

LEVEL 4 HUMAN IN A RUINED WORLD

Chapter 6

Chapter 6: The Strongest Sword of Gumi (2)

“...How much is your life worth?”

The student seemed momentarily surprised at Yeongwoo’s proposition.

But soon, he got his emotions together and nodded repeatedly.

“I’ll give you everything if it means I can survive!”

It was a decision made under the belief that finding another “bodyguard” like this would be nearly impossible.

A person who possessed both the Early Bird and the shield was undeniably a valuable asset.

Besides, it wasn’t like he was asking for money upfront.

“Then can I give you the money when we arrive at the currency exchange?”

“Okay. But...”

Yeongwoo was conflicted for a moment.

Despite being in a position where he was going to save the other person’s life, asking for their entire wealth felt unsettling.

“I won’t take everything, how about 100,000? You should keep some money for yourself too.”

“Ah...! Th-that sounds fair.”

“Then it’s settled for 100,000.”

And so, the contract was sealed.

Now, Yeongwoo’s task was clear, ensure his own and his employer’s survival, and head to the currency exchange.

‘Didn’t they say that the stay time for the currency exchange is 2 hours? Then we have about an hour left.’

Finding a new currency exchange wouldn’t be hard. As seen on his way to the Sword Mountain, currency exchange spots were scattered everywhere.

However...

'At 170,000 karma... that's 170 coins.'

Though he had a bag and could collect them somehow, would people simply leave them be?

'There are only two options, either I have to find an abandoned currency that is completely deserted, or...'

Eliminating anyone who approached.

Brrr!

Meanwhile, the arrow at his feet veered westward.

'Is that the next destination?'

The main quest that led Yeongwoo to the Sword Mountain remained unchanged.

[Main] – "Rookie Soldier"

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

[Reward] Survival Equipment

In other words, the task would only be marked as completed when the instruction to change his destiny was followed.

'I don't know what it is, but it seems like I can change my destiny in the west.'

Swoosh!

As Yeongwoo pondered, the arrow moved once more.

'Huh?'

He blinked, wondering if he was mistaken, but the arrow was raising its head once again.

The target destination was moving.

'Wait... what the arrow is pointing to now may not necessarily be the destination.'

Regardless, following the arrow was still the plan.

"Are you hurt anywhere? Can you move?"

"No, no, I can move."

"Good. We'll have to run now."

Yeongwoo took the lead, holding his sword and shield close, the student followed behind, clenching his hands.

* * *

“Haa... haa!”

“Huff, huff!”

This is his first time playing bodyguard.

Apart from the inconvenience of carrying a sword and shield while running, it wasn't as challenging as expected. Everyone they encountered seemed to notice his armed state and avoided them.

'I hope things will be like this at the currency exchange.'

It had been about 5 minutes since they started running non-stop from the Sword Mountain towards the west.

Yeongwoo expected the currency exchanges to appear soon, and the student following closely seemed to share that thought.

“Um... Mister.”

“What is it? Speak up.”

“What should I do if a fight breaks out?”

“What should you do?”

Yeongwoo hesitated for a moment, since he didn't have anything to say even after trying his best.

He also had very little combat experience.

“...Just stay alive, by any means necessary. If there's trouble, I'll try to deal with it as quickly as possible.”

Ultimately, all Yeongwoo could advise his client was to survive by any means necessary.

And not long after...

“....!”

The currency exchange section appeared again.

Approximately 150 meters ahead on the right.

'Woah, this is a golden opportunity.'

Moreover, there seemed to be almost no one around the nearest currency exchange.

A few silhouettes were vaguely visible, at most.

“What did you say your name was?”

“I’m Yechan, Kang Yechan. What about you?”

“I’m Jeong Yeongwoo. Stick close to me now, we’re going to enter the currency exchange.”

With that, Yeongwoo pointed to the currency exchange office that was gradually getting closer, and Yechan nodded.

“Nobody’s armed, so they can’t attack us carelessly. All we have to do is collect the coins quickly.’

Has life ever been this smooth?

Yeongwoo gripped the shield tightly as they neared the currency exchange.

The people at the currency exchange seemed to sense something strange, and one by one they turned in Yeongwoo’s direction.

Both sides finally confirmed each other’s presence.

“Huh...!”

“Gasp.”

“Wh-what’s going on?”

The people at the currency exchange were clearly intimidated.

As Yeongwoo predicted, they were unarmed, mostly elderly or frail individuals.

Those with combat skills had already moved to the Sword Mountain after going through the struggle here.

However, Yeongwoo, mindful of any potential challengers, intentionally let out a threatening voice.

“Step aside! I’ll kill anyone who comes near the currency exchange!”

Even Yechan, trailing behind, felt a shiver at the hostility radiating from Yeongwoo.

As a result, the people around the currency exchange began fleeing with all their might, resembling a herd of sheep encountering a lion.

“Let’s go, now.”

As soon as the area around the exchange became empty, Yeongwoo pushed Yechan toward the exchange.

“A-all I have to do is touch there, right?”

“That’s right. Hurry.”

Securing the currency exchange wasn’t the end; the real deal would begin as soon as the exchanged coins started pouring out.

Everyone in the area would start paying attention to them.

Furthermore.

‘The fact that there aren’t many people at the exchange means that there are more people at the Sword Mountain.’

And this implied...

‘Those armed with weapons will pass through here soon.’

As Yeongwoo contemplated this, Yechan finally started the exchange.

Clatter.

A traumatic sound, to Yeongwoo, echoed from the exchange, and chaos ensued.

Chrrrrrrr!

[Translator – Peptobismol]

A flurry of crimson coins, 170 in total, burst out at once.

“Oh, Mister?”

A bewildered Yechan looked at his bodyguard.

In response, Yeongwoo threw the backpack towards him and urgently shouted.

“Scoop them all up!”

At the same time, he almost started crawling on the ground to pick up the coins.

“What...?”

“Why do they have so much money?”

With such a commotion, people from other exchanges quickly gathered around. Initially around a dozen, then twenty, thirty... soon, the crowd became overwhelming, even for the fully armed Yeongwoo.

However...

“...”

None of them attempted to take the coins lying on the ground. It wasn't merely fear of Yeongwoo's sword but also because those were the types of individuals that were originally present in that area.

Amidst this turmoil, a problem arose.

“Why are there so many people?”

“Make way, please.”

Someone was using an authoritative tone on the other side of the crowd.

As soon as Yeongwoo heard this sound, he sensed what was coming.

‘The ones who got their weapons have arrived.’

Even so, it wasn't the worst-case scenario yet; they were nearing the end of collecting the coins.

“Put the rest in your pockets. We're leaving immediately.”

Instructing Yechan while slinging the backpack over his shoulder, Yeongwoo noticed Yechan's frightened expression as he glanced behind.

“...Mister.”

Most likely, the owner of the voice from earlier had arrived at the back.

“I get it. So, put them in your pockets.”

“Huh? Mister!”

“...”

Yeongwoo looked at Yechan's face and realized something.

They had already started attacking first.

Splash!

As soon as he twisted his body backwards and raised his shield, a dull sound rang out.

Bang!

‘A hammer?’

Now, whenever he felt threatened, he automatically thought of the moment he was beaten up at the currency exchange booth near his dormitory.

Along with the shame he felt at that time.

‘You damn bastards.’

Once again, every cell in Yeongwoo’s body boiled with anger.

Yeongwoo saw someone’s lower body exposed below the shield. Naturally, that meant...

“...”

In a single moment, Yeongwoo slightly moved the shield aside and thrust his sword forward.

Splash!

The opponent on the other side of the shield let out a startled voice.

“What? Argh!”

Shrieking in agony, the opponent took steps backward in an irregular manner.

Only now did Yeongwoo properly assess the situation after removing the shield.

There were a total of three opponents.

The closest one had fallen backward, their right eye pierced by the sword.

Meanwhile, the other two were staring incredulously at their disfigured companion.

And amidst this, Yeongwoo checked their weapons.

‘A spear, an axe...’

Next was their positioning.

‘They’re standing in a row...’

Without further thought, Yeongwoo dashed forward.

Thud!

The spear wielder, who had just made eye contact a moment too late, felt the impact of Early Bird against his face.

“...Ah.”

As the spear wielder’s brain lagged in processing what was happening, Yeongwoo slashed across his face diagonally.

Swoosh!

Then the man standing right behind him rushed at Yeongwoo, swinging his axe.

“You crazy bastard!”

Announcing his position by shouting aloud.

Thanks to this, Yeongwoo was able to earn a sum just by holding out his shield in the direction of the sound.

Ting!

The sound of impact, unlike the hammer’s, was somewhat less robust.

However, this time, the lower half of his opponent wasn’t visible below the shield. Realizing the attack had been thwarted, the opponent hastily retreated.

But Yeongwoo’s determination intensified.

‘I will absolutely kill anyone who attacks me.’

Thud!

Advancing aggressively with the shield, Yeongwoo caused the retreating opponent to stumble and lose their footing.

“Ugh!”

With a whimper, the opponent lost balance and staggered sideways.

Without hesitation, Yeongwoo thrust the Early Bird into his chest.

“...Die!”

Poof!

As the blade penetrated his body, the surrounding crowd stirred in disbelief.

“Goodness gracious.”

“What’s happening...?”

Some were already fleeing the scene, while the rest hesitated and retreated, staring at Yeongwoo as if they faced a monster.

At this moment, Yechan was the only one not fearing Yeongwoo.

“Mister, are you okay?”

Although his words seemed like he was worried, Yechan’s eyes were actually full of awe, after witnessing his bodyguard take down three armed individuals so effortlessly.

Of course, reality was a bit different.

'Ugh... Is this the end?

Suppressing the trembling in his hands, Yeongwoo cautiously examined the face of the man holding the axe.

Seeing that he wasn't blinking, it seemed he had died.

That left the spear wielder and the hammer wielder.

"Ugh..."

The one appearing the most alive was the spear wielder, despite bleeding profusely from their split face, desperately crawling.

On the other hand, the hammer-wielder, who had been blinded, showed little movement apart from trembling.

"..."

Yeongwoo approached the hammer-wielder first, plunging the blade into his throat, then chased after the spear wielder, who had gone three or four steps further away.

In fact, he wasn't even holding the spear anymore.

Step by step.

"Heeik!"

Hearing Yeongwoo's footsteps, the man jerked his body slightly.

Then, falling victim to the blade that had been aimed at his back, he met his end.

Whomp.

A 1-vs-3 battle.

Yeongwoo, who had emerged as the victor, breathed heavily only after his opponents had stopped moving.

"Whew, huff..."

As the tension, which had been making his breathing harder, slowly released, Yeongwoo began to observe the surroundings more clearly.

Yechan, standing at a distance with bulging pockets, dozens of onlookers watching from afar, and...

'Huh?'

A line of text that had been present on one side of his field of vision for some time.

[A new title can be obtained.]

Upon focusing on the text, a new string of text appeared immediately below it.

– Many have witnessed your prowess. None will dispute the fact that you are the *‘Strongest Sword of Gumi’.

[*‘Best Sword of Gumi’ has been changed to ‘Strongest Sword of Gumi’.]

‘What?’

Yeongwoo’s pupils dilated instantly.

But it didn’t end there.

– If you become the Strongest Sword, you can gain great prestige. However, everyone will recognize you, and some may challenge you to take your place as the Strongest Sword.

‘Surely I won’t have to go around with the title ‘Strongest Sword’ on my head.’

It felt like a game.

Yeongwoo glanced at the top of his head, where nothing was still attached.

Judging by the fact that there would be people challenging him to take his place, it seemed like the way to get this title would be to kill the current ‘Strongest Sword’.

However, since the ‘Strongest Sword’ position was currently vacant, a person whose inaction was witnessed by many is appointed arbitrarily.

‘If you’re not strong enough to actually be the Strongest Sword, your title will be quickly taken away.’

Sigh.

Eventually, the prompts disappeared as if dissolving into thin air.

Then, the first and last offer appeared before his eyes.

Swoosh!

[Strongest Sword of Gumi] – Unique Title

[Authority of the Strongest Sword]

[Gumi Sword Technique]

– Would you like to become the Strongest Sword of Gumi?

[Translator – Peptobismol]