

## Turning 96

### Chapter 96

"Why do we have to kill this one too? Why?"

"Why are you so keen on protecting him? He's a worthless human being."

In Nahan's cold grey eyes, a ruthless gleam arose.

"There's no value in us fighting over that idiotic man. Haven't I been a decent ally up until now? Trust me. Let go of his arm and come here."

"..."

Yuder looked down at Kiolle's arm.

'Well, his point is hard to deny.'

Kiolle Diarca may indeed be a person not worth saving here. Perhaps he might regret this moment.  
'However.'

Yuder took a deep breath and gripped Kiolle's arm even tighter.

"No."

Nahan's fleeting smile vanished the moment Yuder's resounding response echoed throughout the dark cave.

"What kind of ally kills all the witnesses on a whim, without any reason? I find you, who kills people as casually as a brainless nobleman, more distasteful."

Indeed. From the beginning, Nahan was a suspicious man. He was more elusive than Kiolle, who was transparent in every aspect—origin and character alike. It was disconcerting to Yuder that Nahan, unlike Kiolle, gave no hint of what he hid behind his back, no matter how amiable he seemed.

'Don't trust anything you can't clearly understand.' This was one of the advices left by Kishiar before he handed over his position in Yuder's previous life.

Yuder always recalled that advice when on a mission. It was the most practical and helpful advice of all.

"Stubbornness toward worthless targets only leads to unfavorable outcomes."

"And who are you to decide that? By what standards?"

At Yuder's question, Nahan fell silent. His left eye, marred by a red scar, stared blankly into space. Lost in thought, he slowly opened his mouth.

"The standard is simple. The presence or absence of power."

'Presence or absence of power?' Yuder repeated the unusual words in his mind, trying to memorize them.

"I will do anything for my brothers and sisters who share the same power and will. And I will take lives as payment from those who have insulted and trampled upon us. There are no negotiations."

With an emotionless voice, Nahan finished his sentence and turned his gaze back to Yuder.

"You're a smart brother. You must understand what I'm trying to say. Now let go of his hand..."

"...You're not just a simple bandit leader, are you?"

Yuder's sudden remark halted Nahan's speech.

"Where are you from? What's your purpose?"

Nahan had claimed that he and his bandits would leave the empire once they had gathered enough money. However, thinking back, the bandits were also Awakeners, who had left their original homes, and the dazed-faced mercenaries standing behind him were also Awakeners.

Considering the boy he had come all the way here to save was also an Awakener, it seemed that Nahan's purpose in gathering the Awakeners was not for personal or pure reasons.

'Was there an individual or group trying to gather Awakeners who had lost their way during this time? There wasn't in my previous life.'

"Are you targeting the Cavalry? Or is rebellion your goal?"

"Neither," Nahan replied.

Yuder, who had been intensely pondering and about to speak, was shortly interrupted by Nahan, who furrowed his brows.

"Really, such a suspicious brother. Why does it matter whether I belong somewhere or not? All I want is to clean up this mess and leave."

At the same time as he moved his finger subtly, Kiolle, with a dumbfounded expression, started shaking his arm forcefully to shake off Yuder's hand. The force was strong enough that it could have slipped in an instant.

"Let go."

"I said I don't want to, ah."

In the moment Yuder was about to respond, Kiolle had stopped struggling and tried to kick him. Yuder dodged it and, clicking his tongue, struck Kiolle's nape hard.

It was a strength enough to knock out a common person or even a trained knight, but surprisingly, Kiolle did not fall. He just opened his mouth dumbly and tried to escape Yuder.

"I can't understand. Why are you going to such lengths?"

"I told you. I don't like your side, more than this guy. So, and..."

Yuder, while trying to suppress the increasingly violently resisting Kiolle, raised his voice.

"Don't order me around because you're upset. There's only one person who can command me!"

The moment his words ended, Yuder buried Kiolle in the ground, leaving only his head exposed. Kiolle, buried deep below the collapsed ground, twitched as he let out a low moan, but he couldn't break free from the hardened soil.

At the same time, Yuder's arm throbbed heavily.

'I tried not to use my power... I had no choice.'

Yuder, while glaring at Nahan, the culprit who forced him to use his power, drew his sword from his waist. As flames began to crawl up the blade in a spiral, Nahan was seen frowning.

"Planning to attack?"

"You started it."

Nahan frowned. His expression seemed strangely like he wanted to laugh, but also didn't.

"Well, fine. Then I'll do my best to get rid of this trash."

"Using powers against brothers was strictly prohibited, but there was no choice with a skilled person like you." As soon as those words ended, Nahan's face started to ripple.

As soon as he saw it, his head and body became rapidly heavy. Yuder instinctively realized he was trying to use an illusion power against him.

'He's trying to incapacitate me and achieve his objective in the meantime...!'

Yuder quickly used his power to protect Kiolle, who was buried in the ground. However, in that moment, the scenery before his eyes abruptly changed with a swift sound of wind.

'Yudrain.'

It was a very strange sensation. Yuder was certainly aware that he was kneeling inside a cave holding onto Kiolle, but at the same time he saw a beautiful golden-haired man speaking to him. It was Kishiar in his white uniform.

Obviously, Kishiar was the illusion. He was someone who couldn't appear here now. Plus, he was calling him Yudrain, not Yuder. A name that no longer had a reason to be called.

His cool reason made the obvious judgment, but even knowing that, Yuder stiffened for a moment.

'This trick.'

'Yudrain.'

Kishiar called Yuder again. The enchantingly captivating low voice echoed in his ears.

He had to ignore it. He needed to avert his gaze from those crimson eyes. Even though he knew he needed to move somehow, his hand wouldn't obey, as though caught by something...

"Was it a good experience? The one where you plunged your knife into my heart."

Kishiar lowered the hand he had been holding near his chest. A gaping hole, where blood gushed ceaselessly, was visible between the black gloves he wore. Yuder knew the nature of that wound very well.

It was a wound that he himself had inflicted.

Before he knew it, Yuder realized he was panting heavily.

"It's all an illusion."

He knew it. He knew it, yet why couldn't he tear his gaze away from Kishiar? His heart was pounding so hard that he could feel it reverberating through his fingertips.

The strength slowly ebbed from the hand that held Kiolle. Behind Kishiar's illusion, Yuder saw Nahan, looking down at him with gray eyes shining.

Nahan was quietly smiling as he watched Yuder's distorted expression. Seeing that, a semblance of reason flickered in Yuder's warped mind.

"Perhaps, this is an illusion to stimulate the subject's fear and to drain their spirit. That guy, he doesn't know Kishiar. So this is purely... an element drawn from my own memory..."

"Yudrain."

The chain of thoughts that had barely been forming shattered instantly at Kishiar's call. The illusion of Kishiar approached and knelt on one knee in front of Yuder. Yuder was overwhelmed by a powerful urge to release his grip on Kiolle and retreat.

"Answer me."

An incorporeal bloodied hand came closer and touched his cheek. Despite being an illusion, the sensation was so vivid that it sent shivers down his spine. Yuder gritted his teeth at the sensation of the blood from Kishiar's body soaking his cheek.

"Answer me, Yudrain."

He almost responded reflexively. But he mustn't answer. He could sense it instinctively. If he responded to those words, then, he would be succumbing to the intense pressure weighing on his head and shoulders.

"To break free from a mental. From a mental ability attack. The general way is..."

He desperately tried to hold on to his numbing sense of reason and remember. This was his first encounter with such a potent illusion ability, but he had met enough psychic ability users. Usually, to counter such abilities that target the mind...

"Attack the caster, or else."

The sound of his gasping breath pounded in his ears like a drum. Yuder glared into Kishiar's red eyes and raised the sword he had been holding in one hand. Following this, a small sound, as if something made of flesh and blood had been brutally sliced, echoed within the cave.

"..."

A moment later, Yuder, gasping for breath, opened his eyes. Intense pain radiated from the arm that he had deliberately cut deeply. But his mind was clear, and Kishiar was no longer in sight.

Instead, the sight that came into his sharpened view was of Nahan, who had approached unnoticed and was swinging a blood-soaked dagger at Kiolle.

"This bastard."

Without wasting a moment, Yuder swung his own sword to block Nahan. With a sharp clang, the two swords collided forcefully. While parrying Nahan's sword, Yuder used the wind to fling him ruthlessly against the cave wall and picked up Kiolle from the ground.