

# After Ten Millennia in Hell

Chapter 8 - Demon King's Rage (3)

"Sob, sob, sniff." Han Tae-Hyun's sorrowful cries filled the house.

'Why did I have to meet a guy like that?'

If Tae-Hyun had been beaten up by someone who was like a superhero that appeared in novels or manhwas, he wouldn't feel so frustrated. However, the guy who had just beaten him up was more of a villain than a hero.

'The kimchi stew villain... ' Tae-Hyun looked at Oh Kang-Woo with eyes full of resentment.

Upon catching a glimpse of that resentful gaze, Kang-Woo laughed. "What? Do I look like a lunatic to you because I'm so obsessed with kimchi stew?"

"N-No, not at all!" Tae-Hyun quickly shook his head.

With deep and sunken eyes, Kang-Woo continued, "You... have absolutely no idea."

There was no way Tae-Hyun would know what sorts of feelings and thoughts Kang-Woo had had during the past ten millennia.

Demons did not have a lifespan; they could live forever without eating or drinking. After Kang-Woo acquired demonic energy, he had basically become a half-demon, and just like the demons, the concept of a lifespan had vanished for him.

Despite that... he still had a human side left. His mind and bodily senses still remembered the pleasures of eating and drinking. Yet, the things that he craved didn't exist at all in the Nine Hells. That was because the demons didn't need what he was craving.

Moreover, it was impossible for him to give up on his desires. A demon's body was built in a way that prevented their mind from breaking down and, in turn, made it impossible for them to give up their desires. This was why Kang-Woo had managed to remain sane while living for more than ten millennia, and it was also why demons fought endlessly for all eternity.

Living the life of a demon while being human was like being tortured for all eternity. Kang-Woo's desires couldn't be fulfilled, nor could his thirst be quenched.

The reason why Hell truly felt like Hell to him wasn't because of the eternally burning flames or the desolate land. It was because there was truly nothing there that he desired.

"You just don't understand how wonderful your life is," Kang-Woo stated.

It was the same as people not realizing how thankful they should be for the air. Although humans would die in a few seconds without air, no one was thankful for it each time they breathed. A person only craved normal things when they ceased to be normal.

"Ugh. I... I'm sorry! I was wrong!"

Tae-Hyun couldn't understand the meaning behind his words, but there was nothing he could do now except ask for forgiveness.

"Okay, I'll forgive you," Kang-Woo said and grabbed Tae-Hyun by the collar.

"Eek! P-Please don't kill me!"

"Don't worry. I won't kill you."

Kang-Woo wasn't letting Tae-Hyun live out of sympathy or because he hated the idea of murdering someone.

There was only one reason why he wasn't killing Tae-Hyun.

'It'd be bothersome.'

If this were Hell, things would be different, but on Earth, killing another person was a crime. Of course, letting Tae-Hyun off could create trouble for him in the future, so Kang-Woo thought of something better.

"Th-Thank you!" Tae-Hyun bowed with hopeful eyes after hearing that Kang-Woo wasn't going to kill him.

However, Kang-Woo smirked while looking at Tae-Hyun. "Dying would've been better for you."

"...?"

"Well, you'll find out soon."

After saying that, Kang-Woo's demonic energy began pouring out as he activated the Authority of Fear, Orobas's Authority. It engraved the target's fear on their soul, turning them into a puppet that couldn't even fathom the idea of going against the caster. It

wasn't an Authority that consumed a lot of demonic energy, but it had rather harsh prerequisites.

'It's hard to produce an extreme state of fear in someone.'

It was difficult to inflict enough fear on someone to engrave it on their soul, so it was impossible to use the Authority unless the difference in power with the opponent was made clear, like in the current situation. However, if the Authority of Fear could be used, it worked like a charm.

"Ah, aah..." Tae-Hyun uttered.

The Authority of Fear amplified the fear that Tae-Hyun was feeling. He peed his pants and looked at Kang-Woo blankly.

"You'll have to live forever while feeling these emotions." Kang-Woo smiled as he watched Tae-Hyun tremble.

"N-No..." Tae-Hyun said while squeezing out what was left of his rationality.

Kang-Woo shrugged and replied in a light tone, "This isn't a world you can live in just by doing things you like."

The words that Tae-Hyun had said to Han Seol-Ah earlier had turned into a sharp arrow that was shot back at him.

"You can go now. And don't tell anyone about what happened here." Kang-Woo waved his hand in irritation to shoo Tae-Hyun away.

Tae-Hyun had become Kang-Woo's puppet. Even if Tae-Hyun were tortured, he likely wouldn't be able to say anything about what had happened here.

Tae-Hyun just stood up blankly and staggered out.

After seeing Tae-Hyun leave, Seol-Ah walked toward Kang-Woo and bowed to him.

She said, "Thank you. If it weren't for you... I wouldn't have been able to stop him."

Not only had Kang-Woo saved Seol-Ah from the Goblins, but he had also saved her and her mother from Tae-Hyun, who had been bothering them for many years. Consequently, Seol-Ah wasn't sure about how to repay Kang-Woo. Simply saying thanks wasn't anywhere near enough.

"I'll try my best... to repay your generosity," she said sincerely while bowing.

Kang-Woo gazed at her with a smile. "First, let's clean this place up."

The apartment had become a mess because of Kang-Woo and Tae-Hyun's fight.

"Oh, I can do it myself..."

"It'll be faster if we do it together."

Then Kang-Woo began cleaning the apartment with Seol-Ah.

While they were cleaning, she carefully asked him, "Come to think of it, where do you live, Kang-Woo?"

"Ah," a brief utterance emerged from Kang-Woo's mouth at her sudden question.

'Now that I think about it, the place where I used to live is probably gone.'

Kang-Woo hadn't paid rent for five years, so there was probably another person living in what used to be his home. It was then that he realized that he had no place to sleep.

'I'll have to find a place to live first.'

Nevertheless, Kang-Woo wasn't that worried. He now had power that made him incomparable to his past human self, so it shouldn't be hard for him to get a place to live.

"Because of certain circumstances, I don't have a place to stay at the moment," Kang-Woo answered.

"Does that mean...?"

"Well, I'm homeless for the moment," Kang-Woo replied with a shrug.

Seol-Ah thought about it for a moment.

"In that case..." Seol-Ah began while blushing slightly. She clenched her fists and asked nervously, "Would you like to live here until you find a place to live?"

The truth was that what she was doing was irrational. Although she was indebted to Kang-Woo, there was no way that a rational woman would offer such a thing to a man whom she had only met a few hours ago.

'I know that, but...' Seol-Ah wanted to know more about the man named Oh Kang-Woo.

She wanted to know who he was and what kind of life he had lived until now. To put it bluntly, she was kind of interested in him.

"Oh." Kang-Woo's eyes lit up.

It turned out that he didn't even need to think about finding a place to stay. There probably wasn't a better place than here for him to stay and get used to life on Earth. Kang-Woo wouldn't be able to live comfortably because of Seol-Ah's financial situation, but that really didn't matter to him.

'I can earn money myself,' he thought.

If power was the most important thing in Hell, then money was the most important thing on Earth. In a capitalist society, money was an entity similar to a god.

"Okay. Then I'll be in your care for a little bit," Kang-Woo said.

"Ah," Seol-Ah uttered.

Her anxious face reddened in embarrassment. She knew that her behavior was abnormal.

"I'll be in your care, Seol-Ah."

"L-Likewise!" Seol-Ah said. She bowed while shaking hands with Kang-Woo. Then she added, "You can use my brother's old room."

"Okay," Kang-Woo replied with a nod.

After that, Seol-Ah brought him to her brother's room.

'First, I need to take care of two things,' Kang-Woo thought.

He needed to raise his demonic energy so that he could use it in place of his sealed Ten Thousand Demon Core and earn some money for his daily expenses. Among the hundreds of Authorities he possessed, many were useful even outside of battle. If he wanted to live comfortably from now on, then he had to be able to use all of them freely. However, to do that, he needed to increase the amount of demonic energy he had access to.

'I might get involved with more guys like Tae-Hyun down the road.'

Kang-Woo had won easily against Tae-Hyun, despite his stats being absurdly lower than Tae-Hyun's. However, that was because Tae-Hyun's combat prowess was horribly bad. If Kang-Woo's opponent were someone of a higher level and with better technique than Tae-Hyun, Kang-Woo would have trouble fighting against them because his Ten Thousand Demon Core was sealed. So, Kang-Woo's number one priority at the moment was increasing his demonic energy.

'Also, money.'

He'd learned from the internet that Players earned money by hunting monsters.

"Seol-Ah, do you have a mana stone with you?"

"Oh, yes. I don't have that many, but I have a few E-rank ones."

"Could I take a look at them?"

"Of course." Seol-Ah nodded and took out a mana stone, which was emitting white light, from her bag.

While looking at it, Kang-Woo remembered something that had been written in an online article. 'They said that the closer it is to black, the higher rank it has.'

It was the same with Gates. The lowest rank that a Gate could have was F, and they were white. The higher a Gate's rank was, the more murky its color became, peaking with black.

The more highly ranked a mana stone was, the higher the amount of mana would be contained inside, and thus, you could sell it for a higher price. Most players earned an income by selling the mana stones they obtained by hunting.

After taking the E-rank mana stone from Seol-Ah and placing it in his hand, Kang-Woo closed his eyes. He focused his attention on the energy inside the mana stone.

'I can't feel any demonic energy inside.'

Kang-Woo remembered when he'd used the Authority of Predation on the Goblins' corpses. The corpses had contained demonic energy, although it was only a very small amount. Consequently, Kang-Woo thought that there would be demonic energy inside the mana stones too, which were considered to be the monsters' core.

Nonetheless, that did not seem to be the case. The energy inside the mana stone wasn't demonic energy but mana.

'Then... where is the demonic energy stored?'

He hadn't checked for that when he used the Authority of Predation on the corpses because he had not even considered the possibility that the monsters would have demonic energy.

'I'll also have to confirm that.'

However, the most important thing wasn't figuring out where the monsters stored demonic energy. What mattered was that they had demonic energy and mana stones, which could be sold for a profit.

Just by hunting, Kang-Woo could achieve his two goals.

"Seol-Ah, is there a Player Management Office near here?"

"No. We're on the outskirts of Seoul, so you'll have to go further into the city."

"I see. Would you mind taking me there?"

"Sure. I was also planning on going," Seol-Ah answered while nodding.

"You too?"

"Yes. After today's incident, I realized how hasty I was. Although it may take some time... I'm going to enter a Gate after receiving basic training."

In Korea, there was a program in place that supported players and helped them level up safely until they reached Level 10 and unlocked their Second Awakening Trait.

The program was supposed to support new players, but it was way too expensive to take. That's why most Players from poor households like Seol-Ah could barely afford to take it.

In any case, she had realized from the day's incident that entering a Gate without her Second Awakening was like committing suicide.

"Hmm." Kang-Woo's eyes narrowed at her words.

'Should I help her?'

With his strength, it shouldn't be hard for him to help Seol-Ah level up.

His level was lower than hers, but he had all the battle experience that he had gained throughout the last ten millennia, as well as all sorts of Authorities. Bringing someone along for his hunts wouldn't burden him.

'No.' He shook his head after thinking about it for a moment. 'The hunts won't be as efficient.'

Maybe they could hunt together later on, but with Seol-Ah's current abilities, Kang-Woo had more to lose than gain.

'I have no reason to have a party or use a strategy that hinders me.'

It was true that he had taken a liking to Seol-Ah. She was the first human that he had met since returning to Earth. Furthermore, she was also the woman who had cooked

him the food he'd been craving for a long time. Still, that was no reason for Kang-Woo to suffer losses by taking her around with him.

'I need to separate these things.'

Kang-Woo was a calculating person. No, to be more precise, ten millennia in Hell had made him calculative. He used to be at the bottom of the food chain while in Hell. For someone who had been as weak as him to survive, he'd had no other choice but to become calculative.

Of course, after time went on and he had devoured tons of demons with his Authority of Predation, Kang-Woo went up in the food chain. Nevertheless, the habits engraved in his soul didn't disappear.

'I'll think about it after regaining my power.'