

MYST, MIGHT, MAYHEM

Chapter 6

A pale-faced man in his fifties lay on the sickbed.

He seemed to have difficulty breathing, constantly coughing.

Whenever the old physician by his side wiped his mouth with a cloth, blood of a black color stained it.

“Sigh...”

Seeing this, a sigh escaped the old physician’s lips.

As his condition worsened, the end seemed near.

Despite using all his knowledge and experience to treat him, in his long years as a physician, this was the first time he had encountered such an illness.

‘Is there really nothing that can be done?’

As the personal physician of Yeon Mok Sword Manor, he could envision the situations that would unfold in the future.

There would be bloody conflicts between the brothers.

‘Manor Master, you should have just designated a successor.’

The Manor Master had not chosen a successor.

Because of that, even the clan’s retainers could only watch the current situation helplessly.

In fact, everyone knew the truth.

‘If you liked him that much, you should have made the youngest one your successor.’

The Manor Master had cherished the youngest, Mok Yu-cheon.

His talent was so outstanding that it might appear only once in three generations.

At the age of fourteen, he had mastered the clan's martial arts and reached the level of a first-rate master. Now, at just sixteen, two years later, he had reached the threshold of the pinnacle.

It wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that his overwhelming talent was among the top ten of his generation's prodigies.

Moreover, his personality also resembled the Manor Master's.

'Young Master Mok Yu-cheon.'

If the Manor Master had openly supported him, the retainers would have stepped forward to solidify his position.

Even if he was just the son of a courtesan.

Of course, doing so would incur the wrath of the main wife.

'This is a big problem. A big problem indeed.'

The main wife's affection for her eldest son, Mok Yeong-ho, was unwavering.

Even if he was called a scoundrel, that didn't change.

Because of this, from the second young master to the third young master, they had begun to overtly display their greed.

The moment the Manor Master drew his last breath, Yeon Mok Sword Manor would be stained with the blood of the brothers.

'What will happen in the future? Sigh.'

As a mere physician, he couldn't intervene.

As he was lamenting,

The door to the Manor Master's room opened.

'Who is it?'

The old physician's expression hardened as he turned his head.

A face with wrinkles covered by powder, as white as snow.

Lips dyed red with rouge, adorned with luxurious jewelry and attire.

With upturned eyes and a gaze filled with arrogance, this middle-aged lady was Yeon Mok Sword Manor's main wife, Lady Seok.

The old physician lowered his head.

"M- Madam."

"As expected."

At her question, the old physician nodded with a faint sigh.

"My medical skills are lacking, so there seems to be nothing I can do."

"I see. Indeed, there is no way for him to survive with medicine."

"It is because I am incompetent. I..."

Swish!

Lady Seok waved her hand, indicating she didn't want to hear it.

Then, with a sigh, she said,

"When all the renowned physicians in the vicinity, including you, say they don't even know the name of the illness and that it can't be explained by medicine, calling it a strange phenomenon, there is only one way left."

"Madam!"

At those words, the old physician looked at Lady Seok, his white beard trembling.

Lady Seok then glared coldly at the old physician and said,

"With my husband's life hanging by a thread, are you in a position to be picky?"

"But the art of divination is ultimately just a bizarre method of looking at trivial signs. How can such superstitious..."

"Didn't you say with your own mouth that my husband's illness is no different from a strange phenomenon?"

"That may be so, but..."

"Then why do you oppose using a diviner[1] who deals with strange phenomena? Are you telling me to just wait for my husband to die?"

“That’s not what I meant...”

“I don’t want to hear it. I have already summoned a diviner to the annex, so Physician Ha should stop and leave.”

“Madam!”

“Do you want to be forcibly dragged out?”

At these words, the old physician had no choice but to leave, as if he were being driven out.

It was already a situation where he couldn’t do anything.

The old physician, who had come outside, clicked his tongue as if he were regretful and looked at the main building where the sickbed was located.

‘Bringing in a diviner to treat a strange phenomenon? Sigh. She’s determined to kill a person with a diviner.’

“...This is the current situation of Yeon Mok Sword Manor.”

“What an interesting family this is.”

‘Interesting?’

He just learned about the situation he was in, and that’s what he says?

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

In a sense, it wouldn’t be an exaggeration to say that Mok Gyeong-un was in the most precarious position.

If the fact that he was a fake was discovered, he might be torn apart and killed by the retainers, not just the other young masters.

Yet, despite hearing this, he was exceedingly composed.

‘I have no idea what he’s thinking.’

If he were in Mok Gyeong-un’s position, he would try to escape somehow.

It was a situation with no solution.

Even Guard Gam, the captain, was preparing to abandon this fellow.

In the end, the fellow would inevitably be caught in the middle and eliminated.

‘...Even if you subdued me with poison, there’s nothing you can do in this situation, you bastard.’

For now, he had no choice but to follow along.

However, he had no intention of helping Mok Gyeong-un succeed.

So he had hidden some information.

If the truth was seven parts, he had hidden about three parts related to them.

‘Hah. Just wait and see.’

If he could just detoxify the poison, no matter what, he would reve...

Flinch!

Go Chan, who made eye contact with Mok Gyeong-un, trembled.

Just looking into the boy’s eyes sent chills down his spine.

It was pathetic of him to be intimidated like this, but this fellow was somehow different from ordinary people.

There was something about him that made people fear him.

‘A devilish bastard.’

Yes, that description suited him best.

He still couldn’t forget those ominous eyes.

“Guard Go.”

“Y- yes.”

Go Chan straightened up and replied.

Regardless of his inner thoughts, his instincts told him to unconditionally obey the boy’s words for now.

“So originally, the real Mok Gyeong-un and Guard Gam planned to use me as a substitute and have the eldest young master, Mok Yeong-ho, kill Mok Eun-pyeong, right?”

“...That’s correct.”

That was their initial best course of action.

The plan was called “The Fisherman’s Gain[2].”

They had envisioned a scenario where the eldest young master, Mok Yeong-ho, would backstab the second young master, Mok Eun-pyeong, who would let his guard down thinking the substitute had been killed.

To this end, they had even planted false hopes in Mok Yeong-ho through a courtesan they had recruited.

‘They put quite a bit of thought into it.’

Mok Gyeong-un chuckled.

The plan seemed plausible.

If they had proceeded this way, the main wife, who was the mother of the two young masters, and her maternal family would not have been able to significantly intervene.

Rather, it would have become a disgrace for them.

‘It would have been good, but I became the variable.’

Now he understood why Guard Gam wanted to switch sides.

Guard Gam didn’t trust him.

If he had trusted him or had the confidence to completely control him, he would have slightly modified this best plan and carried it out as is.

But because he distrusted him, he wouldn’t do that.

In the end, Guard Gam’s change of heart and the situation of this family could only work against him in any way.

‘Is there only one conclusion?’

He had to either kill Guard Gam or bring him to his side.

However, both the former and the latter were difficult.

The latter was difficult because Guard Gam had no faith in him, and in the case of the former, unlike Go Chan, Guard Gam was definitely stronger than him.

Therefore, it was difficult to kill him.

“Guard Go.”

“...Yes.”

“How much stronger is Guard Gam compared to you?”

“Compared to me?”

“Yes.”

“...Guard Gam is a first-rate master, so he’s probably two to three times stronger than me.”

Go Chan possessed the skills of a second-rate warrior.

On the other hand, Guard Gam was a first-rate master.

In terms of internal energy, he had almost reached half a cycle (30 years), so numerically speaking, it was more than twice that, but considering his enlightenment and skills, it had to be considered three times.

That was the typical difference between second-rate and first-rate.

“In your opinion, Guard Go, do you think I can kill Guard Gam?”

“What?”

“I mean literally. Do you think I can kill him?”

At this question, Go Chan furrowed his brows.

After learning about the situation of the family, did he make up his mind to kill Guard Gam?

But this fellow still didn’t know that they were trying to switch sides.

Or did he deduce it from the fragmentary information?

Gulp!

If that was the case, his insight was truly remarkable.

What kind of fellow was he?

He was on a different level from the real Mok Gyeong-un in terms of using his brain.

“Is the question difficult? Guard Go, you’ve fought with me too, so you should have a rough idea.”

At Mok Gyeong-un’s words, Go Chan hesitated for a moment before answering.

“E- even if the young master is strong and has good movements, it’s difficult to compare the technical aspects and internal energy of a first-rate master with a novice like me.”

“So in conclusion, I can’t win, right?”

“...Yes.”

“Don’t be so cautious. I think so too.”

“...”

If he knew, then why was he asking?

As he wondered, Mok Gyeong-un changed the question.

“Then if I learn this so-called martial arts, would the odds change a bit?”

“What?”

“What if I learn martial arts?”

At Mok Gyeong-un’s question, Go Chan almost scoffed.

He acknowledged that this fellow was stronger than him, a second-rate warrior.

And he also acknowledged that he was different from ordinary people.

However, learning martial arts was a completely separate issue.

Go Chan managed to control his expression and said,

“...Young Master, the foundation of martial arts is internal energy cultivation.”

“Internal energy cultivation?”

“Yes. Internal energy cultivation refers to circulating the natural energy through breathing techniques, that is, inhalation and exhalation, to gather internal energy within the body.”

“And?”

“As internal energy accumulates, you become stronger and more powerful.”

“It seems to be that way.”

In his life, Mok Gyeong-un had never met anyone stronger than him.

But those who had learned martial arts were different.

“However, this internal energy cannot be accumulated overnight.”

“Are you saying it takes time?”

“Yes. It varies from person to person and depends on the breathing technique, but internal energy is formed and accumulated through long-term cultivation. But even if you learn martial arts, can you catch up to someone who has cultivated for many years in a short period of time?”

‘And you’re already too late.’

There was also an appropriate starting age for internal energy cultivation.

It was suitable to start between the ages of five and nine because, at a younger age, the body is flexible, and impurities have not accumulated in the meridians.

At Mok Gyeong-un’s age, impurities would have already accumulated considerably, narrowing the meridians.

“You’re saying it’s difficult in the short term.”

“Yes.”

‘No. It will be difficult even if you cultivate for a lifetime.’

Go Chan didn’t mention this fact.

He didn’t feel the need to tell him, and even if he did, it would only make Mok Gyeong-un uncomfortable and possibly lead him to harm Go Chan.

‘It’s useless to struggle. Now you understand your situation, right?’

The Manor Master was on the verge of death.

Both Yeon Mok Sword Manor's personal physician and other renowned physicians said it was difficult.

In the first place, it was an illness of unknown cause, to the extent that it was called a strange phenomenon.

If such a Manor Master were to lose his life, no matter how much this fake fellow struggled, it would be the end for him.

'Just wait. When that moment comes, I will repay all this humiliation...'

Thud!

At that moment, Mok Gyeong-un stood up.

Then, gesturing to Go Chan, he said,

"Let's go."

"What? Where?"

Was he trying to escape?

If that was the case, it would be a foolish choice...

"Guide me to where the Manor Master is."

"What? Why do you suddenly want to go where the Manor Master is?"

At those words, Mok Gyeong-un chuckled and said,

"Since my life is tied to the Manor Master's life and death, I want to see for myself how critical his condition is."

'!?'

Chapter 7

We corrected the numbering of chapters from 250 to 270 (there are some errors in it, but the consistency of the chapters is correct, don't worry)

In front of the room where the Manor Master was staying.

Lady Seok, the main wife of Yeon Mok Sword Manor, who had been waiting with a straight posture, looked in the direction of the footsteps ascending the floor.

A middle-aged man with a goatee, wearing a shabby Taoist robe with a yin-yang symbol, carrying a backpack loaded with old books and instruments, appeared.

He was the diviner Lady Seok had summoned.

This diviner, called Myo-sin, was known to be quite skilled in Mengcheng County[1].

Lady Seok scrutinized his appearance from top to bottom with a doubtful face and clicked her tongue softly.

She had an attitude of not caring whether the diviner was offended or not.

Despite her attitude, the diviner showed no particular reaction and instead catered to her mood.

“Can I see the Manor Master now?”

“Yes.”

“That’s fortunate. The longer a strange phenomenon lasts, the worse the situation becomes. Then, please have everyone within thirty steps of the main building where the Manor Master is staying leave. If they are close, they may catch the impurities from the Manor Master.”

“I’ve done just that.”

What good would it be to leave prying eyes around when calling a diviner?

She had already cleared the surroundings with a suitable excuse.

“If Madam could also step back...”

Swish!

At that moment, Lady Seok slightly raised her hand and said,

“You remember the favor I asked of you, right?”

At this, the diviner smiled and replied,

“Of course.”

“Good. Since diviner Myo is said to be so miraculous, I will trust you.”

Then, lowering her voice to a whisper, she continued,

“If you can just find out where the Manor Master’s seal and secret manuals are, I will immediately give you three hundred silver taels as promised.”

“Oh my, thank you.”

Diviner Myo-sin bowed his head repeatedly, expressing his gratitude.

Seeing his behavior, Lady Seok let out a soft sigh.

“Phew.”

In fact, she didn’t have much faith in divination or such things.

It was just that she had changed her mind due to a certain opportunity.

She had called the diviner with a glimmer of hope.

‘...If only you had given your support to that child, none of this would have happened.’

To think of making the son of a mere courtesan the successor.

Resentment filled Lady Seok’s eyes as she looked at the door to the Manor Master’s room.

On the way to the main building of Yeon Mok Sword Manor where the Manor Master was staying.

Walking side by side as a guide, Go Chan glanced at Mok Gyeong-un.

‘What is he thinking?’

It was true that the Manor Master’s life was directly tied to the fellow’s.

But what would he do by seeing the Manor Master in such a state?

‘Could he be thinking of trying to save him?’

That would be even more absurd.

I understand that his knowledge of medicinal herbs is exceptional, but the Manor Master had already been given up on by the clan’s personal physician and all the renowned physicians in the vicinity.

They said it was a strange phenomenon, and the exact symptoms and illness were unknown.

The moment the term “strange phenomenon” was used, it meant there was nothing that could be done.

‘Just what is his ulterior motive?’

He couldn’t read this fellow’s thoughts at all.

‘More than that, isn’t he worried about himself?’

Rather, Go Chan was concerned about something else.

If he unnecessarily stood out and interacted with others, and his identity as a fake was exposed, there might be trouble before he could switch sides with Guard Gam.

At that moment, Mok Gyeong-un looked somewhere and asked,

“What is that place for?”

“That is the martial arts training ground.”

The place Mok Gyeong-un pointed to with his head was the First Training Ground.

In Yeon Mok Sword Manor, there were a total of four training grounds, including the Manor Master’s exclusive training ground.

The Third Training Ground was for the ordinary warriors of the clan, the Second Training Ground was for the retainers to cultivate their martial arts, and the last First Training Ground was exclusively for the young masters.

“A place to cultivate martial arts...”

Interest flickered in Mok Gyeong-un’s eyes.

Seeing this, Go Chan clicked his tongue inwardly.

In a situation where his life and death were uncertain, the desire for martial arts was nothing but a vain delusion.

‘Even if you start learning now, do you think you can catch up to Captain Gam?’

It would be difficult for him to even take his first steps, yet it was honestly amusing that he was already thinking of learning martial arts to kill a first-rate master.

Then, Mok Gyeong-un suddenly called out to him.

“Guard Go.”

“Y- yes.”

“Every time I look at you, Guard Go, I feel like you have eyes that are tempting to play with.”

‘!?’

Go Chan flinched and suddenly stopped in his tracks.

He stiffly turned his head, and Mok Gyeong-un put his arm around his shoulder and said,

“It seems you’re not one of my people yet.”

“Ho- how could that be?”

“You should look ahead, Guard Go. Is someone going to eat you?”

‘...Damn bastard.’

He was genuinely anxious.

Mok Gyeong-un’s eyes were precisely staring at his left eye.

With a lick of his lips, it was as if he was dying to pluck out his eyeball.

Go Chan trembled and took a step forward.

Mok Gyeong-un grinned at him and said,

“It’s a pity. Right?”

‘Wh- what?’

It felt like cold sweat was running down his spine.

The more he got to know this fellow, the more he felt like he had provoked something he shouldn’t have.

Suppressing this uneasy feeling as much as possible, Go Chan walked forward.

‘Ah...’

Then, someone in the training ground caught Go Chan's eye.

In the training ground, there was a boy with a strong impression, his upper body bare.

The boy, with well-developed tan muscles on his upper body, was practicing horse stance while sweating profusely.

'Mok Yu-cheon.'

He was the youngest young master, Mok Yu-cheon.

Despite having innate martial talent, his passion was so great that he invested all his time in martial arts training except for meals and sleep.

It was no wonder the Manor Master favored him.

'He's attached.'

It wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that the First Training Ground was Mok Yu-cheon's exclusive ground.

"Someone is training over there."

At Mok Gyeong-un's remark, Go Chan said in a whisper,

"That's the youngest young master."

"The youngest? Is that Mok Yu-cheon?"

"That's right."

"Is that how martial arts are practiced?"

"He's building leg strength through horse stance. It can be said that the foundation of all martial arts comes from the lower body."

"I see."

"Young Master, it would be better not to stare at the youngest young master. You might get entangled unnecessarily."

"Just by looking?"

Go Chan frowned and looked at him.

He must have read the information sheet Guard Gam had given him.

The real Mok Gyeong-un's martial arts skill was at the third-rate level.

But since he was a fake, if he acted recklessly and clashed with others, his identity as a fake might be exposed.

And there was an even bigger problem.

Go Chan whispered,

"The youngest young master really dislikes the real young master."

"Ah."

Mok Gyeong-un nodded.

On the information sheet written by the real Mok Gyeong-un, it was stated like this:

[I can't stand the sight of that lowly bastard boasting about his martial talent. It's unlikely to happen, but if you happen to run into him, refrain from engaging in conversation.]

He was wary of him to the extent of writing this.

Something must have happened.

"Why does he dislike him?"

After hesitating for a moment, Go Chan whispered into his ear,

"...The real young master disparaged the youngest young master's mother as a vulgar courtesan and got beaten to a pulp."

That was two years ago.

He still remembered.

The sight of the real Mok Gyeong-un crawling on the floor with his leg bones and ribs shattered.

He was begging for his life like crazy.

Because of that incident, the youngest young master, Mok Yu-cheon, genuinely hated Mok Gyeong-un.

"He seems to have a kind heart."

"What?"

“Judging by the fact that he left his limbs intact.”

‘.....’

His brows furrowed.

As expected, this fellow had a different thought process.

Even if he was a fake, it was like talking about himself.

Anyway, now was not the time for this.

“In any case, let’s go quickly. It’s better not to run into the other young masters right now. It could become really dangerous.”

At Go Chan’s urging, Mok Gyeong-un silently chuckled.

It was a truly interesting place.

Seeing the brothers quarreling like this.

And so, they passed the training ground and headed to the main building where the Manor Master was.

Looking at the pavilion leading to the main building, Go Chan frowned.

‘What’s going on?’

Usually, the clan’s guard warriors would be guarding the front of the pavilion at the entrance of the main building.

But there was no one.

Come to think of it, the surroundings were too quiet.

Not a single shadow could be seen.

‘This is troublesome...’

Due to the Manor Master’s worsening condition, even the young masters were not allowed to enter the main building by Lady Seok’s order.

Therefore, he thought they would be stopped anyway and had to turn back, so he guided Mok Gyeong-un without saying anything.

But now, it seemed they would really get to see the Manor Master.

Inside the Manor Master's room.

Around the Manor Master's bed where he lay, a dozen red threads formed a boundary, and silver coins with holes in the center were flowing down between the threads.

Clang clang!

The flowing silver coins made a sound as they collided.

"Hmm."

Diviner Myo-sin, who had removed the Manor Master's top and was looking at his chest, clicked his tongue.

Usually, when called for a strange phenomenon, most of the time, it was unrelated.

So he just had to pretend to perform some divi-ation and pass the time.

But this time was different.

Bulge! Bulge!

Centered on the middle of the Manor Master's chest, black blood vessels bulged out grotesquely.

At a glance, it looked like a symptom of poisoning.

However, the strange thing was that the area was constantly moving.

'It's heading towards the heart.'

The bulging black blood vessels were moving towards the heart, turning the area pale.

But as if blocked by something, they had not reached it yet.

Diviner Myo-sin grinned.

'As expected of a martial artist. His vitality is strong, so the impurities haven't penetrated his heart yet. With such a strong killing intent, that thing should have already taken over.'

The Manor Master was enduring well.

But even that was clearly at a critical point.

Looking at the Manor Master's condition, he had been weakened for a long time after being afflicted by the impurities.

'It's fifty-fifty.'

At this point, even if the impurities were purified, the chances of survival were fifty-fifty.

There was nothing more difficult than simultaneously expelling the impurities and the killing intent.

But now, there was no need for that.

'I just need to do what I was hired for.'

The request was not to save the Manor Master from the strange phenomenon.

It was enough to make the Manor Master spit out where the seal and secret manuals were before he died.

Diviner Myo-sin took out a talisman from his backpack.

Myo-sin, holding the talisman, poured red ink onto the inkstone he had prepared in advance.

Tap tap!

Dipping the brush in the red ink, Myo-sin began to engrave characters on the talisman.

As he drew the strokes,

It took the form of a ghost[2].

Myo-sin chanted something in a small voice.

"The Emperor's Proclamation... bearing the Strength... The othe five directions... why do you not perish?... the flying immortal... ten thousand demons demons' hearts....[3]

"

Tremble tremble tremble!

It was strange.

The end of the talisman trembled on its own.

Myo-sin attached the trembling talisman to the strange phenomenon on the Manor Master's chest, which was constantly moving towards the heart.

Tap!

Right at that moment,

Bulge! Bulge! Bulge!

The black blood vessels began to subside, centered on where the talisman was attached.

Then, diviner Myo-sin formed a hand seal.

Snap!

[Lín (臨)]

Bringing the index fingers of both hands together and tightly interlocking the rest symbolized immovable roots.

[Bīng (兵)]

Supporting the index fingers and spreading the interlocked middle fingers, he brought them together.

At the same time, he began to chant the Mantra of Protecting and Killing.

“皆兵...皆..兵....皆..兵...臨.....皆....臨...兵... “.....”(Some bullshit)

As he chanted the Mantra of Protecting and Killing, the Manor Master's body convulsed.

A faint vapor began to flow out from where the talisman was attached.

[Jiē (皆)]

He interlocked all his fingers.

It symbolized external restraint.

Then, the Manor Master's Adam's apple bulged out.

As if his airway was blocked, the Manor Master's face turned red.

Seeing that, diviner Myo-sin's expression hardened.

'The killing intent is too strong.'

Myo-sin, who had been forming the hand seals, got up from his seat and raised his right hand, forming the vajra mudra on the Manor Master's Adam's apple.

And he continued to chant the Mantra of Protecting and Killing.

“皆兵...皆..兵....皆..兵...臨.....皆....臨...兵...”(Some bullshit)

Before the Mantra of Protecting and Killing could finish,

Creak!

At that moment, the closed door to the Manor Master's room slowly opened.

As a result, the three red threads tied to the door came loose, and silver coins fell to the floor.

Clang clang clang!

'Oh no!'

At that instant,

Bang!

“Ugh!”

With a strong rebound, diviner Myo-sin's body was thrown backward.

The force was so strong that he didn't know how far he would be thrown, but then someone grabbed his back.

Thud!

The startled Myo-sin turned his head.

The one who had caught him was a boy with extremely refined and handsome features.

The boy was none other than Mok Gyeong-un.

Myo-sin, who had been momentarily at a loss for words due to his strikingly good looks, was about to express his annoyance at being interrupted.

“I told you not to let anyone in, so how...!?”

Flinch!

However, Myo-sin couldn't express his anger to the end.

However, diviner Myo-sin couldn't express his anger to the end.

It was because he discovered Mok Gyeong-un's eyes, which were as still as those of a dead person, without a single tremor.

'How can a living human have such eyes?'

Chapter 8

Mok Gyeong-un's pupils, unmoving like those of a dead person.

As it was the first time seeing a living person with such eyes, diviner Myo-sin couldn't take his gaze off those eyes for a moment.

'How can a human have such gho...'

However, he soon came to his senses at someone's voice.

"What? What is this?"

It was Guard Go Chan.

Guard Go Chan, who had guided Mok Gyeong-un, was baffled by the sight of the Manor Master's room, filled with red threads strung with silver coins.

He had found it strange that there was no one around the main building.

But who was this person, and what bizarre act was he performing here?

"Excuse me. Who are you, and here..."

"He doesn't seem to be a physician."

Mok Gyeong-un said, looking around the room.

At this, diviner Myo-sin waved his hands in a hurry and said,

"I don't know who you are, but didn't you receive a message from Madam? This is an important moment, so please leave immediately."

"Madam?"

“It’s a moment that shouldn’t be disturbed.”

It was indeed a truly important moment.

In the midst of controlling the strange phenomenon invading the Manor Master’s heart, the killing intent had interfered due to the interruption.

In this situation, the killing intent would rather make the strange phenomenon even stronger.

“Please leave at once!”

There was no time to waste.

At Myo-sin’s urging, Guard Go Chan frowned and muttered,

“Could he be a diviner?”

“Whew. That’s right. I’m a diviner, so quickly...”

“What’s wrong with him?”

At that moment, Mok Gyeong-un pointed to the bed with his chin and asked.

Diviner Myo-sin turned his head.

“Cough, cough!”

There, someone was coughing with their back arched like a bow.

“M- Manor Master?”

‘Manor Master?’

Mok Gyeong-un made a puzzled expression.

The condition of the Manor Master he saw for the first time was bizarrely strange.

His back was arched, his chest facing upward, and his throat was moving up and down, looking quite painful.

“No. Why is the Manor Master like that?”

“Leave! Hurry up and leave!”

Myo-sin shouted and tried to push Mok Gyeong-un and Go Chan out the door.

Right at that moment,

Gulp!

A loud swallowing sound came from the Manor Master, audible to everyone.

Looking at the Manor Master, his back was still arched like a bow, but the bulging of his throat that had been moving up and down disappeared.

The Manor Master's expression, which had been painful, seemed to ease.

But suddenly, the Manor Master, who had his eyes closed, opened them wide.

“Oh? Manor Master?”

Could it be that the Manor Master had regained consciousness?

Then, Myo-sin let out a small, rough sound.

“shit!”

He hurriedly took out a talisman with the character “壓” (Suppress) written in red from the pouch at his waist and tried to rush towards the Manor Master, who seemed to have awakened.

Then, the Manor Master's head suddenly turned to the side in a strange manner.

Creak!

‘!?’

Go Chan's eyes widened.

The Manor Master's horrifying eyeballs were not just bloodshot but dyed red except for the pupils.

Amidst that, with his back arched and his head turned in such a way, it was even spine-chilling.

At that moment, diviner Myo-sin formed a single-handed seal with his left hand and chanted an incantation.

“皆兵...皆..兵....皆..兵...臨.....皆....臨...兵...”(Some bullshit)

Swish!

The yellow talisman wrapped around Myo-sin's right fingers straightened out stiffly.

With the talisman stretched out like this, Myo-sin tried to attach it to the forehead of the Manor Master, whose head had turned.

However,

“Kaaah!”

The Manor Master let out a strange sound and shouted.

“Ugh!”

As the resounding shout echoed like a roar, Myo-sin staggered and was pushed back.

The shout affected not only him.

Go Chan also momentarily covered his ears due to the pain in his eardrums from the sudden scream.

‘I- Internal energy was infused.’

The Manor Master was a master of internal martial arts, so his internal energy was profound.

Naturally, his scream had to be infused with internal energy, and the vibrations caused pain to those who heard it.

Go Chan, who had been covering his ears, looked at Mok Gyeong-un.

But,

‘This fellow hasn't even cultivated internal energy, yet he's unaffected?’

Mok Gyeong-un was just slightly frowning.

Did he simply endure the pain?

In the moment of bewilderment, the Manor Master, who had shouted, turned his head and straightened his back, trying to get up from the bed.

However,

Bang!

The red threads tied to the Manor Master's wrists and ankles tightened, making him unable to stand properly and leaving him in an awkward posture.

Sizzle!

A faint haze and a pungent smell flowed from where the red threads were tied.

"Kaaaaaah!"

The Manor Master, with his bloodshot eyes, howled like a beast, not a human.

Then, he pulled his right hand with all his might.

At that,

Thud!

The open door was torn off, and the red thread snapped.

"shit!"

diviner Myo-sin, who had been staggering due to the shout, couldn't hide his dismay.

He had firmly secured the red threads, but because they had opened the door and entered, his work was ruined.

Bulge! Bulge!

Black blood vessels bulged on the Manor Master's bloodshot forehead and face.

'To be possessed by a strange phenomenon.'

This is what they call being possessed.

Now that it had come to this, finding out the location of the Manor Master's seal and secret manuals, as requested by Lady Seok, was out of the question.

Clang clang! Snap!

Amidst the dismay, the Manor Master tried to break all the red threads strung with silver coins.

"Ugh!"

It was not a situation to question the request or anything else.

diviner Myo-sin rushed towards the Manor Master once again, trying to attach the talisman to his forehead.

However,

Thwack!

“Ugh!”

With a casual swing of his hand, the Manor Master sent Myo-sin rolling on the floor.

‘Wh- What strength...’

Myo-sin was utterly perplexed.

Those possessed by strange phenomena do become stronger than ordinary people, but this was incomparably different.

He had no strength left to hold down the Manor Master.

Snap!

The red thread tying the Manor Master’s left wrist was about to break.

diviner Myo-sin shouted at Mok Gyeong-un and Go Chan,

“Y- You two, help me. Hold down the Manor Master so he can’t break the threads!”

“Hold him down, you say?”

Although he couldn’t understand the situation, Go Chan could tell that it was serious.

There was no time to think it over in his head.

Go Chan hurriedly rushed towards the Manor Master.

Mok Gyeong-un did the same.

“Is it enough to just hold him?”

“Even if you hold him, never make eye contact, and if you feel your hands getting cold and a chill down your spine while holding him, let go no matter what!”

It was quite an ambiguous piece of advice to hear.

Anyway, if they didn't hold down the Manor Master now, something terrible would happen, so Go Chan didn't ask any more questions and quickly grabbed the Manor Master's freed right arm.

Grab!

He wanted to grab the fixed left hand, but he couldn't bring himself to ask Mok Gyeong-un to do it.

But here, a problem arose.

The Manor Master was said to be weakened, but he was a master of internal martial arts who could not be matched even by Captain Gam.

The strength of such a Manor Master was too much for even Go Chan to handle.

Smack!

He easily shook off Go Chan's hand and instead grabbed his wrist.

"Huh?"

Snap!

The grip of that hand was so strong that it felt like his wrist would break at any moment.

In a panic, Go Chan instinctively tried to twist the Manor Master's wrist using the Grappling Hand technique.

Tap!

At that moment, the strength of the Manor Master's hand gripping his wrist weakened.

"Huh?"

He wondered why, but Myo-sin had already attached the talisman to the Manor Master's forehead.

And forming a hand seal, he chanted an incantation.

"_____!"

Tremble tremble tremble!

As the talisman was attached, the Manor Master's body convulsed.

Taking this opportunity, Go Chan tried to remove the Manor Master's hand gripping his wrist.

But the moment he tried to remove it, the grip strengthened again.

Crack!

Go Chan's wrist was twisted and broken.

The bone pierced through the flesh and protruded out.

"Aaaaargh!"

A scream burst out from Go Chan's mouth.

It was remarkable that he endured it despite the bone not only being broken but also protruding out.

But when the blood oozing from the pierced flesh touched the Manor Master's hand,

Squirm squirm!

The strange phenomenon that had bulged out in black, centered on the heart, began to move to the Manor Master's right arm with a surging momentum.

"Eek!"

As it rushed to the wrist at a tremendous speed, Go Chan was terrified.

Then, Myo-sin chanted the incantation once more with greater force.

"_____!"

At that, the strange phenomenon squirmed and strongly convulsed between the wrist and the elbow, going back and forth.

Guard Go Chan urged, trying to somehow remove the Manor Master's hand.

"P- Please, do something!"

"With the killing intent mixed in, the impurities have become too strong. Just endure a little. If the strange phenomenon spreads, you'll be in danger too."

"No, if you had said that earlier..."

Squirm squirm!

At that moment, the strange phenomenon that had been going back and forth tried to rush to the wrist again.

“Gasp!”

The startled Go Chan tried to twist the Manor Master’s hand that wouldn’t let go of his wrist using the Seizing Hand technique to escape.

Swish! Slice!

At that instant, something unexpected happened.

The Manor Master’s wrist, which had been holding Go Chan’s wrist, was cut off.

‘!?’

The one who had cut off the wrist was none other than Mok Gyeong-un.

In Mok Gyeong-un’s hand was a sharp sword, one of the items hanging on the wall.

Go Chan was utterly perplexed.

Although it had been perilous due to the strange phenomenon, he had never expected the Manor Master’s wrist to be cut off.

diviner Myo-sin felt the same way.

‘Cutting off the Manor Master’s wrist? Just who is this guy?’

The Manor Master was the head of Yeon Mok Sword Manor, yet there was not a moment of hesitation.

Squirm squirm!

As the wrist was cut off, the strange phenomenon that had climbed up to that point tried to move back to the Manor Master’s body.

‘That’s it!’

Another opportunity had arisen.

If the strange phenomenon targeted the heart again, he could control it with talismanic techniques and somehow suppress the rampaging energy along with the killing intent.

However,

Slice!

Just as the strange phenomenon was about to pass the elbow and move towards the shoulder, Mok Gyeong-un suddenly swung the sword and cut off the arm below the shoulder before the strange phenomenon could climb up.

diviner Myo-sin was so surprised that he shouted in shock,

“You! You!”

He wanted to say something, but he was so dumbfounded that he was at a loss for words.

To him, Mok Gyeong-un said nonchalantly,

“Isn’t it better than trying to send it back through the body?”

Thud! Thud!

The black blood vessels in the severed arm of the Manor Master on the floor wriggled and thrashed about like a fish out of water.

On the other hand, the color was gradually returning to the Manor Master’s pale face.

Chapter 9

‘This crazy bastard!’

Guard Go Chan made a disgusted expression.

Not only was it absurd to see the severed arm wriggling like a fish, but this fake Mok Gyeong-un’s unrestrained actions were too much to handle.

No matter how dangerous the Manor Master’s condition was, cutting off a warrior’s right arm without hesitation was utterly fearless.

‘What should I do about this?’

If Lady Seok or the other young masters found out about this, there might be trouble.

Regardless of the reason.

Squeak!

For now, Go Chan tore his own clothes and tightly tied the arm above the severed section of the Manor Master’s arm for hemostasis.

“Phew...”

Seeing the Manor Master’s complexion change, diviner Myo-sin let out a deep sigh.

In fact, this method couldn’t be said to be completely wrong.

If the impurities become unbearable, the method of gathering them in a part of the body and amputating it is sometimes used.

‘...It’s so absurd that a fellow who knows nothing about strange phenomena or impurities made such a judgment.’

It was enough to make one click their tongue.

However, this method is literally a last resort.

When dealing with such a large clan or those with power, it is difficult to handle the aftermath of such extreme measures.

“That was a foolish act.”

diviner Myo-sin clicked his tongue and said.

He wanted to say more, but now, dealing with the aftermath was the priority.

Although the strange phenomenon in the Manor Master’s body had been driven out by concentrating it in the severed arm, it was not yet completely resolved.

Snap!

diviner Myo-sin removed the talisman with the character “压” (Suppress) that he had attached to the Manor Master’s forehead and attached it to the severed arm that was wriggling and jumping on its own.

Then, forming a hand seal, he chanted an incantation.

“_____!”

Bulge! Bulge!

Then, the entire thrashing arm grotesquely bulged with black blood vessels.

It was difficult to look at unless one had a strong stomach.

Even Guard Go Chan turned his head to avoid it, but Mok Gyeong-un stared at the grotesquely transformed severed arm of the Manor Master as if it were interesting.

Sizzle!

The talisman trembled, and the skin it was attached to turned red.

As if affected by it, the areas around the skin where the talisman was attached, which had been bulging out, began to subside.

‘What a pity.’

Diviner Myo-sin clicked his tongue inwardly.

Unlike ordinary strange phenomena, there was killing intent mixed in.

Killing intent was a type of curse.

In other words, it meant that it wasn’t something that happened due to chance, but was intentionally inflicted.

Usually, when killing intent is involved, there are ways to trace back to the culprit.

However, if the strange phenomenon is concentrated in a dead piece of flesh like this, even if the killing intent is reversed, it cannot harm the culprit, let alone find out who it is.

‘This bastard ruined everything.’

That was the reason for his inward sigh.

He thought he should quickly perform a moderate purification, prove that it wasn’t his fault, and hurry to leave this place.

Since he couldn’t obtain what Madam wanted.

Right at that moment,

Swish!

A cold and sharp sensation was felt on the right side of his neck.

Diviner Myo-sin, who had been chanting the incantation, suddenly stopped.

“...What is the meaning of this?”

A sharp blade was pressed against his neck.

The one holding the blade to his neck was none other than Mok Gyeong-un.

“Young Master!”

Even Guard Go Chan was perplexed by Mok Gyeong-un’s sudden outburst.

However, when Mok Gyeong-un put his finger to his lips, signaling him to be quiet, he couldn’t say anything more.

‘what the is this guy thinking?’

As he was bewildered, Mok Gyeong-un parted his lips.

“From what I see, you seem to be called a diviner. Is the Manor Master’s brush with life and death related to this?”

“C- Can’t you see? Your Manor Master has been consumed by a strange phenomenon.”

“What is a strange phenomenon?”

At Mok Gyeong-un’s fundamental question, diviner Myo-sin swallowed his dry saliva.

He had to hurry and perform the exorcism, but he couldn’t understand why he was doing this.

“Young Master... I will explain everything, so please remove the sword. If this is not properly purified, the Manor Master’s condition may worsen again.”

“Are you sure?”

“What?”

“The body part has been separated, yet it can worsen again?”

At Mok Gyeong-un’s question, diviner Myo-sin’s eyes wavered.

Usually, when such a bizarre incident occurs, people tend to trust the words of a diviner, who can be considered an expert.

However, this young fellow was doubting him.

diviner Myo-sin calmly replied,

“Look here. How could I lie when I’m performing divination after receiving money from Madam? At this rate, the Manor Master’s life is in danger...”

Swish!

Before he could finish his sentence, the blade slightly dug into his neck.

Startled, diviner Myo-sin was taken aback.

“Wh- What is this? A- Are you really determined to ruin everything? I don’t know who you are, Young Master, but if the Manor Master dies, it could all be your fault.”

“If the Manor Master passes away, it would be the fault of you who couldn’t properly perform divi-ation despite being paid, so how would it be my fault?”

‘!?’

diviner Myo-sin was momentarily at a loss for words.

Looking at this bastard, who showed no sign of wavering even when he said this, it seemed as if he had no interest in the Manor Master’s life or death.

‘Could it be that, like Madam, he’s not hoping for the Manor Master to live but waiting for him to die?’

That possibility couldn’t be ruled out either.

While performing divi-ation, he had encountered such situations countless times.

The power struggle within the clan.

‘If that’s the case...’

“Don’t think too much and just answer the question.”

Stab!

The blade dug deeper into his neck.

With the fear that his neck could be cut at any moment, diviner Myo-sin hurriedly said in a panic,

“I- If the Young Master also wishes for the Manor Master’s death, I will do as you wish, so please spare my life...”

“Also?”

“What?”

“Who wished for the Manor Master’s death?”

At Mok Gyeong-un's question, diviner Myo-sin's expression hardened.

He had taken a gamble out of fear that his neck would be cut, but it seemed he was wrong.

"Th- That's..."

"Who is it?"

"Y- Young Master, I didn't mean it that way..."

"Is it Madam?"

"..."

diviner Myo-sin was at a loss for words.

He had to make an excuse, but when he was hit right on the mark at once, he couldn't give an immediate answer.

Seeing that, Guard Go Chan couldn't hide his surprise.

He thought the boy had gone crazy when he suddenly put a sword to the diviner's neck, but could it be that he had orchestrated this situation?

Drip drip!

Then, diviner Myo-sin, even sweating cold sweat, opened his mouth.

"Young Master... Madam simply..."

"It would be better not to roll your eyes. In a situation like this, honesty might be the way to survive."

"Y- Young Master..."

"I think I might put more force into my hand."

Swish!

"Eek! M- Madam told me to find out where the secret manuals and the Manor Master's seal are from his mouth, even if I don't have to save the Manor Master's life."

In the end, diviner Myo-sin spilled out what he knew.

He, too, had gone through many trials and had a lot of tricks up his sleeve.

But this fellow seemed like he would really cut off his head on the spot.

“Secret manuals? Manor Master’s seal?”

Mok Gyeong-un asked, looking at Guard Go Chan.

At this, Guard Go Chan was at a loss for what to do.

‘shit. I never thought Madam would do such a bold thing.’

The target they were trying to switch sides to was not Madam and the eldest young master, but the second young master.

But if Mok Gyeong-un hadn’t come here, the eldest young master would have inherited the Manor Master’s position before they could even make a move.

“Guard Go Chan.”

“Y- Yes?”

“Madam ordered it, so what should we do?”

“What?”

Guard Go Chan couldn’t hide his perplexity.

What did he want him to do?

Even if he found out that Madam had done such a thing, there was nothing he could do about it right now.

Rather, by interfering with it, he would only incur Madam’s anger and vigilance.

Go Chan’s mind was in turmoil.

Since the situation had already unfolded and they knew Madam’s secret, there was only one way to improve the situation and survive.

‘shit!’

He never thought he would say this with his own mouth.

“Young Master... We need to save the Manor Master’s life. Otherwise, Madam will target you.”

“Because I interfered, right?”

“That’s right.”

At Go Chan’s answer, diviner Myo-sin hurriedly intervened.

“Y- Young Master. I can save the Manor Master’s life. Since the strange phenomenon has been separated from his body, if we purify the severed arm, he will be safe. I will definitely save him, so please...”

“So you can save him?”

“Yes! So...”

“But I’m more curious about something else.”

“What is it? I will tell you anything.”

“You said the strange phenomenon was threatening the Manor Master’s life, so how were you going to find out what Madam ordered from the Manor Master?”

At that question, diviner Myo-sin was once again at a loss for words.

He didn’t expect to be suddenly asked about the method he was going to use to find out.

He could talk about it, but this had to be heard...

Grab!

At that moment, Mok Gyeong-un grabbed diviner Myo-sin’s neck.

And pressing down hard on his neck, he said,

“Don’t think, and when I ask, I’d like you to answer immediately without any gaps. I don’t think there’s a need to keep unnecessary people alive.”

“...”

“No answer again. As expected...”

“I- I was going to control the strange phenomenon and make the Manor Master speak directly.”

The terrified diviner Myo-sin answered right away.

To him, Mok Gyeong-un smiled brightly and said,

“If you can do it, why are you thinking so hard?”

“P- Please spare my life. If Madam hadn’t ordered it, I would never have done such a thing. I will purify the strange phenomenon right away, so please...”

“No.”

“What?”

To the puzzled diviner Myo-sin, Mok Gyeong-un pointed to the Manor Master and said,

“Try doing what you just said.”

“Wh- What are you...”

To the flustered diviner, Mok Gyeong-un said with the corners of his mouth raised,

“You said you can control the strange phenomenon and obtain what you want from the Manor Master’s mouth, right?”

‘!?’

At Mok Gyeong-un’s unexpected and out-of-the-blue request, the expressions of diviner Myo-sin and Guard Go Chan hardened.

Chapter 10

“Try what you just mentioned earlier.”

“Wh-what are you talking about...?”

“You said you could control the demon and get what you want from the Manor Master’s mouth.”

Diviner Myo-sin was momentarily dumbfounded.

Judging by the atmosphere, he naturally assumed they would tell him to save the Manor Master’s life.

But he never expected these words to spill out.

‘Ha!’

Guard Go Chan was equally speechless.

To avoid making an enemy of the Madam, he thought they would somehow make the diviner save the Manor Master's life. But to think the Madam would make the same request...

Go Chan approached Mok Gyeong-un and whispered,

"Young master, what exactly are you trying to do?"

"You heard him, didn't you?"

"What?"

"We can hear what the Madam wants from the Manor Master's mouth."

At those words, Guard Go Chan frowned and opened his mouth slightly.

That wasn't what he was asking about.

"But young master, what will you do after finding that out?"

In response, Mok Gyeong-un let out a faint sneer.

Instead, he asked back,

"What will you do after finding out?"

Being asked in return, Guard Go Chan was momentarily at a loss for words.

The meaning of this question was simple.

It meant don't comment on or question what he was doing.

'That crazy bastard. what the is he trying to do?'

Is he trying to intercept what the Madam was after?

Troubled, Guard Go Chan tried to say something but soon closed his mouth.

It wasn't like this guy would listen to his opinion anyway.

But he was worried that if things got twisted, some incident might occur.

Regardless of that, Mok Gyeong-un urged the diviner to do it.

"Hurry up and do it."

“...A-alright.”

diviner Myo-sin hesitated for a moment, but there was no other choice.

If he refused here, who knew what this bloodthirsty young master would do to him?

Myo-sin took something out from a boxwood case in the corner.

Smaller than a fist, it was a wooden doll.

Abruptly bringing out a doll carved from wood, Mok Gyeong-un asked suspiciously,

“What are you going to do with that?”

“This wooden doll will serve as the medium.”

“Medium?”

“...If the Manor Master directly comes into contact with the demon again like this, not only his spirit, but even his life may be endangered.”

This was true.

Once a demon or evil spirit separates from the body,

if it comes into contact again, it could lead to a dangerous situation.

For a diviner who knows demons well, it was something that should never be done.

“I see. I understand.”

Mok Gyeong-un’s reaction was utterly indifferent.

Seeing his attitude, diviner Myo-sin clicked his tongue inwardly.

‘These people in this household don’t care at all whether the Manor Master lives or dies. But if this fails, it’ll be a big problem.’

Myo-sin looked at the severed arm of the Manor Master on the floor with tense eyes.

Although the demon was suppressed by the talisman, fundamentally it was an evil born from murder, in other words, a curse.

One small mistake and not only the Manor Master but even the diviner himself could be in danger.

'shit.'

Swallowing dry saliva, Myo-sin took out a talisman.

And stuck it to his own chest.

[Seven Stars Talisman]

On the talisman were three sevens (七), then another three inside a boundary, and another three inside that.

Seven Stars Talisman.

This talisman offers the protection of the Seven Stars.

It was to prevent any curses from accidentally rebounding onto himself while performing divi-ation techniques.

-Shk shk!

He took out another talisman and wrote on it with red ink.

(代), (通).

Along with mysterious symbols, those characters were written.

With a tense expression, Myo-sin attached the talisman with “代” written on it to the wooden doll, then wrapped red thread around its head several times.

“It may be dangerous, so please step back.”

At first, nothing changed.

But when Myo-sin directed the hand making seals towards the Manor Master,

-Tremble tremble!

Strangely, the Manor Master's body began to convulse.

In that state, Myo-sin slowly directed the hand seals towards the wooden doll.

Then,

-Wooooo!

The characters “dae” written on the talisman attached to the wooden doll darkened and began emitting an uncanny energy.

It felt as if the wooden doll was Moving.

‘Gives me the creeps.’

Watching this, Guard Go Chan frowned.

He had experienced all sorts of things, but matters related to demons and divi-ation techniques were utterly unpleasant.

What the ... was he trying to do?

He watched nervously to see what would unfold.

-Tak!

diviner Myo-sin gripped the wooden doll and carefully moved it towards the arm that was consumed by the demon.

Then he placed the wooden doll right in front of the arm.

At that, the Manor Master’s severed arm that had the “suppress” talisman attached began to react.

Although suppressed by the talisman, the blood vessels wriggled as if about to bulge out like before.

Right then,

-Pak!

Myo-sin removed the talisman with “suppress” written on it.

The moment he did, blood vessels hideously bulged out from the Manor Master’s severed right arm and moved as if alive, gripping the wooden doll.

-Kwak!

“Ugh!”

The instant it gripped the wooden doll, a groan escaped from the Manor Master’s mouth.

“Eh?”

It was a bizarre occurrence.

To think the Manor Master would react when the wooden doll was grabbed...

-Kwaaaak!

“Eughhhh...”

As strength entered the hand gripping the wooden doll, the Manor Master let out an agonized groan as if in pain.

‘I-isn’t this going to be a big problem?’

Guard Go Chan glanced at Mok Gyeong-un.

However, Mok Gyeong-un was expressionlessly observing this without taking his eyes off it.

It was amazing how he could remain unfazed even seeing something like this.

-Sss...

Just then, the sinister something in the Manor Master’s severed right arm flowed into the wooden doll it was gripping.

‘It worked.’

diviner Myo-sin, who had been chanting the incantation, had a look of relief.

Fortunately, the demon accepted the medium as the Manor Master.

This was a kind of deception.

If the demon did not accept the wooden doll as the Manor Master, it would have gone berserk and caused an incident.

But luckily, the trick worked.

However,

-Crack! Crack!

Small cracks appeared in the wooden doll that the demon had completely transferred into.

‘!?’

Seeing this, diviner Myo-sin's eyes wavered.

The wooden doll was made of refined birch wood and was very sturdy.

But for cracks to appear as soon as the demon entered...

'...The killing intent is too strong.'

Myo-sin gulped down dry saliva.

Although it was interrupted midway, it had possessed a body and some of its power should have weakened during the exorcism process.

But that assumption was completely off the mark.

'This is...'

Come to think of it, it made sense.

It wasn't an ordinary person, but a demon that possessed a martial artist who cultivated ki, threatening even his life.

Its level was different from typical evil spirits.

'It's dangerous.'

In an instant, diviner Myo-sin's lips went dry.

This demon with strong killing intent didn't seem like something that could be controlled.

If he tried to forcefully do so here, the wooden doll might shatter and the suppressed demon could be released.

"Young master, I don't think..."

Diviner Myo-sin couldn't finish his words.

Because his eyes met Mok Gyeong-un's.

-Flinch!

No matter how he thought about it, it was uncanny.

How could a living human have such eyes like a dead person?

Just looking at them sent shivers down his spine.

-Shk!

Just then, Mok Gyeong-un was seen fiddling with a sharp blade.

Seeing this, Myo-sin closed his mouth.

This crazy young master probably wouldn't believe his words unless he saw it with his own eyes.

No, anyone would be the same.

'Ah!'

At that moment, an ingenious idea flashed through diviner Myo-sin's mind.

He felt regretful for not thinking of this sooner, as it was practically a lifeline in this situation.

Myo-sin spoke,

"Young master, I will control the demon. But it seems quite important, so is it alright if that person also hears it?"

The one Myo-sin pointed to with a nod was none other than Guard Go Chan.

"What? Ah..."

For a moment, Go Chan, who wondered what he meant, understood.

What they were trying to hear from the Manor Master's mouth right now was the location of the secret martial arts manual and the Manor Master's seal.

So he was asking if it was okay for a subordinate to hear it as well.

"I will step out for a moment."

Although not truly a subordinate, Go Chan thought it was better to tactfully avoid displeasing Mok Gyeong-un.

Mok Gyeong-un also seemed to think the same, as he lightly nodded his head.

-Creak!

As Go Chan obediently went out the door, Myo-sin chanted the Roaming Incantation again.

-Tremble tremble!

“Eughhhhhh!”

The wooden doll shook violently and a pained groan flowed from the Manor Master’s mouth.

-Crack!

Another crack appeared in the wooden doll.

It still couldn’t endure it.

Myo-sin knew this but paid no heed and made the Tiger Hand Seal with one hand, saying,

“Hurry as I command, answer the call!”

“Ugh... W-who... c-calls... m-me...?”

A hoarse voice flowed from the Manor Master’s mouth.

The way the voice echoed was as if it came from the nothing.

-Crack!

A line cracked in the chest of the wooden doll.

Watching this, beads of sweat formed on Myo-sin’s forehead.

“Hurry as I command, answer the question!”

“Wh-what... a-are... y-you... s-saying...?”

“Hurry as I command. Answer where the Manor Master’s secret manual and seal are located!”

-Tremble tremble!

As soon as that question was asked, convulsions occurred in the Manor Master’s head, just like the wooden doll.

Shaking violently, his eyelids moved uncontrollably.

-Crack! Crack!

Along with that, cracks appeared in the eyes and neck of the wooden doll.

It seemed like it would shatter at any moment.

Right then, the Manor Master opened his mouth.

“Medicinal... Hall... Underground... (T, jeong)... stone... door... inside...”

‘Medicinal Hall... underground (T, jeong)... stone door?’

That was clearly what he heard.

He was about to continue saying something.

-Kwajik!

At that moment, the wooden doll crumpled and shattered into a grotesque shape.

Then the turbulent, eerie something tried to flow along the red thread towards the connected Manor Master.

Myo-sin hastily shouted,

“Young master! You must cut the thread!”

‘Thread?’

He immediately realized something had gone wrong when the wooden doll shattered.

Mok Gyeong-un hurriedly swung his sword down towards the thread along which the turbulent something flowed.

-Snip!

The turbulent, eerie something lost its way as the thread was exquisitely cut.

‘Did it work?’

Just as he thought it was blocked,

-Wooooo!

The turbulent something rapidly climbed up the sword with tremendous speed.

Realizing this, Mok Gyeong-un tried to let go of the sword hilt.

But unlike the red thread that was tied in a long, complex maze, the length of the sword was woefully short.

-Pak!

A chilling sensation flowed in through his hand.

That sensation rapidly penetrated into his body through his arm.

Mok Gyeong-un's body shook as if struck by lightning.

'It worked!'

Seeing this, the corners of diviner Myo-sin's mouth curled up.

It went as intended.

The wooden doll couldn't endure that killing intent-filled demon from the start.

So he had predicted that it would eventually be released from the suppression during the Six People Roaming Technique.

Thus, Myo-sin deliberately made the demon transfer to Mok Gyeong-un.

And it succeeded.

-Pak!

Diviner Myo-sin took out a talisman with "suppress" written on it from his bosom and attached it to the convulsing Mok Gyeong-un's forehead.

'Killing two birds with one stone.'

The Manor Master's mouth roughly revealed the location of the secret manual and seal.

And he even passed the demon to this bastard.

Demons also have a will, so they learn.

Since it experienced the exorcism technique and even endured the Six People Roaming Technique, there was no longer any way to remove the demon through divination techniques.

'It's unfortunate, but it happened because you pressured me.'

If the demon was forcibly removed, the possessed person could lose their life or become disabled.

But either way, it didn't matter.

As long as he completed the Madam's request, that was enough for him.

The scene before his eyes turned white.

Jeong looked around.

The sound of water trickling and birds chirping could be heard simultaneously.

This spring, which gave a refreshing feeling, was the place he always went to fetch water with every morning.

'What is it?'

It felt like something had happened just before.

But he couldn't remember what it was.

It seemed like he had a momentary dream or had spaced out for a bit.

'It's bothering me.'

It felt like he was forgetting something, but he couldn't recall it.

After pondering while sitting on a rock, Jeong eventually stood up.

Then he shouldered the water frame he had put down.

'I need to hurry.'

If he's late, his grandfather will nag him.

Jeong ran up the steep mountain path with the water frame on his back.

This mountain path he ran on every day was so familiar he could traverse it with his eyes closed.

-Splash splash!

The water in the water containers hanging on the frame sloshed.

Nevertheless, not a single drop of water spilled out.

Following his grandfather's nagging to never let the water overflow, at some point, he became able to carry it without spilling a single drop.

Like that, Jeong ran.

After running for a while, as he was about to reach the mountain top,

'!?'

Jeong frowned.

Black smoke was visible there.

The place where the smoke was rising from was where his house was located.

Seeing this, Jeong threw down the water frame and ran like crazy towards that place.

Soon, he arrived there.

-Crackle crackle!

The scorching heat reached him.

The house was burning fiercely.

Jeong's face stiffened terribly.

Hurriedly looking around, Jeong ran to the back of the burning house.

There was a small vegetable garden in the backyard.

It was because medicinal herbs that could be cultivated were grown directly.

Usually, his grandfather would wake up early in the morning and pick herbs from the garden.

'Please... please...'

Jeong, who ran to the garden, stopped in his tracks.

Through his eyes that widened as if about to burst, he saw something stained with blood.

Things that should have been inside the body were strewn across the vegetable garden.

-Grit!

Jeong gritted his teeth.

And he followed the trail of blood and pieces.

Looking down the hill, Jeong shouted,

“Grandfather!”

His grandfather was there.

The sight of his grandfather with only his upper body remaining, the lower half torn away, was utterly horrible.

Even in that state, his grandfather’s face could be seen, barely clinging to life, struggling to lift his head.

The moment he saw that, it felt like his sanity would fly away.

Someone was standing next to him.

It was a being with black eyes devoid of whites and a pale face.

Jeong could not recognize him at all.

‘Is that what you desire most?’

Jeong’s pain could be felt.

The black-eyed being who was looking at him like that snapped his fingers.

-Tak!

At that moment, a bizarre thing happened.

Jeong, who had been enraged, couldn’t hide his bewilderment.

‘What the... what is this?’

The image of his grandfather at the bottom of the hill disappeared without a trace.

Turning his head, wondering where he had disappeared to, the house that had been burning was standing there as usual, as if nothing had happened.

Moreover, the vegetable garden that had been a mess was intact.

In that garden, his grandfather could be seen picking herbs while rubbing his back.

“Grandfather?”

Then his grandfather turned his head and said,

“If you’re here, why are you just standing there blankly instead of helping?”

The moment he heard his grandfather’s voice like that, his heart swelled with emotion.

He didn’t know what had happened just now, but he realized how precious his grandfather was.

He would never lose his grandfather again.

Because he was the only reason he, who should have died, was able to live on.

Someone with black eyes was watching Jeong from behind like this.

He couldn’t hide his satisfaction.

‘Yes. Stay with your grandfather forever. Never lose what’s precious to you again...’

Right then.

Jeong, who had been trembling with overwhelming emotion, suddenly whipped his head around.

‘!?’

The black-eyed being frowned.

Jeong was staring straight at him with baleful eyes like a dead person.

That shouldn’t have been possible.

That bastard absolutely couldn’t recognize him...

-Puk!

At that moment, Jeong’s two fingers dug into the black eyes.

‘Aaaaargh!’

Jeong’s fingers gouged and plucked out his eyeballs.

The black-eyed being, whose eyes were abruptly torn out, writhed in agony.

To him, Jeong spoke in a chilling voice,

“I don’t know what you are, but you’re quite annoying. To play tricks using my deceased grandfather...”
