anything.”

Even though there were many shops nearby, Lukas must have intentionally chosen to come to a restaurant like this one that took the form of a drinking shop. But regardless of what his intention was, it was pointless.

...Then Lukas looked at Yang In-hyun in front of him.

‘When was it?’

At some point, whenever he got into a conflict with someone, he usually resolved it by force. This wasn’t exactly because Lukas had violent tendencies.

The stronger the being, the more indomitable their belief.

It was very difficult for such beings to be persuaded or coaxed by talking.

The only way to shake that was to persuade them through force.

But that method was not available right now. Because Lukas didn’t want to fight Yang In-hyun. So for the first time in a long while.

“Why do you hate the Murim so much?”

He chose to talk.

“A technique like the Eternal Plum Sword First Move Murim Annihilation is not something that could’ve been born simply from training in swordsmanship. I’m sure you have some kind of background.”

“...”

“Answer me.”

“Why?”

“Because then I might understand. At the very least, the Yang In-hyun I know is not a man who would kill for no reason.”

Lukas had already made a decision.

He could not drag both Pale and Yang In-hyun around as time bombs. This time, it was a small disturbance(?), but if Yang In-hyun were to commit the same behaviour again, the situation might be tens or even hundreds of times worse.

‘The worst case would be for both of them to go out of control.’

“...huh.”

Yang In-hyun sighed heavily.

“What difference would it make if you understand?”

“At least I might stop meddling in whatever you do.”

Yang In-hyun also didn’t want a confrontation.

This was because he recognised Lukas’ power. He knew that he was as strong as him.

He’d had that impression since their first meeting, and it had solidified after their brief exchange in the Infernal Heaven.

That fight was nothing more than a simple probe. Lukas hadn’t used his full power and Yang In-hyun hadn’t used his Everlasting Plum Sword.

But that was more than enough for them to understand each other’s level.

Yang In-hyun was silent for a while. A long while. He kept his mouth closed until the food was brought out one after the other.

Pale quickly devoured the food. Lukas only moved his chopsticks a few times until his stomach was no longer empty before stopping.

“Mm. It was delicious but too greasy. “

Pale didn’t seem to like foods that were too oily. It seemed so because she seemed to enjoy eating raw meat that was dripping with blood. It wasn’t long before she reached for the hundred flower wine that was served with the food.

Pop, she opened the cork and took a big gulp.

“...huh?”

Pale’s face brightened.

“This is delicious!”

Then, she snatched the bottles of hundred flower wine beside her and drank three in quick succession. After drinking from the bottle, Pale's white face gradually took on a red hue.

This wasn't good, as Lukas had this thought and was about to stop her with a stiff face.

He caught sight of Pale placing the bottle of hundred flower wine back onto the table.

"Wait..."

Boom!

-The moment the bottle of hundred flower wine was placed down, the table was smashed.

Seeing this, Lukas broke out into cold sweat.

'That was dangerous.'

He had created a space beneath the table to absorb the impact... If he had been even slightly slower, the impact of her placing the bottle down would have pulverised the entire building, the Golden Flower Pavilion, before scattering it into the nearby street.

"Mmm..."

The culprit who had nearly created such a major disaster, staggered a few times before leaning onto Lukas' shoulder and fell asleep.

"..."

Was she really asleep?

Lukas looked at the face of the sleeping Pale, wondering if she was acting or not.

Just as his face became troubled.

"..."

Yang In-hyun looked at Pale with a complicated expression. He probably had a completely different feeling from when he usually looked at Pale.

Before long, he muttered.

"...perhaps choosing this store wasn't such a bad choice."

He looked at the hundred flower wine on the table.

"I don't drink. In the past, and now."

Then, contrary to his words, he held out a glass towards Lukas. After a brief pause, Lukas poured the alcohol for him.

Gurgle-

He half filled the glass. This was out of consideration since he said he didn't drink alcohol. But Yang In-hyun gulped down the half filled glass in one go.

Gulp.

After swallowing the alcohol, Yang In-hyun lowered his head.

"...hundred flower wine, was her favourite drink."

Lukas didn't ask who 'her' was. He just stared at him quietly.

"I would like to ask you something, Lukas Trowman."

Putting down the glass, Yang In-hyun said.

"What do you think is a martial artist?"

[The Great Mage Returns After 4000 Years](#)

Season 2 Chapter 476

Lukas knew a fair bit about martial artists. This wasn't referring to the magic martial artists from his home universe.

This was referring to those who used internal energy that they accumulated in their danjeon to power their martial arts.

Beings who lived in another world called the Murim, martial artists.

However, Yang In-hyun didn't seem to simply be asking him for a definition of martial artists.

"Mmm..."

Pale tossed and turned with a groan. Her sleeping face was like that of an angel, although her drooling destroyed any sense of elegance. Trying to ignore her existence, Lukas said.

"Are they not those who temper their bodies and polish their martial arts?"

"I'm asking about 'after that'."

"After?"

"Polishing martial arts and tempering the body. Those aren't wrong. In fact, it is even advisable. However, then what? What would you do after gaining that strong power?"

"If you were to dig at it from that direction, then nothing in this world would be meaningful."

At that, a corner of Yang In-hyun's mouth rose.

"No. There is a clear reason for a farmer to cultivate a field. To stock up on food, to trade for goods. Even if their jobs are different, shop workers who do the chores, boatmen who row all day, soldiers defending a royal palace, or astronomers staring at the night sky, all have the same purpose. Even a petty thief who steals a single potato to fill his stomach has a reason. So let me ask. What is the purpose of a martial artist?"

Lukas couldn't answer.

This was because it was a problem he'd never really thought deeply about and because he felt like he shouldn't open his mouth hastily.

"It's simple. To rule as the strong, that is all."

Yang In-hyun's gaze drifted down to the hundred flower wine.

Then, after a brief pause, he spoke once more.

"The Murim, is a world that shouldn't exist."

* * *

Yang In-hyun, age 8, autumn.

In an underground space created by remodelling an underground cave. Dozens of children were gathered in a gloomy place that was only illuminated by candlelight.

"This is an era when righteousness(義) has fallen to the ground."

It was the only voice in this place that didn't belong to a child.

It was an old man with an even older old impression, but his very presence seemed to fill the huge cave. Of course, that wasn't all. The eyes of the children were filled with indescribable emotions as they looked at this old man.

For the dozens of children there, that old man was their saviour. Although they all had different forms, he had repaid debts and saved their lives.

But the old man had never treated the children warmly. From the start, he always maintained a cold attitude towards the children and threatened to send them back to where they'd come from if they acted rudely or lacked manners.

They were all children with different backgrounds and circumstances, but they all had no choice but to be fearful of the old man's words. Because of this, the children did not speak a word of complaint even when being made to stand for over an hour in a cave with an atmosphere so gloomy it wouldn't be a surprise for a ghost to appear.

"The men of refined taste no longer sing about the chivalry(俠) of martial artists. The overwhelming forces of the evil faction, the establishment of the Demonic Cult, the fall of some of the most upright members of the righteous faction. There are probably countless reasons for this. Those from the grass roots are speaking in unison. This is an era where a plague is running rampant."

"..."

"...the Nine Righteous Sects*, who used to be the most prestigious members of the righteous faction, became obsolete. Mount Hua** no longer smells of plum blossoms."(*: According to the wiki, this refers to the top '10' sects in the Murim's righteous faction.)(**: Decided to only refer to Yang In-hyun's territory in the void world as 'Flower Mountain', the murim sect will be 'Mount Hua' for separation purposes)

The old man's voice carried a hint of remorse. Then, the look in his eyes changed as he turned towards the children. At the end of his deep gaze were emotions that were impossible to describe.

"You all will drive the plague away."

"...!"

"And you will bring the scent of plum blossoms back to Flower Mountain. I'm sure of it."

The voice of the Mount Hua Sect Elder, Red Void Jo Sung-choo, caused the children to tremble.

"That's why you can't give up. Get used to the pain. Whenever you're struggling, think about your roles and a better world. Then, you will all become the heroes of this era."

1.

Living was hell.

Thud-

Yang In-hyun heard the sound of someone falling. He looked to his left... Who was it? Ah, right. Moyong San was that guy's name.

It was said that he was a descendant of the prestigious Moyongse Family. Jo Sung-choo had picked him up when he found him nearly dead after being caught up in some scheme.

...If he was left like that, he would probably die. Autumn nights were incredibly chilly, and many scary mountain beasts appeared around this place. There was no way that they would pass up the chance to taste the soft, tender flesh of a defenceless boy.

The moment Yang In-hyun was about to go try to help Moyong San.

"What do you think you're doing?"

He heard a shout from somewhere.

Upon turning around, he saw Jo Sung-choo staring at him with wide eyes.

"San two* fell down."(*:Assuming there's a 'san one')

"Answer the question first. I'm asking about your actions right now."

"...I was going to help him since he'd die if left alone."

"Why?"

"I am not injured, and I still have plenty of energy left. Even if I carry San two, I'll be fine..."

"Nevertheless, why?"

"...because, Elder won't help him."

At that, Jo Sung-choo strode over and slapped Yang In-hyun across the face... The taste of blood spread in his mouth. This was because the inside of his cheek had torn apart.

“What do I always tell you?”

“...”

“Answer me.”

Yang In-hyun forced himself to speak.

“...to kill our emotions.”

“And?”

“To obey the words of Mount Hua, without question.”

“What else?”

Wiping the blood from his mouth, Yang In-hyun replied.

“...never forget chivalry, and always keep it in your heart. But I don't understand. Isn't chivalry about guarding faith, respecting principles, and above all, protecting the weak?”

“That is all correct. However, San two is not weak. Look.”

Moyong San wriggled his fingers. And he could see him clench his teeth, trying to raise his body.

“Isn't he trying to stand up on his own? Your help will only be an insult to that child.”

“...”

“Go on ahead. And stop looking around. Let go of your compassion as well. The children around you are not the weak that need your help, but the comrades you will walk with.”

Yang In-hyun hesitated for a moment before walking forward. But after walking a few steps, he looked back.

At Moyong San who had forcibly picked himself up.

There was no spite or determination in his gaze. It was fear that moved him. The voice and pressure of the old man who only had a few sparse hairs standing behind him was the only thing keeping him moving.

But Yang In-hyun was no different from Moyong San.

After all, wasn't it the fear of Jo Sung-choo that he felt that was making him move at that moment?

“Kuk.”

Yang In-hyun bit his lip. Then he just moved his body roughly so as to force himself to stop thinking about it.

He climbed a sheer cliff. Avoided traps that could take his life. And killed the occasional wild animal that he encountered.

Then.

He reached the top of the mountain.

At the top, all kinds of delicacies had been prepared for them, including medicines to heal their wounds and even elixirs.

“...”

Jo Sung-choo had prepared all of this.

He'd created a system where they would obtain better rewards depending on their order of arrival.

But Yang In-hyun didn't touch any of the prepared rewards.

Instead, all he did was eat one dumpling and drink a few sips of water.

Then, he sat in a corner and waited.

As time passed, children arrived one after the other. They were all covered in scars, and the moment they reached the top, they all had expressions of relief. Then, in turn, they took the rewards that Jo Sung-choo had prepared.

Food, medicine, and elixirs all disappeared.

Yang In-hyun sat and watched all of these scenes without exception.

By the time the dawn of the new day began to arrive, new children stopped appearing.

Instead, Jo Sung-choo was the one that appeared.

“Well done. You all surpassed your limits.”

Jo Sung-choo's voice was filled with satisfaction.

“Now we'll move on to the next step.”

Yang In-hyun looked around one last time.

When they'd arrived, there had been a total of 49 children. But only 27 children had arrived at the top of the mountain.

Moyong San was not among them. He knew what that meant.

“...”

2 years.

It had been 2 years. That was how long it had been since Moyong San had left the Moyongse Family and started training at Mount Hua.

...Was that the life Moyong San had wanted? When he'd accepted Jo Sung-choo's offered hand, had he expected this kind of end?

If that was the case, then what was the meaning to such a life?

To only live for two more years before becoming a corpse in a mountain no one would search, and be eaten by wild animals.

Would Jo Sung-choo remember him? What about the other children? Would Mount Hua remember the name Moyong San?

...As dawn broke, a cool breeze blew atop the mountain.

10 years old, again in fall.

2.

16 years old, early winter.

“The plan for success that I’d set was for 20 years.”

As he said this, Jo Sung-choo let out a white breath.

“That was my minimum expectation. 30 years, 40 years, 50 years... I even wondered if I’d have to pass down the task to someone else.”

“...”

“However, Hyun. Your existence shortened that plan by decades.”

Jo Sung-choo’s rare smile was bright.

“You have already surpassed me.”

Those words weren’t a lie.

At the age of 16, Yang In-hyun had already surpassed Jo Sung-choo. He had already been taught several combat techniques, including Mount Hua’s actual martial arts, by Jo Sung-choo, and now, he could overwhelm him in every aspect apart from internal energy.

Although Jo Sung-choo looked like an old man, and he had already resigned from his position as an Elder of Mount Hua, he still possessed skills that wouldn’t be lacking even when compared to peak masters.

To surpass Jo Sung-choo, who far surpassed him in age, before reaching the age of twenty...

‘The word genius isn’t enough.’

A natural martial aptitude and talent, coupled with a harsh environment and training to the point of death, and the martial arts and elixirs of one of the righteous faction’s most prestigious sects.

All of these factors had combined to make Yang In-hyun what he had become.

“The other children’s training hasn’t ended. However, I have nothing more to teach you.”

Jo Sung-choo’s eyes narrowed.

“So I will give you your first task.”

“I await your orders.”

“Kill Jin Gi-ak. The deadline will be 1 year.”

“...”

He gave the command as if it was nothing, but it was by no means light.

Yang In-hyun knew this.

Jin Gi-ak was one of the demon leaders that dominated the evil faction. He was also an elder of the cult known as the Blood Ghost Sect, as well as one of the Three Tyrants(三霸)* that had recently gained notoriety.(*: Not exactly but the word I translated as ‘bully’ means to ‘rule through might instead of right’)

‘The power of the Three Tyrants is at least on the same level as one of an elder from the Nine Righteous Sects.’

This referred to the elders that were still on active duty, no Jo Sung-choo, who had resigned from the front line.

“I will obey your command.”

Nevertheless, Yang In-hyun nodded calmly.

On that day, Yang In-hyun made his debut in the murim as the sharpest sword forged.

Jo Sung-choo did not think Yang In-hyun would fail. But he did think that 1 year might not be enough.

‘It’ll be a good experience.’

In any case, since it was his first mission, there would probably be many problems.

After Yang In-hyun returned, Jo Sung-choo intended to dig deeper into his mistakes and pick them apart one by one.

—After some time passed, Yang In-hyun returned to Mount Hua.

And it was then that Jo Sung-choo realised that his two expectations had been wrong.

First, Yang In-hyun returned not after a year, but after three months.

And second, he had returned with not one head, but three.

Yang In-hyun had defeated all of the Three Tyrants, not just Jin Gi-ak.

3.

Assassination, execution, or slaughter.

Yang In-hyun’s main missions were all to kill.

But at some point, he began to be forced to do more. It wasn’t that hard. It was simply placing a red plum blossom on the corpses. This was also the same for his comrades who had also begun their activities.

The demon leaders of the evil faction or corrupt officials from the righteous faction were assassinated one after the other.

And a red plum blossom was also present at the scene.

‘Being targeted by the Bloody Plum Group was no different to writing your name in King Yama’s book.’

After some time, rumours began to spread even to the people who had nothing to do with the murim.

“Excellent work.”

Jo Sung-choo said in a satisfied voice.

The Bloody Plum Group(血梅團).

There were only four people known by that name. They were the only survivors of the rigorous training, and the levels their martial arts reached made it easy to overpower even four or five elders of small or medium sects.

Jo Sang-choo didn’t call these four the Bloody Plum Group, he called them Killing Ghosts(殺鬼).

“At last, law and order has been revived in the murim. You should be proud. This was all accomplished because of you all.”

“We just did what we had to do.”

Evil Killing Sword Wiji Gil responded in an emotionless voice. Jo Sung-choo slowly looked around before walking towards Yang In-hyun.

Then, he put his hand on his shoulder and said,

“Your hard work was especially good. Hyun.”

“Thank you.”

“However, this mission will not be easy. So please take extra care.”

He had never received such advice from Jo Sung-choo before a mission before. Yang In-hyun looked at him without a word.

“Your next target is the Blood Prince.”

“...!”

The other Killing Ghosts flinched and looked towards Jo Sung-choo. There was also a mixture of astonishment in their gazes.

Jo Sung-choo’s wrinkled eyes remained directed at Yang In-hyun.

“Kill the Blood Prince.”

Despite asking for so much, Jo Sung-choo knew what kind of answer he would receive.

“...I will obey your command.”

Because Yang In-hyun had never turned down a mission.

The Blood Prince(血君)

A much more famous name.

The Evil Faction's Number Two Man Dang Chun-geuk.

—Yang In-hyun, 25 years old, late winter.

Received a life-changing mission.

[The Great Mage Returns After 4000 Years](#)

Season 2 Chapter 477

“Kukuku.”

A frivolous laugh resounded.

It was Wiji Gil, who, until now, had only let out an emotionless voice. Yang In-hyun knew that what he was showing now was actually his true self.

Getting up, Wiji Gil spat on the floor.

“We made it all happen? Haha. Hey, Yang In-hyun. What do you think about that statement?”

“...”

“We didn't. You achieved most of it on your own. In fact, you alone killed three of the Evil Factions Ten Great Masters. The three of us were only able to kill the others by rushing in without caring about our lives.”

Wiji Gil smiled coldly.

“You understand? The reason the Elder thinks this reckless plan will work. It's all because of you. It's because you're here, Yang In-hyun.”

The other two seemed to agree with him. He watched them leave together with Wiji Gil as if sympathising with him.

Yang In-hyun, who had been left alone, thought about the attitude they'd just displayed. Firstly, he was certain that their skewed hostility stemmed from an inferiority complex.

Their purpose for living was to satisfy Jo Sung-choo, so it was natural for them to hold some level of dissatisfaction towards Yang In-hyun, who had successfully completed one high level mission after the other and monopolised Jo Sung-choo's favouritism.

It wasn't that he didn't understand, nor did he have any intention to blame them.

That was just the way they'd learned to live. That's how they had been raised by Jo Sung-choo. Brainwashing... it might not be entirely wrong to call it that.

‘Then what about me?’

Why did he find no joy in Jo Sung-choo's praises or encouragement? He didn't know.

Yang In-hyun stopped questioning it. He couldn't afford to. His attention naturally shifted to the goal of the next mission.

'The Evil Faction's Number Two Man, Blood Sovereign Dang Chun-geuk.'

A powerful man second only to the Heaven Breaking Sovereign, who was called the Sky of the Evil Faction. The stories of his victory despite facing a sneak attack from the masters of the righteous faction like Wudang(武當)'s Taichi True Man(太極真人) and Shaolin(少林)'s White Crane Great Master(白鶴大師) was already a legend in the murim.

That wasn't all.

Dang Chun-geuk led the Black Demon Alliance, one of the top three forces in the evil faction. There would definitely be distinguished masters from the evil faction there.

This time, Jo Sung-choo didn't give a deadline for the mission. Yang In-hyun seemed to realise the reason.

This mission didn't have a deadline.

* * *

However.

"Cough...!"

And yet, he won.

He accomplished the mission.

Dang Chun-geuk looked at Yang In-hyun with wide eyes. He couldn't believe that he was still alive despite his heart being pierced through. Was he really human? Yang In-hyun's pace was slightly pale.

"The Bloody Plum Group... I see. So you are the one that killed half of the Ten Great Masters."

"...are those your last words?"

The surrounding was a sea of blood. Yang In-hyun was the only one left who could hear Dang Chun-geuk's last words.

Coughing up another mouthful of blood, Dang Chun-geuk murmured with hazy eyes.

"To the west, there is a village called Great Virtue(太良)."

"What?"

"My daughter is there. She was born on a whim. She probably doesn't even know I exist. I too had forgotten about her until now."

"..."

“...at the moment before death, I suddenly remembered that child for some reason. Hwa-ryun*. My only flesh and blood...” (*: 華憐- meaning ‘pitiful flower’)

Dang Chun-geuk lowered his head after saying those words.

Yang In-hyun stood there blankly.

Listening to the final words was a habit that had developed at some point. Most of Yang In-hyun’s missions were assassinations. Naturally, this meant that he was the only one who could listen to what the target said just before death.

That’s why he listened to the final words of those he killed. And he never forgot them. This wasn’t because of feelings like atonement or guilt.

Then what was it? That smallest courtesy he could give to those that faced his sword? Did it have anything to do with human morality? He didn’t know.

Yang In-hyun looked down at the corpse of Dang Chun-geuk. Most members of the evil faction usually cursed him just before they died. At the very least, Dang Chun-geuk was the first to bring up something like a blood relative.

His head ached slightly.

Yang In-hyun left with weary steps.

Not east, west.

* * *

His hair itched. It felt as if the sunlight was stroking his head. As if hearing someone’s voice through fog, Yang In-hyun slowly regained consciousness.

Someone’s hand.

The moment he realised that fact, his hands wildly. The wrist in his grip was surprisingly slender, a woman’s wrist. When he forced his eyes open, he saw a pattering sight.

The figure of a woman staring at him with rather large eyes.

“Did you regain consciousness?”

“...”

“You were lying near the village. You had a fever and your entire body was covered in blood... Uh, are you already healed? I used some medicine to stop the bleeding.”

Ignoring the woman’s words, Yang In-hyun raised his upper body. Then, he looked around.

He was inside a shabby house which was rather dirty as it had all kinds of herbs and medicines scattered all over the place.

He’d lost consciousness.

Yang In-hyun couldn't believe it. Of course, it wasn't a surprise that he'd lost consciousness. After all, Yang In-hyun had risked his life in the fight against Dang Chun-geuk. The problem was what came after that.

'I didn't even know what was happening to my body.'

He had no right to be a Killing Ghost.

He'd made a blunder so great that it wouldn't be strange if he lost his life at that moment.

So, why? Why had he done something so stupid? What had made him make such an impulsive decision?

"Excuse me?"

When he heard her voice, he looked up at the woman.

"Thank you."

And got up to bow after a brief moment.

"Uh. Wait a minute, you're still injured..."

How long had he been unconscious? He didn't know, but it was clear that he no longer had time to lose.

Dang Chun-geuk's death would soon be known to the entire evil faction, and Yang In-hyun had left a red plum at the scene this time as well.

In other words, the news would soon reach Mount Hua. So before that, he needed to go to the village called Great Virtue...

'Go to the village?'

Yang In-hyun's thoughts suddenly stopped.

After going to the village, what would he do?

Even if he did find a woman named Hwa-ryun. Was he going to take care of her?

That was impossible. In the life of a Killing Ghost, there was no need for the humane part.

In fact, it should be cut out entirely. It would be absurd for him to create a relationship with his own hands. He existed only to straighten the fallen righteousness and chivalry.

"..."

It suddenly felt futile. This entire act made him feel like a fool. Dang Chun-geuk's last words had shaken his heart for a while, but no longer.

It felt like his mind had now returned to normal.

'...let's head back.'

To where he was supposed to go,

To Mount Hua.

“I will pay for the medicine.”

At that, the woman let out a laugh.

“You, are from the murim?”

“...”

“What’s the point of being surprised? You have a well trained body, a single sword, there is a lot of power in your gaze, and you are inflexible.”

Instead of listening to more, Yang In-hyun got to his feet. Then, he pulled a bag of silver coins from his pocket and placed it on a desk.

“With that much, you could buy all of the herbs on the desk.”

“I’m paying for my life.”

“...well, fine. I’m always in need of money anyway.”

With a snobbish expression, she stuck her tongue out and took the money. Just before he left the house, he heard her voice again.

“You can come again if you’re hurt. Since you paid this much, I’ll waive the fee a few times. I’m pretty good at this kind of thing.”

He could have just left after that.

But Yang In-hyun paused at her next question.

“By the way, what’s your name?”

“...why do you ask?”

“So that if I’m not here the next time you come, you can write your name in a letter? That way I won’t be confused.”

“That’s fine. I won’t be coming here again.”

“Ah. Is that so? Then I’ll ask as the one who saved your life.”

“...”

“You make funny faces.”

Looking at Yang In-hyun’s frowning face, the woman burst into laughter. Did this woman know? That he could smash her head with a finger if he wanted to.

“...you can call me Yang In-hyun.”

As soon as he answered, Yang In-hyun felt a strange emotion. Now that he thought about it, he couldn’t remember when last he’d introduced himself to someone.

“I’ll call you Young Sir Yang.”

The woman smiled brightly and said.

“My name is Dang Hwa-ryun.”

* * *

After that day, Yang In-hyun occasionally visited Great Virtue.

In order to fulfil Dang Chun-geuk’s will, because Dang Hwa-ryun was a pretty good apothecary, because he didn’t want to waste silver.

...He had many excuses if someone were to ask him why, but none of them could convince himself. In other words, Yang In-hyun didn’t know why he kept going to Great Virtue.

Dang Hwa-ryun was a proud, ambitious woman. Even though she hadn’t learnt martial arts.

In the village of Great Virtue, there were many elderly people and children, and a few young people. And yet, in Yang In-hyuns’ eyes, it wouldn’t be wrong to say that Dang Hwa-ryun was solely responsible for the vitality of this village.

There came a time when Yang In-hyun found that he enjoyed watching Dang Hwa-ryun play with the children beneath the sunset.

“Where did you roll from this time?”

It was always nice to hear Dang Hwa-ryun’s worried voice,

Her strangely strong but precise touch,

Her soft but distinctly pure gaze,

As well as the foolish appearance that he sometimes saw.

Yang In-hyun...

“Have some of the hundred flowers wine I made.”

Dang Hwa-ryun smiled and said.

“I used a lot of herbs that are good for your health.”

The moon was unusually bright on that summer night.

Like the pleasant song of a grasshopper, Dang Hwa-ryun’s voice tickled his ears.

“Where else would you be able to taste something like this?”

She handed over a glass and slowly filled it with the hundred flower wine. As a result, the bitter scent dug deeply into his nostrils. It certainly smelled like medicinal herbs.

As he quietly looked down at the starlight in the glass, Dang Hwa-ryun interrupted.

“When the moon is bright, you can catch the starlight like this. Isn’t that wonderful?”

“I see.”

“Pour for me too.”

Yang In-hyun filled her outstretched glass.

Then they drank it down at the same time. Without snacks*. (*: appetisers you eat while drinking.)

“...”

It was certainly bitter. However, the sweet aftertaste was a bit addictive.

For a while, they emptied one glass after another. Gradually, the bottles of alcohol created a pile. Usually, Dang Hwa-ryun was the one leading the conversation, but that day, she was exceptionally quiet.

After emptying two more bottles.

“Young Sir Yang.”

Dang Hwa-ryun spoke.

“Today will be the last day.”

“What do you mean?”

“The free treatment. Do you remember the silver coins you gave me the first time? It was the perfect amount to finish with today’s treatment.”

“...”

Had she been counting it? Yang In-hyun suddenly felt bitter.

“Don’t worry. I can pay.”

“No. That’s not it. I’m saying...”

Mumbling her words a few times, Dang Hwa-ryun looked up at the sky before saying.

“...from now on, you don’t have to pay.”

The always confident Dang Hwa-ryun now had a red face that he’d never seen before.

It wasn’t because of drunkenness. As soon as he realised that, Yang In-hyun could not remove his gaze from her face.

“Just come. Anytime. Y-, you don’t have to pay.”

“...but.”

“Does Young Sir Yang dislike it?”

“...I don’t dislike it.”

“Really?”

Dang Hwa-ryun smiled.

“Thank goodness.”

The moment he saw that smile, his heart began to beat uncontrollably. Yang In-hyun's eyes were so dazzled that he couldn't see her face.

27 years old,

Spring, which seemed like it would never come, had arrived.

And the spring,

Quickly.

Too quickly—

[The Great Mage Returns After 4000 Years](#)

Season 2 Chapter 478

“Dang Chun-geuk has a daughter.”

His heart sank.

“Her name is Dang Hwa-ryun, and she works as an apothecary in a village called Great Virtue-”

Jo Sung-choo's voice continued, but it stopped entering his ears.

“Hyun, I know you've been going to that village a lot recently.”

He sucked in a breath.

How did he know? Did he track him? Or had he made a mistake and left some evidence? No, he hadn't acted that clumsily.

How the hell...

“Good job.”

“Huh...?”

“You were investigating the agents left behind by Dang Chun-geuk, right? Hyun, I really admire your thoroughness.”

“...”

“However, it's done now. I also carried out my own investigations. The Black Demon Alliance that Dang Chun-geuk left has been completely destroyed. Not even a remnant was left.”

Jo Sung-choo spoke with a calm expression.

“You can kill her now.”

“—”

His mind went blank.

Jo Sung-choo turned around.

After he finished speaking, he left without delay. But he couldn't leave it at that.

"Wait...!"

Yang In-hyun hurriedly held him back.

"Mm?"

"Did you mean... kill Dang Hwa-ryun?"

"That's what I said."

"What is the reason?"

"...?"

Jo Sung-choo looked at Yang In-hyun with a puzzled expression. This was because Yang In-hyun had never expressed any doubts about a mission before.

"She... has nothing to do with the murim. She was born in Great Virtue and has never left. Naturally, she wouldn't know that her father is the Blood Sovereign either..."

"Do you know who Dang Chun-geuk's father is?"

"Huh?"

"Blood Disaster Demon(血劫魔) Dang Gi-chul."

"What does that have to do with..."

"Dang Gi-chul's father, Dang Chun-geuk's grandfather, was Heavenly Martial Arts Kill(武極天殺) Dang Il-lyuk, both of them were vicious people who created horrendous disasters that turned the murim into a bloody death."

"...."

"The future generations of the Dang bloodline is something that must be cut off. Do you understand what that means? That means that not only Dang Hwa-ryun, but also any children she might someday have, have the talent to become a demon."

"So you want me to kill her now? Even though she hasn't done anything yet—?"

"It would be too late to do it after an incident. If she does go out of control, what will you say to the families of those that died?"

It was ridiculous logic. There was a limit to speculation.

For the first time, Yang In-hyun felt that something was horribly wrong.

"...I won't do it."

Then, he muttered in a firm voice.

"I will not kill Dang Hwa-ryun. Never."

“...”

Jo Sung-choo's face became one of surprise and anger.

Then, after a moment, it became expressionless.

Looking at Yang In-hyun with emotionless eyes, he spoke in a dry voice.

“You are refusing to do the mission, is that what you're saying now?”

“Yes.”

“I see, understood.”

“Yes?”

Yang In-hyun was surprised when Jo Sung-choo accepted it so easily.

“Until now, there was never a time when you failed to follow orders. So I will respect your wishes this time.”

“...tha-, thank you.”

In comparison to Yang In-hyun, whose expression brightened at the unexpected result, Jo Sung-choo disappeared without a reply.

...Even so, he kept his head lowered in thanks.

He was glad he'd spoken up.

It was a stupid thought.

* * *

He thought he'd grown accustomed to blood. No. It was different from being accustomed to it.

Even when he'd committed his first murder, Yang In-hyun hadn't felt anything. This was also according to Jo Sung-choo's arrangement. He had taught them to be like that.

Therefore, Yang In-hyun wouldn't be shaken even in front of a mountain of corpses and an ocean of blood.

But not now.

There was only one body at the scene, but Yang In-hyun's hands and feet shook.

Dang Hwa-ryun.

She was lying submerged in a pool of blood as if she had fallen asleep.

“I was a bit nervous because she was Dang Chun-geuk's daughter.”

Together with the voice appeared a man,

It was revealed.

A face he knew.

Wiji Gil. A man who was a Killing Ghost just like Yang In-hyun.

“She wasn’t that big of a deal. No different from an ordinary person.”

“...”

“I don’t know why you had a hard time with this woman, Yang In-hyun.”

It was then that Yang In-hyun realised.

Jo Sung-choo had accepted Yang In-hyun’s refusal, but that didn’t mean he’d given up on killing Dang Hwa-ryun.

The mission that Yang In-hyun had refused had just been given to another Killing Ghost.

To the man here, Wiji Gil.

Before he could even feel its warmth, spring...

Went away.

* * *

It wasn’t like he was moving his body, it was like he was operating it. The days passed like that.

There was a huge hole in his chest, and the sense of loss was impossible to fill.

As if his heart had disappeared, he could no longer hear it beating in his body.

Staggeringly.

He continued to carry out missions in a manner as if he would collapse at any moment. He couldn’t stand it otherwise.

Jo Sung-choo was extremely satisfied with Yang In-hyun’s attitude. The form of only following missions was the ideal form that Jo Sung-choo had in mind for the Corpse Ghosts.

One thing.

Yang In-hyun also had a change.

He began to grow stronger. Even at that moment, just by inhaling and exhaling, he continued to climb to a higher level.

And he killed.

He killed so much that a scent of blood that couldn’t be erased permeated his entire body.

Time passed with each kill. But Yang In-hyun’s time had already stopped.

In the colourless world, the only thing that stood out was blood.

The time that had stopped began to flow again.

“You can’t kill him.”

“...?”

It was when he heard this voice.

Yang In-hyun stared blankly at Jo Sung-choo.

It was the moment he’d defeated the Cult Leader of the Demonic Cult, the Heavenly Demon, and brought him back to Mount Hua alive.

“What is the reason?”

“...?”

“You know it as well, the might of the Demonic Cult’s forces.”

“Yes. And I am well aware of the dangers.”

“Right. However, it is possible to control that danger. Because all of the followers of the Demonic Cult obey the orders of the Cult Leader unconditionally.”

“...”

“Do you still not understand? If we can control the Heavenly Demon, we will gain control of the entire Demonic Cult. With their power, it would be possible to contribute greatly to the peace of the murim. I would be able to move my plans forward.”

Jo Sung-choo spoke as if giving a speech.

But Yang In-hyun didn’t understand.

What was this guy talking about right now?

“This man is the Cult Leader of the Demonic Cult, the Heavenly Demon.”

“That’s right.”

“And the force he leads is the Demonic Cult.”

“That’s right.”

“...hundreds of martial artists have died to them. And dozens or even hundreds of times more civilians suffer because of them.”

“...”

“And you just told me to spare this man?”

“Hyun, you have to think broadly.”

Jo Sung-choo spoke.

“The standard of martial arts that the Heavenly Demon possesses. There are only a handful of martial artists in the present murim that can compete with him. If we could take control of such a person, how much would it help in raising the morality of the murim?”

“...”

“Of course, it might be hard to understand. However...”

“Then what about Dang Hwa-ryun?”

Yang In-hyun felt as if he was spitting out lava.

After the incident, he had been living like a puppet for five years, but now, he could help but spew out the heat that was building up in his throat.

Yang In-hyun asked.

“Why did Dang Hwa-ryun have to die?”

“Hyun.”

Then.

Jo Sung-choo said.

“Who is Dang Hwa-ryun?”

“_”

His mind went blank. Then, he felt his head begin to ache.

He felt sick. Dizzy. This time, his field of vision, became red...

“Hyun?”

He felt sick to his stomach.

He felt like throwing up right then.

“...what, was that-?”

Nevertheless, he forced himself to speak.

“What did you just say?”

“Ah.”

Jo Sung-choo seemed to finally remember.

“Right. Dang Hwa-ryun. That was the name of Dang Chun-geuk’s only daughter.”

Then he spoke.

But Yang In-hyun could no longer hear Jo Sung-choo’s voice clearly.

Had he forgotten? The woman who he'd sentenced to death with his own mouth. A woman he had practically killed himself.

How could that be?

At the very least, Yang In-hyun remembered the faces of all of the people he'd cut down.

"This is a different case from that woman. Dang Hwa-ryun didn't learn martial arts even after becoming an adult."

A different case?

What was the difference?

"However, we cannot forget the savagery in her blood. There was still the chance of her going out of control if she learned demonic arts. On the other hand, the Cult Leader of the Demonic Cult already has a complete understanding of his martial arts, so there's no need to worry about him losing his reason"

He was talking about something, but he couldn't seem to hear him properly.

Instead, Yang In-hyun looked at the old man with blank eyes.

A face covered in liver spots, hair that was falling out, turbid eyes, and yellow teeth.

He couldn't feel any profoundness or elegance. It was like looking at a rotten tree that was giving off a stinky smell.

What the hell was this ugly old man?

Where was the Red Void?

That day,

The Jo Sung-choo who had taken him by the hand when he was suffering from hunger and guided him, where was he...?

"...so you have to understand. Got it?"

After finishing his story, Jo Sung-choo's eyes shifted towards him.

And at that moment, he saw something shimmering in those eyes.

[Greed(慾).]

'-ah.'

Yang In-hyun suddenly realised.

He was wrong.

It was his fault.

That day,

The day Dang Hwa-ryun died.

What Yang In-hyun should have cut with his sword wasn't the target of his next mission.

"Hyun?"

The person that he really should have cut that day.

"...was you."

"What?"

Jo Sung-choo's neck was cut.

The old man's neck, which was already hard for him to control, was weaker than a rotten tree branch. Blood rushed out like a waterfall. It was surprising. A human like this had red blood.

Yang In-hyun then cut down the Cult Leader that he had captured and dragged here.

He also cut down the three remaining Killing Ghosts that rushed in.

Then, then...

Yang In-hyun—.

* * *

Severe regret could drive a person mad. At that time, the strong willpower developed through training was useless.

Even if he were to cut down the Righteous Faction's Great One, or the Evil Faction's Sky like he cut down the Cult Leader of the Demonic Cult, there was no way to turn back the past.

What was once lost could not be regained.

He had cut down Jo Sung-choo, but he would never meet Dang Hwa-ryun again.

'Then what is the purpose of my sword?'

If it was now, there was nothing that he couldn't cut.

Whether it be a mountain, sea, or even the sky, he could cut it.

However, at the moment when he should cut, Yang In-hyun had cut the wrong thing.

He could have prevented it. He could have done that much.

If he had been a bit faster, he could have saved Dang Hwa-ryun's smile.

He hadn't.

Then... what exactly had he done until now?

-The men of refined taste no longer sing about chivalry.

He recalled Jo Sung-choo's voice.

Chivalry(俠).

What the hell was chivalry?

-Get used to the pain.

He was used to it.

-Whenever you're struggling, think about your roles and a better world.

He always thought about it.

The important role given to him, and a better world.

However... Jo Sung-choo's training was wrong.

Yang In-hyun didn't know the world. He didn't even know what the world contained.

How could he dream about a better world when he didn't even know what the original world was like?

-Then, you will all become the heroes of this era.

So, had he become a hero?

Before erasing Mount Hua, when he'd still faithfully followed Jo Sung-choo's words, was what he'd done heroic?

'No.'

If he had really walked the path of a hero.

It might have been painful. He might have strayed. He might have given up. It might have been an arduous and lonely road.

However... at least it would have been honourable. He would have been able to puff up his chest and admit it openly.

He couldn't do that.

Yang In-hyun was so ashamed of himself that he couldn't take it.

'...still.'

If his actions had benefited the world even a little bit. If that was the case...

He walked down the street to find out.

Hiding himself, he walked around Shaanxi.

He recalled the scene he'd seen in Great Virtue.

Children playing beneath the sunset, elderly people watching the scene with bent backs. And young people clinking glasses beneath the moonlight... The memories were faded now, but when he thought back to that time, he felt his empty heart fill ever so slightly.

"Uaaah...!"

“P-, please spare me some change. I haven’t eaten in three days.”

“Well, what do we have here? You’re dressed up so nicely.”

He saw starving people.

Children picking up dumplings that fell to the floor, elderly people begging for money with bent backs.
And young people trying to extort money and valuables from others.

“...”

Was this what the original world looked like?

Was this a better world?

Or was it... deteriorating?

No. That didn’t matter.

This place was Shaanxi. The breath of Mount Hua.

If Jo Sung-choo’s change for a ‘better world’ were to occur, the first wave would certainly have started here.

Crunch.

His molars clenched so tightly that blood seeped out. His fists clenched as if they would shatter.

Jo Sung-choo’s goal.

From the beginning, it was never to establish righteousness and chivalry.

All he wanted to do was raise the name of Mount Hua.

To just put the name of Mount Hua at the top.

He just wanted something so trivial.

‘Mount Hua, Mount Hua...!’

Yang In-hyun’s burning gaze turned to one place.

Towards the highest peak in the Shaanxi region.

* * *

The Supreme Council Meeting of the Mount Hua Sect was held on Yeonhwabong peak.

In a large conference hall where only the Sect Leader, Elders, and a few leaders with special permission were allowed to participate.

“With this, even the Demonic Cult has been brought down.”

“I really can’t help but admire Elder Jo’s mind.”

“But where is Elder Jo...?”

“I heard he wouldn’t be able to attend the meeting today.”

“Mm. That’s a shame.”

Yang In-hyun eavesdropped on the meeting.

“Then, let’s proceed.”

“First of all, the Merchant Union that sprouted in the Shaanxi region has decided to rely on Mount Hua. From the next month, 70% of the dojos and drinking shops will be doing business under the name of Mount Hua.”

“Won’t there be a lot of resistance from Zhongnan?”

“Haha. They have already been warned. They won’t act foolishly. They know about the red plum blossoms, so they will accept it.”

The Zhongnan Sect was also a part of the Nine Righteous Sects.

In the words of Jo Sung-choo, a comrade to rise up together with.

And yet, they were discussing ways to keep them in check, humiliate them, and suppress them.

Was this how they treated their comrades?

‘Ugh.’

He felt like vomiting.

He bore it.

“It seems we have been receiving a lot of requests from Sanseo and Hanam. Haha. We don’t have enough students to send.”

“Wouldn’t it be a good idea to send the second generation disciples? Even if the martial arts of those kids are lacking, there is no force left who dares to challenge Mount Hua head on.”

“Hmm. That’s a clever idea.”

“Ah. The Evil Faction’s Dark Flower Group(暗華黨) and Truth Piercing Gate(真剖門) have expressed their intention to surrender. They seem to be planning on handing over the control of the entire region to Mount Hua...”

“That’s not even worth considering. Hasn’t history proven that righteous and evil aren’t compatible?”

“Why don’t we publicly execute the heads of each school? Right here in Shaanxi. Wouldn’t that be an opportunity to raise the name of Mount Hua and win the support of the public?”

“Hoh! And we can subjugate the remnants that remain.”

Was this really the way a meeting between prominent members of a sect established in the murim was carried on?

Yang In-hyun could no longer suppress his nausea.

He revealed himself.

“Uht?”

“Wh-, what fool is this?!”

“To dare come to this place...”

Their reactions made him suddenly want to burst into laughter.

Right. So that was it.

They didn’t even know his face.

“Ku, kukuku.”

Where the hell was the scene he was painting?

Was this the law of murim that he’d mentioned?

“Haha, hahahaha!”

“This crazy bastard...”

“I don’t know how you managed to infiltrate so deeply, but we’ll make you spit out everything you know.”

In the meantime, the elders surrounding him drew their swords.

With poor posture, and contemptible internal energy.

“You all, when last did you swing a sword?”

“What was that?”

“Kuku. No. Nevermind. There is something else I’d like to ask instead.”

Soon, Yang In-hyun asked with a calm smile.

“The scent of plum blossoms, is it fragrant?”

* * *

He wiped out Mount Hua.

He literally erased it.

He exterminated the Sect Leader and the Elders, and then the disciples. He knew there were innocents among them. He knew that what he’d done was a massacre.

He knew it, but he couldn’t stop himself.

Mount Hua disappeared.

And yet, the world didn’t change.

Zhongnan filled the vacancy, their behaviour not much different from those from Mount Hua. They used their power to beat down and intimidate, and eventually, they began to look down on the weak and dominate the region.

Then, he realised.

In the end, the strong didn't care about the lives of the weak.

They, after all, were martial artists.

While chasing demons who killed dozens of people, they overlooked disasters that killed tens of thousands of people.

No one lowered themselves to do the field work for the sake of the famine stricken commoners. They didn't catch fish. They didn't cut firewood for the orphans who froze to death on the cold nights after the firewood ran out.

Because to the strong, to the martial artists, such things were trivial.

Those things couldn't help them raise their name.

Even if he were to wipe out Zhongnan, he was certain it would be the same.

The various factions simply slandered each other as they all fought to take the position of overlord.

'Disgraceful.'

Srrng.

Yang In-hyun drew his sword.

At one point, he'd mistakenly believed he simply had to swing his sword at his opponents. That was the most miserable mistake in Yang In-hyun's life.

Not this time.

What Yang In-hyun knew wasn't what to cut.

He knew what to do.

[The Great Mage Returns After 4000 Years](#)

Season 2 Chapter 479

The street lights had gone out a while ago. As dawn approached, very few people could be found.

Lukas looked at the completely relaxed figure of Pale.

Now that he thought about it, he didn't think he'd ever seen her sleep before. That was because sleep didn't exist in the World of Void.

"..."

Yang In-hyun's story tugged on his heartstrings. And he now understood why he once had a negative view of humans.

His life had been completely ruined because of the greed and malice of humans. Wiping out the world called murim at the last moment could be considered a very restrained result when compared to the rage Yang In-hyun felt.

...In all honesty.

He hadn't expected it. For Yang In-hyun to reveal his origin like this.

Something shouldn't be mistaken though. This man wasn't the type of person to confide in others for advice or comfort. In the first place, it wasn't possible to conclude that Yang In-hyun was a good person.

What had happened to Yang In-hyun was certainly tragic. And there was nothing wrong with sympathising with him. However, the massacre he'd carried out was definitely too far.

How many people's blood did he have to be covered with in order to wipe out the murim?

"Are you convinced?"

After a short while, Yang In-hyun spoke.

Right. In the first place, the only reason he'd brought up this story in the first place was to carry out his twisted conviction to kill martial artists. It was because he didn't want to have conflict with Lukas while carrying out this task.

"...right. I understand the situation."

"Then you won't stop me from doing it."

"I won't stop you."

Yang In-hyun made a puzzled expression when Lukas answered so passively.

"However, there is something I'd like you to answer."

"What is it?"

"You hated the world called murim. This includes all the elements that make up that world. However, do you not consider yourself a martial artist?"

"An identity cannot be denied."

"...I'm sure an identity can be denied."

Yang In-hyun's expression changed.

"What are you trying to say? If you have something to ask, just ask."

Lukas decided to follow through.

Looking into Yang In-hyun's especially sunken eyes, he asked.

"Why do you consider yourself the Sect Leader of Flower Mountain?"

He didn't hear the answer.

This was because Yang In-hyun had gotten up from his seat and prepared to leave. It seemed he didn't want to continue this conversation. Or Lukas' words had given him a change of heart.

Just as Lukas was about to send Metel after him again, he heard a voice.

"I will be right back."

It seemed he found Metel's presence offensive.

"Are you going to kill someone else?"

"You said you wouldn't stop me."

"I'm just asking."

Yang In-hyun was silent for a moment before answering.

"Not tonight at least. I'm not in the mood to kill anyone."

Tonight, he said.

It wasn't something one should say at dawn, but Lukas was convinced.

At the moment that Yang In-hyun left and Lukas prepared to go back to the castle,

[How boring.]

He heard the Lightning God's voice in his head.

[My excitement was shattered. I was curious about how such a strong being came to be, but it wasn't that big of a deal.]

'...that's surprising. Is that really what you thought after hearing that?'

[Did you expect me to feel some kind of human emotion?]

The Lightning God smirked as he said that.

[I just realised... if all Twelve of the Void Lords are like Yang In-hyun, those guys won't be able to respond.]

'Respond? Do you mean to you Rulers?'

The Lightning God continued without answering.

[An unprecedented being, someone strong enough to step into our domain, is only born in one case. By incalculable coincidence... Those guys aren't. They just had a couple incidents and low quality malice.]

'Most of the things that we call incidents are born out of coincidence.'

[You're making stupid remarks. If you look back at an incident, you will be able to clearly see the cause of it. The only reason it can be dismissed as a coincidence is if you cannot grasp the causal relationship. It's like a natural disaster. The ignorant consider them to be the wrath of god.]

'Then what coincidence are you talking about?'

[Well... the way the Seven Fanged Dragon God was born.]

Lukas said in disbelief.

'It's not surprising that you treat every being that isn't a Ruler as trash, but did you forget? The one who brought down the Seven Fanged Dragon God was one of the Twelve Void Lords.'

[That's right. Kuku...]

The Lightning God chuckled as if he'd heard something unpleasant. Lukas had no desire to continue the conversation, so he just woke up Pale, who was lying beside him.

"Wake up. It'll be dawn soon."

"Uhh..."

With a groan, Pale opened her eyes.

Then, with dishevelled hair and dopey eyes, she uttered.

"Hungry."

"..."

It was 4:17 in the morning.

This remark was made 17 minutes after the closing time for the drinking shop.

Looking at the table, Pale said.

"Where's my food?"

"You ate it all."

"Mm. I'm sure I had a bit left."

"..."

They had eaten the leftovers as snacks.

It really was a bit.

"I'm hungry."

Pale muttered the word again.

"Let's go back to the castle. You can eat as much as you want there."

"Why? This is a restaurant. The food was delicious too."

"Business hours have ended. We have to leave now."

"Ayyy. I'm hungry."

“You can’t.”

“...”

At that, a dangerous glint appeared in Pale’s eyes.

“I want to eat, now.”

Lukas broke out in cold sweat. It was clearly the appearance of Pale, but, strangely, the tone was similar to that of the Blue Knight.

This might not end as a joke. If he didn’t fill her stomach here, an unbelievable disaster might occur.

...He didn’t have the courage to try to forcefully take Pale to the castle in this state.

Excusing himself, he called for the owner who was closing up.

“Hah? You want me to make food? Do you not see the time?! That’s really rude! It’s already past closing time!”

...Was what he said until he gave him way too much money for him to bring out food to feed Pale.

“Huhuhu.”

Pale grinned in satisfaction as she inhaled the food with puffed cheeks.

‘Strange.’

By nature, she was a glutton, but she didn’t want food this often before.

Did something change after she came to this world?

With such doubts in his mind, he finally returned to the castle. It was just before dawn.

He didn’t see Jiudad or Dok Go-yun in the throne room. But he could feel their presence in the private chamber beside it.

When he opened the door, he bore witness to a strange scene.

It was the forms of two men drinking tea.

“You’re back?”

“Ku-, kuum...”

Unlike Jiudad, Dok Go-yun seemed to have a hard time greeting Lukas.

“Y-, you’re here.”

Then, with a determined expression, he spoke informally. But when Lukas’ gaze turned to him, he quickly flinched and added.

“...sir.”

“...”

He didn't care if this man spoke formally or informally. Rolling his eyes, Lukas looked at Dok Go-yun and said.

"You can go back and clean up the Demonic Cult. I'll come look for you soon."

"Ye-, yes."

Dok Go-yun answered quickly and left just as quickly.

He could consider this an opportunity to escape, but he had no intention of doing so.

The magic that this blonde haired monster used was invisible, and he was also able to use some kind of amazing spatial movement.

It felt different from the Warp spell used by Wizards, the space contraction method of the Magicians, or the portals of the Great Galactic Alliance.

One thing was certain though, as long as he had that bizarre technique, Dok Go-yun would never be able to run away from Lukas.

After confirming that Dok Go-yun had completely left, Lukas said.

"I'm sorry, but I ended up spending more money than expected."

"It's fine for you to use all of it. After all, you are my benefactor."

Jiudad smiled as he said this.

There was still a hint of bewilderment on his face.

"To be honest, I still can't believe it. To think the Heavenly Demon would show such a figure... Who the hell..."

Jiudad muttered for a moment before shaking his head.

"...I won't question your identity. What is important is to keep my promise. You said you wanted my full support? As long as you do not harm the people of Luanoble, I will grant your every request. Even at the cost of my life."

Of course, Lukas had no intention of making such a heavy request.

"I'd like to start with a simple question."

"Of course."

"Have you ever heard of an organisation called the [Trowman Rings]?"

It was something he should have asked immediately after realising that 'Lukas Trowman' existed in this universe.

"You know about the Trowman Rings?"

"Right. Can you briefly tell me what you know about them?"

"Hmm. Fine."

Jiudad began to speak with a casual expression.

“First off, they’re mostly made up of people born on Earth. The Leader is a young woman with the title [White Flower]. Her name should be...”

“Min Ha-rin.”

“Ah. Right. That’s it.”

“...”

“Although it’s made up of mostly young people, some of the founding members possess tremendous power that doesn’t match their age. It is said that they gained power that defies common sense in an incident that occurred just before the Great Fusion. But I don’t know the details about that.”

...The preliminaries for the Great Game.

The Great Game didn’t just end after Lukas’ battle with Nodiesop. The rewards for the result had become meaningless, but the merit of being able to grow explosively in the field that had been prepared still remained, so it wasn’t surprising that they had grown beyond recognition.

To be honest, he was a bit curious.

He wanted to see how strong his disciples had become with his own eyes.

“However, meeting them would be difficult.”

Although he had no intention of doing so, he asked.

“Why is that?”

“The Trowman Rings are pan universal problem solvers that travel all across the world to resolve disputes. This means they never stay in one area for too long. They are probably some of the busiest beings since the Great Fusion.”

Problem solvers that resolved disputes.

Lukas almost had the urge to laugh lightly for a moment.

“...are the Trowman Rings related to Lukas Trowman?”

“They don’t seem to have any particular connection. But there are certainly many people who associate them as ‘Trowman’ is not an established vocabulary. There is also some overlap in their actions...”

“...”

“It seems that you’re interested in the Trowman Rings.”

“A bit.”

“Mm. Please wait for a moment.”

After saying that, Jiudad took out his laptop again.

“I have some information about the size of the Trowman Rings and its members. Of course, nothing I have is certain since it was all independently investigated by Luanoble, but it should serve as a reference.”

“Why did you investigate them?”

“I asked the Trowman Rings to help in our country. I had hoped that they would be powerful enough to drive away the Heavenly Demon. Of course I didn’t receive a rep— Mm?”

“Is there a problem?”

Surprise shined in Jiudad’s eyes.

“...the Trowman Rings accepted my request. A week ago.”

“What?”

“I’d been pretty busy recently so I didn’t get the chance to check... Mm. They say that they will be sending some of their members here, but according to the reply, they should be arriving today—”

“Give it to me.”

Lukas snatched the laptop away.

Then, when he saw the names on the screen, his expression became a bit strange.

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Those sent by the Trowman Rings.

The number of people was fairly large. He looked through the list and found 12 names. Most of them were names that he didn’t know. Since Min Ha-rin was the Leader, Lukas had thought that the group would be comprised mostly of people he knew, but that didn’t seem to be the case.

Except for one.

The name of the person at the top was surprisingly familiar.

[Person in charge: Neil Prand]

A man who was once the boss of the Hunter Association.

And the disciple that Lukas had ultimately failed to lead in the right direction.

That Neil, was a member of the Trowman Rings?

“Isn’t this guy the Head of the Association?”

“That’s right.”

“But he’s coming to aid Luanoble as a member of the Trowman Rings?”

“Is there a problem?”

Problems? There were many.

Neil Prand could be classified as a dangerous man.

He had an amazing talent and senses, but his nationalist mindset was so strong that he had no issue sacrificing non-Americans.

For example, even if he had to choose between 1 American and 100 foreigners, he would choose the former without hesitation.

Was a man like that really affiliated with the Trowman Rings and accepted orders from Min Ha-rin?

It was natural for him to have suspicions.

“I’ve heard of Neil Prand’s martial prowess. If that man worked together with the elites of the Trowman Rings, they might have a good chance of defeating the Demonic Cult.”

Ignoring Jiudad’s voice, Lukas came to a conclusion.

He couldn’t meet Neil Prand.

This wasn’t just because Lukas didn’t want to make any more contact with his ties from Earth and his home universe.

During the Preliminaries for the Great Game, Lukas had tried to secure Neil as a member of his team. However, someone had struck before him.

Retip

‘Is Retip still in this world?’

It would be fair to assume that.

At the moment, meeting Retip would be undesirable. This wasn’t just because the Lightning God’s consciousness was inside his body.

‘Retip would not be an easy opponent.’

He was a Lord, a strong being that ranked at the top of Absolutes.

It was said that he was a monster that was at least comparable to the Demon King who held the same position. If he was to meet that guy and something went wrong which caused them to clash, he would have to use void again.

‘I’m sure something bad would happen if he met Pale.’

According to the response, it appeared that Neil Prand would be arriving in Luanoble today. Lukas felt the need to leave before that happened.

“Jiudad, have you heard of the names Diablo and Kasajin before?”

“...!”

At that, Jiudad’s expression suddenly changed.

For a moment, he appeared startled before fear blossomed on his face.

“...there’s no way I wouldn’t know them. Especially the Archlich Diablo. He is the being responsible for the most terrible disasters before and after the Great Fusion.”

“After the Great Fusion? Diablo appeared in this world even after the Great Fusion occurred?”

“That’s right.”

“...”

Lukas frowned.

He recalled the last scene that God had shown him. The image of his home universe meeting a tragic end.

...Was that scene an event that unfolded in this merged universe? Or had God tricked Lukas?

If not...

‘The future might have already changed.’

Lukas shook his head.

For now, he had just learned something.

Diablo had a method of travelling between the World of Void and the Three Thousand Worlds. He knew this because he had seen Diablo in the Dump Site before regressing.

‘If I use this fact well, I might be able to control Yang In-hyun.’

Thinking this, he asked Jiudad.

“Do you know where they are?”

“I might be able to guess, but there is a fairly high chance that I would be incorrect. And don’t you have someone around you who would know even more than I do?”

“Mm.”

Narrowing his eyes slightly, Lukas muttered the name of this person.

“...Heavenly Demon.”

* * *

Yang In-hyun was standing on the roof of the building called Infernal Heaven once more. But this time, instead of looking down at the street, he was looking out over the horizon. The dark sky was slowly becoming grey as the glaring sun slowly rose in the east.

—It was a sight that didn’t exist in the World of Void, so it couldn’t be seen.

Yang In-hyun asked himself.

Him now, was he feeling sorrow and other emotions while looking at this sprawling scene?

“ ... ”

His chest had been feeling stuffy for a while.

There were many reasons for this, but the biggest reason for this was the last question Lukas had asked.

-Why do you consider yourself the Sect Leader of Flower Mountain?

He hadn't been particularly shocked by it. Yang In-hyun had always been relatively able to look at himself objectively. Naturally, he was also aware of the contradictions he had.

However, just because he was aware of the contradictions, did that mean he had to resolve them? How many beings in this world lived without harbouring contradictions?

“I just wanted to see his reaction.”

Yang In-hyun muttered quietly.

He knew about Lukas' life. Because he'd heard it so much he was tired of it.

Perhaps it was because he couldn't tell what his thoughts or reactions would be. He wondered what kind of expression Lukas would make after hearing about the life of the man called Yang In-hyun.

‘You travelled to many worlds, Lukas Trowman. Taking on the role of saviour.’

He must have seen more strange scenes than the Mount Hua and murim trash that Yang In-hyun had seen. And yet, he didn't stop. He hadn't abandoned his duty.

Was it because that was your first conviction?

If so, then what was the difference between you and me?

You...

“Who are you?”

Yang In-hyun said this out loud. This time, it wasn't a murmur.

Taking his eyes off of the horizon, he turned around.

Before he knew it, a man was standing here.

“Hello, sir.”

A man in a suit and fedora, holding a cane.

“I asked you who you are.”

“This foolish guy doesn't have a name. You can just call me Pawn for now.”

“ ... ”

“Nevertheless, if that displeases you, please call me ‘Gentleman’.”

The man called Gentleman took off his fedora and bowed.

...Pawn he said.

Yang In-hyun narrowed his eyes.

In his opinion, this man was not so weak as to lower himself in such a way.

“Right, Gentleman. What business do you have with me?”

“Thanks to sir, I was able to witness a priceless sight yesterday. So first of all, let me start by expressing my heartfelt thanks. It was truly a beautiful stage.”

“A sight? That is not possible. There wasn’t anyone watching. I killed them all.”

“That’s quite assertive.”

“I’m sorry, but someone at your level would not be able to deceive me.”

“Haha. That is right. As you said all the ‘people’ watching you died. However, I was watching through video.”

Smiling, Gentleman raised his cane and pointed at the sky.

Then, Yang In-hyun recalled the gigantic flying metal ship that he had seen when they first arrived.

A ship that soared higher than Mount Tai.

If that was the case, then...

[getid]

Yang In-hyun looked up at the sky.

For a short time.

“Indeed.”

Then nodded.

“There is a strange object floating in the vacuum of space. Was that the cause of the strange feeling?”

“...huh?”

For a moment, Gentleman couldn’t help but be taken aback by his remark.

‘Did he really confirm the presence of the satellite in space with his naked eyes?’

No, there was no way. He had to be bluffing or joking.

Soon, his smile returned.

“In any case, it was amazing. The power to single-handedly demolish the Demonic Cult... I was naturally in awe.”

“So? What business do you have with me?”

“Do you not like this kind of private talk? Alright. What do you think of the phenomenon called the Great Fusion?”

Yang In-hyun responded expressionlessly.

“I have no opinions.”

“Is that so? Have you never had this thought? There must be a reason why the strong people who reached the peak in different universes and different environments, were miraculously gathered in one space.”

“...”

“That is what we think. If God exists, then he must have decided to host some kind of competition to determine the strongest in the entire multiverse. The huge explosion must be a result of this! It is foolish to try to stop it...”

For a moment, an expression of disgust flashed across the face of Gentleman, who had been speaking joyfully.

“...I’m talking about the fools that try to obstruct this great interaction.”

“...”

“To ignore this opportunity gifted by the heavens and the voice of the era is, without a doubt, an incredibly foolish thing to do.”

Gentleman placed his hand into his breast pocket.

Then, he retrieved a black card and handed it to Yang In-hyun.

“Sir. Would you be willing to join us?”

Turning over the black card that was bereft of any characters or patterns, Yang In-hyun asked.

“[Us] isn’t the name of the organisation you belong to, right?”

“That’s right.”

With a smile, Gentleman opened his mouth.

2.

“—VIP?”

Dok Go-yun nodded at Lukas’ question.

“Yes.”

“The Demon King, Diablo, and even the Heavenly Demon are affiliated with it?”

“Rather than affiliating... you could call them members of VIP.”

“Members?”

Pale, who was beside him, tilted her head as if she was unfamiliar with the concept.

“Yes. So there are many cases in which members do not know the true identities of other members. Most of them seem to like hiding their true identities like the former Cult Leader.”

“...”

“...the Cult Leader said that the Demon King and Diablo are exceptional members. He said they didn’t hesitate to reveal themselves.”

Looking at Lukas, Dok Go-yun said.

“Um. So... what should I call you...”

“Luka... sajin. Call me that.”

“Ah, yes. Sir Lukasajin. A splendid name.”

“...”

“Does Sir Lukasajin have some kind of grudge against them?”

“I have to ensure their end with my own hands. Both of them.”

“I, I see.”

Dok Go-yun gulped.

He, of course, knew how strong the Demon King and Diablo were. Even if he were to briefly scan the TV or newspaper at that moment, he would find reports of dozens of disasters and massacres caused by those monsters.

However, the thought that the man in front of him might be under them never occurred to him. After all, wasn’t this the being who had killed the Heavenly Demon in an instant without a scratch?

‘In other words, a monster catching monster. More of a monster than a monster...’

As a martial artist, Dok Go-yun couldn’t help but feel a bit excited.

This man, the Demon King, and Diablo.

If they fought, who would be the final winner?

“There will be a chance to meet them soon. The Cult Leader said that a general review meeting for the VIP would be held soon.”

Perhaps because this desire spurred him on, Dok Go-yun said these words before he could realise.

“A general review meeting? What will they be reviewing?”

“W-, well. I’m not sure...”

“...”

“I heard that this card is proof of a VIP membership.”

As he said that, Dok Go-yun pulled out a black card. He had obtained this card from the clothes the monster woman had left like a shell after eating the Heavenly Demon.

“Huhuhu.”

Pale let out a chuckle at the sight of the card, and Dok Go-yun had to forcibly ignore the goosebumps rising across his body as he said.

“H-, he said that he’d have to reach the ‘next stage’ before October 10th in order to participate in the meeting.”

“October 10th... What date is it today?”

“October 1st.”

“Where is the next stage?”

“Ah, please wait for a moment.”

Dok Go-yun left his seat, then, after a while, he returned with a map.

“This is the map of the world after the Great Fusion. Of course, because of the distortion of space, the region is still constantly changing even at this moment.”

The Heavenly Demon didn’t seem to think much of it, but in truth, the value of a map in the current world was tremendous. It was to the point where it would probably easily sell for millions of dollars.

Lukas could recall.

The form that his home universe and Earth had before.

That’s why the image on the map that was now unfurled before them was even more bizarre for him. It felt as if normal clothes had several pieces of cloth sewn onto it and made it like rags.”

“This is the location of the next stage.”

Dok Go-yun pointed his finger somewhere between Mongolia and China.

But there was no designation for the area where the next stage would take place. Instead, the entire area had been dyed black as if it was a large stain, and instead of a word, ‘???’ was written beside it.

“It looks like an empty spot on the map.”

“That’s because it hasn’t been properly identified yet. Aren’t there many places like that?”

As Dok Go-yun said, there were many black stains on the map.

“How do you know the next stage is here when it hasn’t been properly identified?”

“The next stage will take place on an artificial island that floats in the air. It’s one of the Great Galactic Alliance’s mobile cities. It would be more appropriate to call it a position instead of a region.”

“...”

A meeting held on an artificial island.

Lukas pondered for a moment before looking at Dok Go-yun.

...This man might still have some use.

“Fine. Then you will join. Not as Dok Go-yun, but as the Heavenly Demon.”

“H-, huh?”

Dok Go-yun jumped up and said.

“I-, I’m sorry, but I’m afraid I can’t agree. That’s not a place for a guy like me to go. Pretending to be the Heavenly Demon probably wouldn’t work in front of those guys. As soon as my identity is revealed, I will immediately-”

“I will accompany you.”

“...deal with that rabble, if the Great One accompanies me.”

Dok Go-yun spoke with a determined expression.

“I know the fastest way to get to the ‘next stage’.”