

MYST, MIGHT, MAYHEM

Myst, Might, Mayhem #Chapter 4 - Read Myst, Might, Mayhem Chapter 4

Chapter 4: Mok Sword Manor (1)

Mok Gyeong-un unwrapped the bandages and looked at his upper body reflected in the mirror.

There were scars from stab wounds on the left side of his chest and abdomen.

‘Scars?’

Normally, even considerable wounds wouldn’t leave scars.

However, the wounds inflicted by that man’s black sword had turned into scars.

It seemed they would likely remain for life.

‘Well... can’t be helped.’

He had to be satisfied with surviving.

Even he thought wounds of that extent would be fatal.

But contrary to expectations, he had survived.

He was aware that he had exceptional recovery abilities from the beginning, but his tenacity for life was beyond imagination.

‘Is this a sign that I shouldn’t go there yet?’

Fortunately.

If he had to listen to his grandfather’s nagging, he at least wanted to complete his revenge.

That way, it would be less unjust.

‘Revenge...’

Thinking about revenge, he felt he was lucky.

Who would have thought there would be someone in the world with the exact same face as him?

Thanks to that, he could cleanse his identity.

‘Should I say I’m lucky?’

Since the identity of the death row inmate had been killed, there would be no wanted posters saying he had escaped.

In fact, more than the government office issuing wanted posters, he had something else in mind.

‘They’ll probably think I’m dead now, right?’

The middle-aged man with the black sword whom he had encountered while tracking his nemesis’s traces.

That man had appeared to kill him.

But if the fact that he was alive was discovered, the man would undoubtedly show up again.

‘...Martial arts.’

He had clearly experienced it.

That man was a monster he had encountered for the first time in his life.

It seemed impossible to confront him without learning martial arts.

In that regard, it seemed like a stroke of fate.

The guy who had the same face as him was the third young master of the martial arts clan, Yeon Mok Sword Manor.

He could now deceive that bastard and the world as the third young master of Yeon Mok Sword Manor, not as the Sickle-slaying Demon, and furthermore, an opportunity to learn martial arts had opened up.

‘It has opened up, but...’

There was just one problem.

Mok Gyeong-un looked at the black figure standing outside the door while putting on his top.

It was the person Guard Gam had placed to monitor him.

Because of that, he was confined to the villa and couldn't move except when going to the latrine.

'How annoying.'

The situation wasn't easy.

It was no different from being imprisoned.

Although they had made a deal, as expected, Guard Gam didn't trust him at all.

It would probably continue like this.

It might be natural since he had boldly killed the 'real one' right in front of his eyes.

'What should I do?'

If he stayed still, he would only be manipulated like this.

There might not even be an opportunity to learn martial arts.

It was a situation where he was stuck between a rock and a hard place, unable to do anything.

Nevertheless, Mok Gyeong-un chuckled with a rather nonchalant face.

Knock knock!

At that moment, someone knocked on the door.

"Young Master, I've brought your lunch."

Soon, the door opened, and a maid brought a tray of food.

It was beef and eggplant stir-fry, bean sprouts, and rice.

As she always did, the maid placed the tray on the round table by the window.

She glanced at Mok Gyeong-un, who was buttoning his top and sitting on a chair.

'He's handsome.'

Among the four young masters of Yeon Mok Sword Manor, Mok Gyeong-un's looks were by far the best.

To the extent that the maids would compete to bring him his meals and want to see his face.

One needed to have such small pleasures, didn't they?

However,

'Huh?'

The maid slightly furrowed her brows.

With a faint smile on his face, he didn't look any different from the usual Mok Gyeong-un.

But what was this subtle sense of unfamiliarity?

'What is it?'

Something felt different.

It was quite difficult to pinpoint exactly what it was.

As the maid was puzzled inside, she was about to take the tray and leave when,

"Wait a moment."

"Yes?"

"About the beef and eggplant stir-fry."

"Yes."

"Next time, I'd like the beef to be less cooked."

"But if it's undercooked, the blood..."

"Beef is more tender when it's rare, and it's delicious when it's slightly soaked in blood."

He smiled brightly as he said that.

The moment she saw his smile, a chill ran down the maid's spine.

She seemed to understand why she felt the unfamiliarity.

His mouth was smiling, but his eyes were staring at her without moving at all.

It felt like her body was stiffening.

“Is there a problem?”

“That... well...”

Once seized by fear, it was difficult to answer.

Right then,

“The chef will handle the cooking as he sees fit, Young Master.”

Mok Gyeong-un turned his head toward the door.

Guard Gam was entering through the open door.

He shook his head with a displeased look and waved his hand at the maid.

The maid bowed her head and hurriedly went out.

Thud!

Guard Gam closed the door and approached Mok Gyeong-un, saying,

“I warned you not to do anything conspicuous, didn't I?”

Mok Gyeong-un picked up some rice with his chopsticks and replied,

“Is asking for the beef to be cooked less considered conspicuous?”

“You're Mok Gyeong-un, not a death row inmate.”

“The paper you gave me to memorize didn't mention what kind of meat the ‘real one’ preferred.”

Mok Gyeong-un calmly retorted.

‘This bastard.’

Guard Gam's expression hardened at his attitude.

It wasn't exactly wrong, but he didn't like how the boy talked back at every turn.

It was annoying, and the way he was chewing his food was also irksome.

Guard Gam sat across from him and said,

“Judging by the way you’re talking, I assume you’ve memorized everything I told you to, right?”

“Yes. There wasn’t much to it.”

“Not much to it? Ha! Then what’s the name of the eldest young master?”

“Mok Yeong-ho. Age twenty. Has a mole on his left cheek and is so absorbed in women . The most incompetent among the four brothers, but greedy and tyrannical.”

‘...’

One of Guard Gam’s eyebrows rose.

It was accurate without a single mistake.

Since the real young master had written the information sheet himself, it was bluntly written from his own perspective.

“...What about the second young master?”

“Mok Eun-pyeong. Age eighteen. Has droopy eyes like the main wife. Cunning and treacherous. A piece of trash who would do anything to become the head of the clan.”

Mok Gyeong-un had memorized it exactly as it was written.

The forceful handwriting gave a strong impression of dislike.

‘It would be easier if he were a dimwit.’

Guard Gam clicked his tongue inwardly.

As expected, the fellow was cunning and had memorized everything.

There seemed to be no need to check further.

“Should I also talk about the fourth young master? Or the real Mok Gyeong-un’s usual habits...”

“That’s enough.”

“Then, I haven’t finished my meal yet, so may I continue?”

“Hmph. Eat and listen.”

“Understood.”

Guard Gam got up from his seat, looked out the window with his hands behind his back, and opened his mouth.

“Although you’ve familiarized yourself with the information on the sheet, you’ll hardly have any occasions to meet other people in this household.”

“...Why is that?”

“Even if you have the same face as the young master, the longer the tail, the more likely it is to get stepped on. In the first place, we just need to avoid creating such situations.”

“So you’re saying I should stay cooped up inside?”

“You catch on quick.”

“This doesn’t seem much different from being a substitute.”

“You volunteered to be a puppet instead of a substitute. Since you chose that path yourself, you just need to do as you’re told.”

Guard Gam made it clear.

So that this cunning fellow couldn’t have any other thoughts.

“I just need to do as I’m told, right?”

“That’s right.”

“Is there anything else I need to know?”

“No.”

At Guard Gam’s final words, Mok Gyeong-un, who had been using his chopsticks, narrowed his eyes.

He had been told about the information he needed to be familiar with, but other than habits or personal details that wouldn’t easily give away the fact that he was a fake, he wasn’t told anything else.

Especially the most important information.

‘He’s not telling me why a substitute was needed.’

Of course, he had guessed that they might not tell him.

Because of this, Mok Gyeong-un could be certain of one thing.

'Are they planning to leave me in a dangerous situation that requires a substitute?'

Otherwise, there would be no reason not to tell him.

They had made him take a poison pill, and now that the 'real Mok Gyeong-un' was dead, he thought they would utilize him for a while since he was the only substitute.

But it seemed that wasn't the case.

They probably had another hidden card up their sleeve.

The corners of Mok Gyeong-un's mouth curled up savagely as he was lost in thought.

'They're trying to switch sides.'

Thud!

Guard Gam, who had closed the door, said to the sharp-eyed middle-aged man guarding outside,

"Make sure he never escapes. And if someone comes looking for him, come up with an excuse that he's not feeling well or something, so he doesn't come face to face with others."

"Understood."

"I'll be out for a bit."

As he was about to leave, the middle-aged man whispered,

"Captain. But is there really a need to switch sides?"

"Huh?"

"You've made him take the poison pill anyway. Wouldn't it be better to just control that fake fellow? After all, the reason you chose the third young master..."

"That fellow is no good."

"What? What do you mean?"

"I mean he's not someone who can be easily controlled."

At Guard Gam's words, the middle-aged man inwardly scoffed.

No matter how much of a death row inmate the fellow was, he was just an ordinary civilian who hadn't learned martial arts.

Yet, it was amusing how the captain was overreacting like this.

Perhaps because he had retired from the front lines and lived as a bodyguard, his sharpness had indeed dulled compared to the past.

If it bothered him that much, he could just step on the fellow and teach him a lesson.

However, regardless of his own thoughts, he couldn't talk back to the captain.

"I understand."

"Watch him closely. If he tries to do anything unnecessary, subdue him with the Grappling Hand technique. I allow you to inflict some pain, except for the face."

"Oho. Really?"

"That might be better for that fellow. Anyway, guard him well."

"Understood."

The middle-aged man raised the corners of his mouth in satisfaction.

About fifteen minutes after Guard Gam left,

The closed door opened.

The middle-aged man guarding the door blocked Mok Gyeong-un, who was trying to go out.

"Where do you think you're going?"

"I'm going out for a bit."

"To the latrine?"

"No. I thought I'd take a look around outside the villa. I needed someone to talk to anyway, so would you like to come with me?"

Mok Gyeong-un spoke nonchalantly.

Seeing his attitude, the middle-aged man shook his head in disbelief.

The captain had just left, and he was already trying to run out?

The middle-aged man spoke in a cold tone,

“If you don’t want to see a rough sight, go back in right now.”

“Did you say Go Chan? I think nothing will happen if the two of us just keep our mouths shut...”

Before Mok Gyeong-un could finish speaking,

Swish swish smack!

The middle-aged man, no, Go Chan, swiftly grabbed Mok Gyeong-un’s wrist and twisted it behind his back.

It was a Grappling Hand Technique.

According to the captain, although the boy’s external strength was not remarkable, his muscle density was unusual, so rather than striking, it was easier to subdue him by twisting his joints.

‘Nothing special.’

Using the Grappling Hand Technique after a long time, it seemed his skills hadn’t rusted.

Feeling better after twisting the boy’s arm, he whispered into Mok Gyeong-un’s ear,

“You seem to have forgotten your place, but you’re not the real Mok Gyeong-un. There’s nothing good about unnecessarily provoking me.”

Squeeze!

He twisted the wrist even more.

Regardless of his muscles, having his joint twisted must be painful.

“Go back in and stay put.”

Go Chan warned in a low voice.

He thought the boy would naturally go back in on his own after this much, but,

“What if I don’t want to?”

“What?”

Go Chan snorted in disbelief.

He had heard the boy’s thinking was unusual, but he seemed out of his mind.

If he didn’t want to go back in obediently, what else could he do?

“Foolish fellow.”

Go Chan struck the back of Mok Gyeong-un’s neck with his hand infused with internal energy.

Smack!

With this much force, regardless of his muscles, he would faint from the impact.

That’s what he thought, but something was strange.

It felt like he had hit a wooden pillar.

‘What?’

He thought the boy would definitely collapse, but he was enduring it just fine.

Thinking he might not have used enough internal energy, he tried to apply more, but Mok Gyeong-un’s voice was heard,

“You do seem weaker than Guard Gam.”

‘This bastard?’

It seemed he didn’t feel any pain at all.

Otherwise, how could he speak so calmly after being hit on the back of the neck?

Feeling unsettled, Go Chan decided it wouldn’t do and tried to twist Mok Gyeong-un’s wrist even more to slam him to the ground.

However,

Squeeze!

No matter how much he twisted, the boy didn’t budge.

No, the boy was straightening his twisted wrist and forearm.

'Wha- what the?'

Startled, Go Chan summoned his martial power to the fullest.

He couldn't worry about the fellow getting hurt or not.

He had to subdue him first and then see.

But,

'Huh?'

The moment he tried to draw upon his martial power, his body floated upward with a whoosh.

Then, he was slapped down in front of the boy.

Thud!

"Ugh!"

Fortunately, it didn't seem like he was thrown down too hard.

He quickly tried to bounce his waist and get up, but Mok Gyeong-un grabbed his neck with his right hand.

Squeeze!

"Guh!"

The strength of that grip was so immense that it felt like his neck would break at any moment.

Go Chan's eyes trembled and started to turn bloodshot.

He hurriedly grabbed the boy's wrist and tried to push it away to free himself.

But it wouldn't budge at all.

'Th- this bastard, what the is he? How can he be so strong...?'

In terms of martial arts, he had reached the second-rate level.

It was no exaggeration to say that he possessed twice the strength of an average adult man.

Yet, he couldn't handle the strength of one hand of this fellow who hadn't even learned martial arts.

"Guh, guh."

His breath was getting cut off.

It felt like his face would burst.

Struggling in agony, he suddenly caught a glimpse of the boy's face.

'Smiling?'

The corners of the boy's mouth were curled up to his ears.

He had a face like an innocent child playing with a toy.

Chapter 5: Mok Sword Manor (2)

'what the is this bastard...?'

Not only was his breath being cut off, but a chill ran down his spine.

The gaze in Mok Gyeong-un's eyes, as he was grinning from ear to ear, was strangely spine-chilling.

Now he understood why Guard Gam, the captain, had said those words.

[I mean he's not someone who can be easily controlled.]

He thought it was just something he said.

But actually experiencing it, the boy was clearly different from ordinary people.

Even without having learned martial arts, his immense strength and the ominous pressure in his eyes were crushing his mind like pulp.

Squeeze!

"Ugh..."

The force squeezing his throat intensified.

He endured it with his internal energy, but he couldn't hold on any longer.

Seeing his eyes burning, it seemed he would soon lose consciousness.

At that moment,

Swish!

The hand gripping his neck loosened.

“Cough, cough!”

As his blocked airway opened, he coughed as if choking.

Amidst that, he was puzzled.

‘Why?’

Mok Gyeong-un, who had been enjoying it with a grin up to his ears, stopped smiling.

Then, he spoke as if he were disappointed,

“I almost killed you.”

“Cough, cough... Wh- what?”

“If I kill you like this, becoming Mok Gyeong-un would be meaningless, wouldn’t it?”

At Mok Gyeong-un’s words, Go Chan’s eyes wavered.

It felt like the boy was toying with him.

Just what was this bastard?

Go Chan, his anger surging, opened his mouth with trembling lips.

“...Do you have the confidence to handle the consequences of doing this?”

“Consequences?”

“Without the antidote, you will die. And it will be a very painful death.”

Go Chan mentioned the poison Mok Gyeong-un had ingested.

He thought this fake fellow would also know that and stop midway.

But it was too late.

He had already seen this fellow’s unsettling side.

As the captain said, this fellow was someone who could never be controlled.

Although he didn't know what would happen after five days, if he were to switch sides, it would be better to kill him in any way possible.

'If I leave him be, he will surely stab me in the back.'

However, at the moment, the one holding the knife was this fellow, so he had to make him realize his position.

Go Chan spoke in a low voice,

"If Guard Gam finds out, he won't let you off easy."

"That's probably true."

"...But I'll consider this incident as an impulsive act."

"What does that mean?"

"I'll consider it as something you did out of frustration from being confined, so go back to your room now."

"Go back to my room?"

"Yes. If you obediently go back on your own, I'll pretend what just happened never occurred."

At those words, Mok Gyeong-un smiled brightly and said,

"If that were the case, I wouldn't have bothered coming out."

Go Chan frowned.

Did this fellow really not understand the situation?

Why was a bastard who had even taken a poison pill and had his life at stake acting so arbitrarily?

"If the captain, no, Guard Gam finds out..."

"Yes, yes. He won't just let it slide."

"But now, if you resist here..."

"If Guard Go keeps his mouth shut, nothing will happen. What's the problem?"

“What?”

Go Chan was dumbfounded by Mok Gyeong-un’s brazen words.

As his senior said, he really seemed uncontrollable.

Go Chan spoke, trying to suppress his anger.

“They must have told you that if you don’t take the antidote or neutralizer within the hour, your life will also end, but you can’t come to your senses...”

Before he could finish his words,

“Monkshood, aconite, hemlock, pinellia...”

‘!?’

At the medicinal herbs, no, poisonous herbs coming out of Mok Gyeong-un’s mouth, Go Chan’s expression instantly hardened.

They were all plants that went into the poison pill.

“Woodbine[1], magic mushroom, dutchman’s pipe. Is that about it?”

‘...Impossible.’

Go Chan was dumbstruck.

Even if he got one or two wrong, it would have been understandable, but he was accurate.

He correctly identified all the toxic ingredients that went into the poison pill.

The reason he was so shocked wasn’t simply because the boy guessed the ingredients.

The poison pill was made by combining these ingredients, boiling them, and drying them to make the pill, so it couldn’t be identified just by tasting it.

“Wh- what the are you?”

Even the Poison Emperor Cho Ak-gyeong or the Medicine Immortal Mun-no, would they be capable of this?

‘Didn’t they say he was an ordinary death row inmate?’

He was curious about this fellow’s true identity.

As he was astounded, Mok Gyeong-un said,

“Since I was young, I ate all sorts of medicinal and poisonous herbs. I tried boiling them and drying them.”

“What? You ate poisonous herbs?”

“An herbalist must know their effects, they said.”

‘...It’s not just for that reason, though.’

He knew there were other reasons, but it didn’t matter now.

Anyway, Mok Gyeong-un could distinguish medicinal herbs with sensitive precision.

No, if it was something he had personally tasted or even slightly smelled, he remembered it.

Even his grandfather would stick out his tongue in amazement at that.

“A herbalist, you say?”

“Oh, you didn’t know? I originally lived by gathering medicinal herbs.”

“Nonsense! How can a mere herbalist identify the ingredients in a poison pill just by tasting it?”

It was something that couldn’t be possible.

“Judging by your surprise, I guess I was right.”

Mok Gyeong-un approached him as he was startled.

As he suddenly closed the distance, Go Chan unknowingly took a step back.

Go Chan hurriedly said,

“E- even if you know that, what do you think you can do? Making the antidote is even more difficult than the poison pill.”

He gathered internal energy in his Yongcheon acupoint[2] to use lightness skill if necessary.

This fellow was extremely unsettling.

He had to be prepared because he didn’t know what he would do.

'Even if his strength is greater than ordinary people, he hasn't learned martial arts. Then, if I use the lightness skill, he won't be able to catch up.'

He thought it would be fine as long as he didn't directly confront him.

Right at that moment,

Crunch!

As Mok Gyeong-un took a step, the wooden floor beneath his foot was dented.

It was an immense leg strength.

'Oh no!'

As if a tiger was pouncing, Mok Gyeong-un instantly charged forward.

Jumping back was useless.

Mok Gyeong-un's speed was too fast to secure any distance.

Thwack!

Mok Gyeong-un's hand stretched out.

Thinking he would naturally aim for the neck or head, Go Chan tried to defend by crossing his arms.

But that wasn't it.

Tap tap tap tap tap!

"Ugh!"

Mok Gyeong-un's fingers struck acupuncture points on his chest.

Go Chan's eyes widened.

He was certain this fellow didn't know any martial arts.

In fact, there were no signs of him having cultivated internal energy, so he thought that was the case, but the acupoints he just struck were the paralysis acupoint that stiffened the body and the mute acupoint that prevented speech.

'Could it have been a lie?'

He accurately struck the acupoints.

Once the acupoints were sealed, he shouldn't be able to move or speak.

However, even though his chest ached and his body felt creaky, he could still move.

"What is this...?"

As he wondered what was going on, Mok Gyeong-un tilted his head and muttered,

"Was it not like this?"

"What?"

"I tried imitating what Guard Gam did, but it doesn't seem to work. I thought doing it this way would make the body unable to move and prevent speech."

'!?'

Mok Gyeong-un spoke nonchalantly.

At his words, Go Chan was not only dumbfounded but also flabbergasted.

If this was true, did it mean he had imitated exactly what he had experienced himself?

'He imitated what he saw?'

If he knew nothing, he would have thought the boy had learned it.

He might have even thought the boy had practiced it dozens of times to perform it.

Because he had struck the acupoints almost accurately.

'Just who is this guy?'

If he had internal energy, the acupoints would have been sealed.

It ended with his body stiffening slightly because the boy had just poked them forcefully without skill.

As he was stunned and at a loss for a moment,

Grab!

"Guh!"

While he was caught off guard, Mok Gyeong-un grabbed his neck.

Since he was standing, he tried to kick the boy's groin with his foot, but,

Crack!

His neck was slightly twisted.

If he applied a little more force here, it would snap.

As his life was in danger, Go Chan couldn't move an inch in that state.

"...S- stop. If you don't want the antidote..."

"Ah, about that. It's still a secret from Guard Gam, but... actually, I don't need it."

"What?"

what the was he talking about?

He doesn't need the antidote?

As he wondered what was going on, Mok Gyeong-un smiled and said,

"Since I ate so many poisonous herbs from a young age, I developed a resistance."

"Re- resistance?"

"Well, my stomach would ache when I ate them, but a crude mixture like the one Guard Gam gave me doesn't even faze me."

'Crude mixture?'

Go Chan was dumbfounded.

The poison pill still used by the society[3] was crude?

This was a poison pill with such potent toxicity that even a first-rate internal martial arts master, if affected, would have difficulty detoxifying it even after cultivating qi for half a month.

'Just what is this guy?'

If anyone else had said it, he would have dismissed it as nonsense.

But strangely, it was hard to deny the boy's words.

At that moment, Mok Gyeong-un did something strange.

Chomp!

He suddenly bit his own index finger.

Go Chan didn't know why he was doing that, but the boy suddenly brought his bleeding finger to Go Chan's mouth.

"Wh- what are you trying to d- mmph!"

He couldn't refuse.

Mok Gyeong-un's finger invaded his mouth.

Drops of blood wet his tongue and flowed down his throat.

With an uneasy feeling, he tried not to swallow, but he had no choice because his neck was being gripped.

But not long after swallowing the blood,

"Ugh!"

His chest became hot.

A burning pain suddenly engulfed his body.

Even after Mok Gyeong-un released his grip, the pain was so intense that it felt like his internal organs were twisting.

"Aaaah!"

'Po- poison?'

No matter how he thought about it, this was poison.

Otherwise, there was no way it could cause such pain.

Go Chan hurriedly tried to circulate his qi, but as he tried to sit cross-legged, Mok Gyeong-un kicked his body.

"Oof!"

Thanks to that, he rolled on the floor.

As he was suffering, Mok Gyeong-un crouched down and said,

“There were a few things my grandfather told me not to do. One of them is this. Not only have I developed a resistance from eating many poisonous herbs, but he said my blood also carries toxicity.”

“What?”

“A dog I raised accidentally licked my blood and had a seizure. It was vomiting blood and going crazy.”

“You... you...”

The twisting pain prevented him from speaking.

Regardless, Mok Gyeong-un giggled and looked at him.

Swish!

As he was suffering, Mok Gyeong-un grabbed his chin and lifted it up.

Then, he spoke as if admonishing,

“It’s okay. Grandfather told me how to treat it, and it improved.”

“Aaaaargh!”

Go Chan clutched Mok Gyeong-un’s knees.

Unable to speak, he looked at him imploringly.

Then, Mok Gyeong-un smiled brightly and said,

“From now on, I believe you’ll help me a lot.”