

LEVEL 4 HUMAN IN A RUINED WORLD

Chapter 4

Chapter 4: Chaebols Transform into Dragons (4)

Sword.

It was surprisingly light.

At most, it felt like it would weigh only a few hundred grams.

And as soon as he gripped the sword's handle, the tooltip that appeared in front of his eyes suggested that indeed, it was indeed a lightly designed weapon.

[Early Bird] – Hero's One-Handed Sword

[Very lightweight.]

However, there was no other information available.

Not even the attack power typically displayed in a weapon item tooltip.

All Yeongwoo could discern was the fact that it was light.

Yet, for the moment, that was enough.

“Step aside! Anyone who touches me from now on will die for sure!”

As Yeongwoo yelled, gripping the sword with both hands, the people surrounding him flinched.

But they didn't all scatter in a panic.

It was probably because they noticed the sword trembling severely in Yeongwoo's hands.

“....”

A strange silence enveloped the scene.

A seemingly average build, a face smeared with blood, an unsteady stance that barely held.

Could this person really have the ability to kill?

Moreover, the sword was worth much more than mere coins. With a sword in hand, one could easily steal as many coins as they wanted.

And the fact that it was a rare item with only a few in the vicinity was an added bonus.

‘...I must look like an easy target.’

Seeing a glimmer of resolve in the eyes of the onlookers, Yeongwoo tensed his hands and forearms.

Swish!

Right then, a significant movement occurred behind him. Someone was rushing to wrap their arms around him.

“...!”

Reacting swiftly, Yeongwoo twisted his body and swung the sword behind him.

Swish!

The sword’s trajectory flashed, accompanied by a sickening squelch.

Thud!

The blade struck the shoulder muscles of the man who was trying to approach Yeongwoo.

“Ah...!”

There was no dramatic scene of a blade slicing through someone’s body, as seen in movies or comics.

In reality, it was just the muscles contracting reflexively, clamping down on the blade.

...Grit.

The slight tremor of the contracted muscles transmitted through the sword’s handle.

Perhaps this was the texture of human flesh.

‘...’

What kind of life had begun? The life that until yesterday merely consisted of shuttling between a factory and a dormitory now felt like a dream.

Swish!

As he withdrew the blade from the opponent’s body, a small amount of blood splattered, and the forgotten sounds of the scene finally pierced his ears.

“Get him!”

“Aaahh!”

The observers, deeming Yeongwoo’s first strike a failure, rushed towards him.

However, strictly speaking, Yeongwoo’s strike wasn’t a failure.

Though unintentional, that earlier strike had become a form of ‘zeroing in on the target.’

Through the first strike, he somewhat understood the sword’s striking point, realizing that burying the blade into the opponent’s body meant a loss in ‘damage.’

And, most importantly.

‘Killing a person... It’s not an easy task.’

This realization was crucial.

From that moment on, stabbing became his choice of attack.

Swish.

Of course, it wasn’t a properly executed strike.

Simply aiming the blade horizontally, perpendicular to the body, he aimed for the opponent’s neck as they approached.

Yet, the effect and repercussions were significant.

Squelch!

The blade pierced the opponent’s neck in a flash.

“Argh...!”

As the victim shrieked strangely, twisting in pain, Yeongwoo was too preoccupied tracking the other fleeing attackers.

‘...Two left.’

The number of thieves who managed to escape unscathed.

‘Damn, it’s only right to kill them all.’

It was a mix of rage, revenge, and an inexplicable compulsion.

If his attacks resulted in some dying while others didn’t, even though all of them attacked him equally, it would feel unjust.

But now, the distance between both sides was too vast for immediate pursuit.

Therefore, the only available option was to hope for another chance in the future.

'Damn it.'

Furrowing his brow, the vague outlines of the two fugitives' faces appeared in his mind.

Still, this should be enough to recognize them if he were to meet them again. And if an opportunity arises, he'd definitely kill them right away.

Perhaps, this, too, was part of the 'karma.'

"Ugh... Ugh...."

As the second victim of his swing writhed in agony, Yeongwoo finally ended his suffering.

Squelch.

Right as if waiting for it, the system message appeared again.

|Basic living funds will be provided.

|Prepare yourself.

"Ah."

Come to think of it, he had only received the 'Early Bird' as the first-come-first-served reward; he hadn't claimed the basic reward from the main quest.

Clack.

Soon enough, a familiar sound echoed, and three red coins materialized in the air where Yeongwoo was looking.

Swoosh!

"Oh."

Yeongwoo exclaimed in surprise as he quickly grabbed the coins.

'Each red coin is worth 1,000 Karmas... They're giving 3,000 Karmas under the guise of basic living funds.'

Does that mean that with that amount of money, one would be able to provide food, clothing, and shelter for themselves for a while?

If that's the case, then what about the 30,000 Karmas he had obtained from exchanging karma points...

"...."

Suddenly, the image of the police at the same exchange booth and the numerous coins scattered there flashed through his mind, but he quickly erased them from his thoughts.

‘By now, he’s probably dead, or worse. There were too many people near the exchange booth.’

The coins would have scattered among different owners as well.

Therefore, the current top priority was simply to escape this living hell.

‘Then, where to now?’

As Yeongwoo gripped the sword and glanced around for a way out, a new quest was assigned right on time.

[Main] – “Rookie Soldier”

[Mission] Follow the arrow to the Sword Mountain, then change your destiny.

[Reward] Survival Equipment

‘Sword Mountain...?’

Yeongwoo’s gaze instinctively turned towards the Early Bird, sensing the significance of the upcoming quest.

[Translator – Peptobismol]

‘Seems like it’s a weapons supply area, but I’m not sure what they mean by ‘change your destiny’.’

Since there wasn’t a first-come-first-served condition this time, anyone who arrived alive at Sword Mountain would obtain a weapon.

What on earth was going to happen in the future for them to hand out weapons to everyone?

“...”

There was no point in dwelling on it further.

Yeongwoo ceased contemplating about it and looked at the arrow at his feet.

‘West... It’s in the direction of Gwangpyeong-dong.’

Gwangpyeong-dong. It’s a housing complex adjacent to the industrial complex where he was staying.

When food was ordered from the factory dormitory, it was usually delivered from Gwangpyeong-dong, so it was a familiar area.

The problem was that the Sword Mountain was located there.

He had a feeling that another bloody battle would soon unfold, but there was no other option.

Without hesitation, Yeongwoo followed the arrow's direction and stepped forward.

* * *

—A new monster type, 'Troll', has been added to this world.

—A new component, 'Abnormal Climate,' has been added to this world.

Even as Yeongwoo ran following the arrow, the world continued to change.

However, since he was still traversing the outskirts of Gongdan-dong, he felt no noticeable difference.

All that was visible were the dimly lit factory buildings and scattered currency exchange booths.

However, there was one significant change from before.

'Why?'

That was because, at some point onward, no one appeared to stand in his way.

Not only were there no hindrances, but some even cleared the way for him.

Why?

Could it be that experiencing murder suddenly started to emit an overwhelming aura of fear from him?

'No way.'

From this, Yeongwoo arrived at one conclusion.

'They aren't afraid of me. They are afraid of the Early Bird.'

It had been at least several dozen minutes since the exchange booths landed, and the initial recipients of the Early Bird were tangled in disputes involving dozens of others, hence...

'Just by becoming the first owner of Early Bird, I proved that I'm strong enough.'

In other words, the Early Bird was now a symbol of a strong and vicious person.

“Huh.”

“Watch out from behind!”

Yeongwoo felt a wave of corrupted pleasure wash over him as he watched even those who were much larger than him hurriedly retreating.

It was the first time he had seen himself become a source of terror for others.

But soon, he reminded himself of his limits.

He had inadvertently encountered the ‘true owner’ of the Early Bird.

Swish!

A figure appeared like a flash from 10 meters to Yeongwoo’s right.

A tall man with a tanned complexion.

He was so tall that the Early Bird, which was about 80 centimeters in length, looked tiny compared to his height, and from his tanned skin, both elasticity and strength exuded simultaneously.

‘Oh my goodness.’

He exuded such strength that anyone would recognize him as a formidable being.

“ ... ”

The man’s gaze met Yeongwoo’s for a moment, then he swiftly continued on his path, completely ignoring the Early Bird in Yeongwoo’s hand.

Faaaah...!

The distance between the two Early Birds widened quickly.

In response, Yeongwoo slightly changed his direction and walked down the same path the man had just taken.

The path was wide open thanks to the opponent’s overwhelming force.

‘What’ll happen when we arrive at the place called the Sword Mountain? I wonder if I’ll have to end up fighting with guys like that.’

Yeongwoo swallowed his dry saliva as he looked at the ‘powerful being’ that was already turning into a tiny dot in the distance.

And at the same time, a commotion began to appear on his left side.

“?”

Turning his head to see, about a dozen people, all wearing white shirts and maroon ties, came into his view.

Were they office workers in a group?

‘No, wait, where could there be a group of people dressed like that...’

As Yeongwoo pondered, a belated realization struck him.

‘Ah.’

There was one place where there could be a sizable group of people in shirts and ties.

That place was none other than Gumi City’s Gwangpyeong-dong...

‘Gumi High School.’

The students in the school were not exceptions to the reset.

Judging by how they were already heading towards Sword Mountain, it was evident that they had already passed through the chaos of the exchange booth.

Since one student in the lead was even holding an Early Bird.

‘Did they form an alliance around that kid?’

A group of high school students who secured an Early Bird.

Based on preconceptions, Yeongwoo had to remain cautious.

Swoosh.

The arrow on his feet began to tilt gradually.

‘Almost there.’

Observing the students converging towards him, Yeongwoo diverted his gaze, searching for the presumed location of ‘Sword Mountain.’

And then it happened.

Crack!

There was a loud cracking sound of something shattering, and a change occurred in the sky ahead.

‘Oh my god.’

In an instant, Yeongwoo’s pupils dilated to their maximum.

What he saw was tens of thousands of weapons raining down from the sky.

[Translator – Peptobismol]