

Mayhem 401

Chapter 401 – Ritual of Three Veins (1)

The Heaven and Earth Society Leader stood with his hands behind his back in front of a wide window.

The sickly appearance that had always been accompanied by constant coughing was nowhere to be seen.

Vice-Leader Mong Seo-cheon's expression was indescribably strange as he looked at the Society Leader's backlit silhouette.

"....."

Just half an hour ago, he had thought there was no hope left, given the unanimous diagnosis of the physicians.

The Society Leader had been ill for many long years.

Was such a great master who had dominated an entire generation and gained such renown to die so feebly from illness?

He had been feeling depressed at this thought, but then a reversal occurred.

Vice-Leader Mong Seo-cheon, summoned to the Society Leader's quarters in the main compound, was shocked.

The interior of the main compound, stained with blood, was being cleaned up by the Second Guard Corps, and the area around the Society Leader's quarters was full of fallen corpses.

The ones cleaning up those corpses were the First Guard Corps.

They were the closest aides, each personally selected by the Society Leader, known to have never strayed more than twenty jang from him.

What on earth had happened while he was away?

When he opened the door and entered the quarters, Vice-Leader Mong Seo-cheon was astounded.

[My lord?]

The Society Leader, who had been gasping for breath and seemingly about to pass away at any moment, was standing perfectly fine.

And in his hand was a sword, stained with the blood of the elders who had invaded his quarters.

He still couldn't forget that sight.

To think he would see again the Society Leader's sharp and imposing gaze that he had long forgotten.

Could this really be the same Lord who had been a step away from death?

To him, filled with surprise and questions, the Society Leader spoke matter-of-factly in a businesslike tone:

[Two from the First Guard Corps, eleven from the Second Guard Corps, eight from the Third Guard Corps... The rest are all from the Elder Council.]

Surely the numbers he just mentioned weren't...

[...Are you saying they were all enemies, no, spies?]

[As you can see.]

[My lord, how did you know whether they were spies or not...]

[They took the bait I had prepared with the net I've been setting up. They're all spies.]

[.....]

At his confident voice, Vice-Leader Mong Seo-cheon felt a chill run down his spine for a moment.

He spoke as if it hadn't been long, but he had truly spent a long time suffering from illness.

But looking at his current state, that long illness was clearly a lie.

How else could he have recovered in such a short time if it wasn't a lie?

'...How ruthless.'

It would be considered remarkable to deceive for just a few months, but he had shown the appearance of suffering from illness for nearly ten years or more without leaving his quarters.

He had even deceived him, his closest aide who had served him since his youth.

He was at a loss for words at the realization that he had waited for this moment for a long time with incredible determination and endurance, trusting no one.

More than feeling hurt that he had kept this secret even from him, he was simply amazed at why he had gone to such lengths to catch these people.

'Just who are these people?'

He had momentarily lost focus due to the surprise of the Society Leader's good health, but these people were also a mystery.

The main compound's guard corps is composed of only the most trustworthy individuals, and even the Elder Council can only be entered after retirement by those who have long devoted themselves to the association.

So how could there be spies in such guard corps and Elder Council?

[Who on earth would do such a thing to the guard corps and Elder Council?]

It was something that even the Righteous Alliance's spies couldn't do.

To him in his bewilderment, the Society Leader said something hard to understand:

[...It's Him.]

[Him?]

What on earth does that mean?

Was there someone the Society Leader would refer to as "Him"?

As he was puzzled, the Society Leader gave an order:

[Set off the Red Flares.]

[By Red Flares, do you mean to call for an emergency assembly?]

[Now is the perfect time to settle everything, when they have bared their fangs towards this seat and the association. Call them all in.]

Following his order, he had set off the Red Flares.

Nearly 70% of the personnel in the inner city had gathered, and the rest were still coming.

What was the Society Leader's true intention?

There was no reason to call everyone together like this after rooting out the hidden spies, it didn't make sense to go this far.

Rather, with so many people gathered, it would be difficult to do anything.

What exactly did he mean by perfect timing?

Unless there was something special to announce, such an assembly in this unsettled situation after large-scale spies were discovered in the Elder Council... Wait...

'Announce? Is he going to make an announcement?'

What on earth is the Society Leader trying to announce?

Is it to let everyone know he's in good health?

Given the situation, it was difficult to guess the Society Leader's true intentions.

But then,

"It's the Earth Vein!"

“The Earth Vein has returned to the association!”

At the cheers heard from outside, Vice-Leader Mong Seo-cheon’s eyes widened.

‘!?’

What is this?

The Earth Vein has returned to Heaven and Earth Society?

Why have they, who should be guarding the North, come to the association?

Unlike other sects, in the case of the Earth Vein, it was virtually impossible for them to return to the association without a special reason.

For them to re-enter the association, they needed only the Society Leader’s permission.

Which means,

‘Did the Society Leader call them?’

-Rumble!

A group wearing red fox fur cloaks entered the center of Heaven and Earth Society’s square as if in a victory procession.

They were the Earth Vein, one of the two pillars forming the foundation of Heaven and Earth Society.

“The Earth Vein? Why the Earth Vein?”

Mo Yak, Young Master Na Yul-ryang’s right-hand, frowned as she looked at them.

Even if they were a foundation, how did they, who had been driven out to the North long ago after being pushed from the center of power, return here?

Na Yul-ryang was no less puzzled.

‘Head of the Yang family...’

The tall, sharp-featured middle-aged man standing proudly with his arms crossed at the front of the group was Yang Jeong, the head of the Earth Vein.

He had seen him once when he attended the association’s grand meeting as a child.

At that time, Na Yul-ryang had only been learning martial arts for a few years, so he couldn’t gauge Yang Jeong’s martial prowess.

However, since they had long been pushed back by the Heaven Vein and forced to guard the North, he hadn’t thought they would be particularly strong.

But Na Yul-ryang’s eyes gleamed.

This was because Yang Jeong’s martial prowess was difficult to gauge.

The fact that he couldn’t sense his qi meant he was either equal to or above himself, who had reached the pinnacle-stage of the Transformation Realm.

‘.....’

How could someone this strong remain unknown?

With such martial prowess, it wouldn't be an exaggeration to say he was on par with the Five Kings who had received the title of Eight Stars among the executives.

Eldest Young Master Na Yul-ryang's eyes narrowed with suspicion.

Although the Society Leader's authority was great, someone of such extraordinary strength wasn't the type to be unconditionally suppressed.

Moreover, hadn't the Society Leader been known to be suffering from illness for many years?

It seemed plausible that they could have aimed for a reversal.

Despite this, for the leader of the Earth Vein and the Earth Vein itself, who had been so quiet until now, to appear coincidentally at this point...

[Didn't you know? The Society Leader has no intention of passing on his position to any disciple, including the Eldest Young Master.]

Suddenly, Na Yul-ryang recalled those words spoken by Yul-myeong, the messenger from the Elder Council.

As he recalled those words, strangely, the scattered pieces of the puzzle began to fit together.

The Elder Council, which began to move saying the Society Leader's condition had worsened.

The Society Leader revealing himself in good health, not dying, while simultaneously purging the Elder Council.

And the appearance of the Earth Vein along with the emergency assembly.

-Clench!

Blood flowed from Na Yul-ryang's clenched fist, such was the force he applied.

It wasn't just underestimation.

All along, he and everyone else had been dancing in the palm of the Master's hand.

Rather than his mind becoming complicated, it felt as if it was emptying.

This feeling was a first for him.

'Ha... Hah.'

What a truly strange day.

He had thought himself emotionless, but he seemed to be feeling multiple emotions simultaneously.

It was at that moment, as he was sinking emotionally,

-Hear me!

A voice that resonated like an echo.

The voice imbued with spiritual energy made everyone's ears ring.

Exclamations flowed from here and there at the Society Leader's profound spiritual energy.

This alone announced that not just his appearance, but everything about him was in good health.

-During my illness, I learned that malicious individuals were hiding within our association.

At these words from the Society Leader, the square stirred.

Then, are those being displayed on spear tips the malicious individuals the Society Leader spoke of?

The Society Leader continued his words.

-Look carefully at those being displayed. Do you recognize who they are?

At this question from the Society Leader, everyone's gaze turned to the displayed heads.

While there were unfamiliar faces, they were individuals belonging to the Elder Council, and among those who had received the position of elder were some with thick reputations.

Therefore, for the people of the association gathered there, the sight of those displayed was quite shocking.

-I endured for a long time to root out these individuals. And finally, when rumors spread that my condition had reached its worst, they revealed their hidden fangs.

-Clench!

-Drip!

Blood from Na Yul-ryang's fist dripped onto the ground.

Where had it gone wrong?

Although the Society Leader didn't mention it directly, looking at those being displayed, anyone could guess that the Elder Council was at the center of this turmoil.

At the point where they had failed and been purged, Na Yul-ryang was in a situation akin to being surrounded on all sides.

Although he hadn't fully trusted the Elder Council, the fact remained that he had continued to contact them and received help.

Using this as a pretext, he too could be purged.

This was why a considerable number of the forces following him now had tense expressions.

At this point, Mo Yak wrapped Na Yul-ryang's bleeding fist with cloth and spoke in a small voice:

"Young Master, be confident."

"....."

"The purge of the Elder Council might provide justification to strike at us, but there are too many who follow you for that."

It was nearly half of the forces.

They supported Young Master Na Yul-ryang as the next successor and were actually working together.

At this point, if they tried to deal with Na Yul-ryang and all of these people by linking them with the Elder Council, the situation would grow uncontrollably into internal strife.

“...That’s why he prepared it.”

“Pardon?”

“The Earth Vein, I mean.”

At these words from Na Yul-ryang, Mo Yak frowned and denied:

“Surely not. No matter what, how could he... not from among the disciples, but...”

“Because they’re the only ones qualified to be Society Leader outside of the Heaven Vein’s bloodline or disciples.”

“What do you mean? Then the Society Leader calling the Earth Vein was... Ah!”

Mo Yak’s eyes widened.

If the Society Leader were to pass the right of succession to the leader of the Earth Vein or their clan, Eldest Young Master Na Yul-ryang and his fellow disciples would be put in a disadvantageous position.

This means he had predicted and prepared for this situation from the beginning.

Mo Yak couldn’t help but click her tongue.

Just how many steps ahead had he planned this?

‘...This is the worst.’

If the Society Leader, not deteriorated from illness but in such good health, directly announces passing on the right of succession, he can completely change this situation given time.

Those who support are just that, supporters, but if the Society Leader is in good health, the situation is different.

Gradually, support will shift towards the successor chosen by the Society Leader.

If that happens, there was only one way to overturn this.

At that moment, the Society Leader continued speaking.

-The reason I gathered everyone today is not just to announce the rooting out of malicious groups. One is to announce that I am still in good health, and...

Everyone’s attention focused.

-The other is to announce my successor, a position I have long left vacant.

At these words, murmurs began to spread here and there.

They had predicted the exclusion of Young Master Na Yul-ryang’s right of succession due to his contact with the purged Elder Council.

But with the sudden announcement of naming a successor, the atmosphere couldn’t help but stir.

At their reaction, the corners of Yang Jeong’s mouth, the head of the Earth Vein, twitched.

He had been waiting for this moment through an agreement with the current Lord.

[Since the founding of our association, the Heaven Vein has always held power, but that's not fair.]

[Then you mean to give the Earth Vein a chance as well?]

[Yes.]

An unexpected proposal.

He couldn't refuse such a tempting offer.

There was something the current Lord had demanded along with the proposal.

[But I can't just give you the chance.]

[What do you want?]

[It's simple, but difficult.]

[What do you mean by simple but difficult?]

[It's...]

To build the strongest single force that no other group could match, away from the association's influence and eyes.

And martial prowess befitting the position of Lord.

Yang Jeong, head of the Earth Vein, had prepared everything he demanded, grinding his teeth in determination in the North.

Now, he prided himself that the power of the Earth Vein was at its peak in history.

Now that he had finished those preparations and returned gloriously to the association, it was time for the Society Leader to keep his promise.

As if responding to these expectations, the Society Leader continued speaking:

-I and the successive heads of the Heaven Vein have fulfilled our responsibilities as Society Leader of Heaven and Earth Society for a long time since the Convergence Ceremony, but that doesn't fit with the ritual of the Three Veins, which forms the foundation of our association.

The ritual of the Three Veins.

Although now only the Heaven Vein and Earth Vein remain, it means that all three foundational veins should have the opportunity to become Society Leader.

-So now I intend to give that opportunity to veins other than my own.

No sooner had these words from the Society Leader ended than Yang Jeong, head of the Earth Vein, spoke loudly as if he had been waiting, infusing his voice with spiritual energy:

-We are grateful that the Society Leader respects the ritual of the Three Veins, which can be said to be the foundation of our association, and gives our Earth Vein this opportunity.

-Murmur murmur!

"Then does this mean he's giving the right of succession to the Earth Vein, not to the Young Masters?"

“It seems so, doesn’t it?”

“Was this the reason the Earth Vein returned to the association?”

“Ha! What’s going on?”

The old sects knew this well.

However, all sects that had mentioned the ritual of the Three Veins without following the Heaven Vein had been purged or pushed to the outer city or branches, despite their contributions to founding the association.

The current Society Leader had practically declared that he would revive this ritual of the Three Veins, which had been all but abolished.

‘So it was like this after all.’

Eldest Young Master Na Yul-ryang’s eyes were tinged with disappointment.

Perhaps they had never been in Master’s consideration from the beginning.

But then why had he taken them as disciples?

Was it just to continue the martial arts of the Heaven Vein?

Whatever the reason, thanks to this, it seems he’s learned the emotion of disappointment for the first time.

-Clench!

Yes.

If that's Master's true intention, it seems I no longer need to have any lingering attachment.

Sitting still and being spoon-fed wasn't his style anyway.

And Master had made one mistake.

Although he needed justification, if he intended to give the Earth Vein a chance through the ritual of the Three Veins, he too had room to exploit this.

He too had the qualification to compete with the Earth Vein's successor as one who inherited the martial arts of the Heaven Vein.

This was the only loophole and his way out.

At this, Na Yul-ryang opened his mouth to declare that he too would participate in the ritual of the Three Veins as part of the Heaven Vein.

"Heav..."

But it was right then.

"Master!"

Na Yul-ryang frowned at the familiar voice.

'Jang Neung-ak?'

It was the voice of Jang Neung-ak, the second disciple.

His appearance caused a stir here and there.

At the point where the Society Leader had announced he would conduct the ritual of the Three Veins and Yang Jeong, the leader of the Earth Vein, had accepted this, stepping forward here was tantamount to declaring intention to participate in the ritual.

Seeing this, Young Master Na Yul-ryang couldn't help but sneer.

'How dare someone like you step forward?'

He couldn't distinguish between when to step in and when not to.

Of course, it's not incomprehensible.

He must have stepped forward thinking his position was shaken due to the Elder Council purge.

But it's too much for someone of his caliber.

Even Master would make him step down due to his inadequacy if he says he's stepping forward for the ritual of the Three Veins.

But then Jang Neung-ak opened his mouth as if to declare his intention to participate.

"If it's the ritual of the Three Veins, doesn't the Moon Vein also have a chance?"

'!?'

At these words, sneers erupted from the forces following Young Master Na Yul-ryang and even the Earth Vein.

“Pfft.”

“The Moon Vein? Ha!”

They had thought he would say he was participating in the ritual of the Three Veins, but it was absurd that he suddenly mentioned the long-lost Moon Vein.

Yang Jeong, head of the Earth Vein, opened his mouth with a similarly sneering face.

“Young Master Jang. Of course, as it’s the ritual of the Three Veins, the Moon Vein would have a chance too, but their vein was cut off long ago. Yet to mention such a Moon Vein in this place...”

“They’re here!”

At that moment, Jang Neung-ak interrupted his words.

At this, one of Yang Jeong’s eyebrows shot up.

No matter that he was the Society Leader’s disciple, to not only interrupt the words of himself, the head of the Earth Vein, one of the Three Veins, but also to utter such absurd words in a place like this?

“Sigh. Young Master, it’s not right to carelessly say words you can’t take responsibility for...”

“The successor of the Moon Vein has come here!”

‘!?’

What? The successor of the Moon Vein?

What on earth is he saying?

It was a puzzling moment.

From the crowd that wasn't Young Master Na Yul-ryang's or the Earth Vein's forces, a path opened in two directions and someone revealed themselves.

'Mok Gyeong-un?'

Chapter 402 – Ritual of Three Veins (2)

Jang Neung-ak, the second disciple of the Society Leader, shouted loudly.

"The successor of the Moon Vein has arrived!"

No sooner had that cry ended.

From the crowd that wasn't part of the Earth Vein's faction or Young Master Na Yul-ryang's group, a path opened up in two directions, revealing someone's appearance.

Everyone's gaze turned there at once.

"Who's that?"

"Isn't he the disciple the Shadow Clan Master took in?"

"I'm pretty sure that guy was originally a hostage from the Orthodox Sect..."

There was a stir here and there at Mok Gyeong-un's sudden appearance.

It was a moment no one had expected.

“H-How?”

Mo Yak, who was beside Young Master Na Yul-ryang, couldn't hide her bewilderment.

What's going on here?

Didn't Yul-myeong, the messenger from the Elder Council, boast that he would bring all the forces he could muster to deal with Mok Gyeong-un?

But how did that guy get here?

Moreover, judging by his attire and appearance, there's not even a trace of injury.

Could it be?

‘No way?’

Even if he had crossed the Wall of Walls, how could he face such forces without a single scratch?

Mo Yak looked up at Na Yul-ryang beside her and said,

“Young Mas... Huh?”

She was suddenly at a loss for words.

Although she had seen Na Yul-ryang in an unpleasant state quite a few times before, this was the first time she had seen his face so hardened.

Na Yul-ryang's gaze towards Mok Gyeong-un was filled with complex emotions.

As she had guessed, Na Yul-ryang was inwardly displeased that Mok Gyeong-un had appeared here safely.

But there was something that irritated him even more than that.

'Moon Vein?'

What's this talk about the Moon Vein?

Wasn't the Moon Vein he knew an extinct clan from a hundred years ago, with even their remaining secret techniques cursed, causing countless deaths to anyone who touched them, making it an irretrievable clan?

So why did that Jang Neung-ak just introduce Mok Gyeong-un as the successor of the Moon Vein?

'What's your intention?'

Despite his quick judgment and deep insight, he couldn't understand this situation at all.

That Mok Gyeong-un guy, though strong, wasn't supposed to be the main character here.

His role was supposed to be helping either the second disciple Jang Neung-ak or the youngest Wi So-yeon to become a succession candidate by surpassing himself.

But now that Jang Neung-ak guy was doing the opposite.

Could he really mean to say that Mok Gyeong-un guy is the successor of the Moon Vein?

“The Moon Vein?”

Yang Jeong, the head of the Earth Vein, frowned.

This was something that hadn’t been discussed at all with the Society Leader beforehand.

No, wasn’t the Moon Vein already a lost vein from long ago, and thus out of the question?

‘He’s beautiful.’

Despite being a man, he had a truly beautiful face.

His face was so beautiful that he could pass for a woman if well-dressed, but what’s this talk about this young junior brother being the successor of the Moon Vein?

He knew that among the Society Leader’s disciples, Jang Neung-ak was skilled in strategies.

But he couldn’t understand the intention at all.

It would be one thing if he stepped forward to participate in the Ritual of the Three Veins as a successor to the Heaven Vein’s martial arts, but why is he inserting a third person as the successor of the lost Moon Vein?

‘Society Leader.’

Eventually, Yang Jeong, the head of the Earth Vein, looked up at the Society Leader with a gaze that showed he couldn’t understand.

Is this situation also part of your plan?

Or is it an unexpected development that even you didn't anticipate?

'.....'

At that moment, Yang Jeong's eyes narrowed.

This was because while there was a stir here and there at the mention of the Moon Vein's successor, the Society Leader showed no particular change in expression.

Seeing his reaction, it was as if he had somewhat predicted this situation.

'Did you know about this?'

Of course, that wasn't exactly the case.

Even the Society Leader's eyes glinted at the sight of Mok Gyeong-un stepping forward as the successor of the Moon Vein.

However, unlike others, he wasn't greatly surprised because he had known from the beginning that Mok Gyeong-un, the hostage from the Orthodox Sect, had inherited the Moon Vein's martial arts, and it was he who had prevented this information from being disclosed.

'How coincidental.'

But now he revealed himself.

And of all times, just as the Ritual of the Three Veins was about to take place.

At this, the Society Leader clicked his tongue.

Perhaps it was a predetermined course of events.

“Society Leader.”

At that moment, Vice Society Leader Mong So-cheon approached and, pointing at Mok Gyeong-un who had appeared among the crowd with a troubled look, said,

“What should we do? I don’t know how he found out about this, but it seems Young Master Jang Neung-ak acted on his own. For now, should we stop him from...”

“Leave him be.”

“Pardon?”

“The will imbued with the spirit is unlikely to miss this good opportunity.”

‘The will imbued with the spirit?’

What does this mean now?

Is he saying this because that child Mok Gyeong-un has mastered the cursed secret techniques of the Moon Vein that no one has been able to learn until now?

As he was puzzled by the Society Leader’s incomprehensible words.

At that moment, Young Master Na Yul-ryang’s voice resonated through the plaza in front of the main platform.

“I, Na Yul-ryang, who has inherited the martial arts of the Heaven Vein, wish to participate in the Ritual of the Three Veins.”

The crowd couldn't help but admire his resounding voice.

They say Young Master Na Yul-ryang's martial prowess is comparable even to the Eight Stars among the Five Kings, and indeed, it was well-deserved.

Na Yul-ryang, who had indirectly revealed his level by infusing his voice with internal energy, made a fist-and-palm salute to Yang Jeong, the head of the Earth Vein.

This was clearly showing his will to perform the Ritual of the Three Veins.

‘As expected of the Young Master. Yes, that's how it should be.’

Yang Jeong, the head of the Earth Vein, returned the fist-and-palm salute.

From when he had discussed with the Society Leader beforehand, he had guessed that Young Master Na Yul-ryang wouldn't easily give up his right of succession.

If so, this was rather good.

It was much more beneficial for him, even in terms of justification, to have the potential successor participate in the Ritual of the Three Veins of his own accord, rather than the Society Leader simply handing over the right of succession.

However, on the other hand,

“While I acknowledge the participation of Young Master Na Yul-ryang of the Heaven Vein, could that young junior brother over there convince me on what grounds he claims to be the successor of the Moon Vein?”

At this question, Mok Gyeong-un quietly moved his hand to the scabbard of the demonic sword Evil Commandment Sword at his waist.

As he grasped the scabbard, Mok Gyeong-un said through voice transmission.

-Finally. The time has come.

-Yes. Disciple.

The voice of Cheong-ryeong trembled in response.

She had been waiting only for this moment.

A hundred years ago, she lost everything she had to Bi Yeong-hon, the head of the Heaven Vein, and became a vengeful spirit.

As the first and last leader of the Heaven-Earth Moon Society, she intended to reclaim her lost honor and everything else.

And now was the beginning of that.

-Shing!

Mok Gyeong-un drew the demonic sword Evil Commandment Sword.

-Wooooooooo!

As soon as he drew the sword, Evil Commandment Sword's unique demonic cry erupted, making the spectators' spines tingle for no reason.

“Is that the demonic sword Evil Commandment Sword?”

“The energy flowing from the sword is truly sinister.”

“Even so, it’s a famous sword. The sword energy emanating from it is extraordinary.”

The sword masters renowned in the Heaven and Earth Society showed interest as they looked at the demonic sword Evil Commandment Sword.

As sword masters, there was no one who wouldn’t be captivated by a sword made by the greatest craftsman, Ou Yezi, even if it was a demonic sword.

-Swish!

Mok Gyeong-un immediately took a sword stance.

Then he slowly traced an orbit with his sword.

Everyone who saw that orbit was reminded of a full moon hanging in the night sky.

The orbit was so clean that some of those watching couldn’t help but gape.

Especially the sword masters with high martial prowess.

They couldn’t help but exclaim in admiration the moment they saw this orbit that Mok Gyeong-un was slowly tracing.

It was such a simple orbit, but it was perfect to the point where no gaps or spaces could be seen.

‘As expected.....’

Even Cheong-ryeong couldn’t help but admire as she watched this.

Even when she first showed Mok Gyeong-un the sword techniques of the Moon Vein, he had internalized them at a glance.

However, that was just simple movements.

Mok Gyeong-un’s sword techniques of the Moon Vein, as he properly displayed them, not just basic forms but actual techniques, had already far surpassed her own.

Rather, she was grateful that they had become even more perfect in Mok Gyeong-un’s hands.

-Whoosh!

Exclamations flowed from here and there at Mok Gyeong-un’s subsequent sword movements.

“This can’t be.”

“How can sword movements be this beautiful?”

“These sword movements.....”

Those who were watching in admiration soon couldn’t hide their surprise as well.

This was because they could tell that the sword techniques Mok Gyeong-un was displaying, while similar to the sword techniques of the Heaven Vein, were clearly different in essence.

‘.....It’s undoubtedly the sword techniques of the Moon Vein.’

Even Yang Jeong, the head of the Earth Vein, had to admit this inwardly.

The Three Veins, derived from one root, had a structure where their techniques might be similar in basic forms even if their essence was different, but the sword techniques that Mok Gyeong-un was now displaying were so imaginative that even those seeing them for the first time were reminded of the moon.

At this,

“Enough!”

Yang Jeong, the head of the Earth Vein, shouted for him to stop.

Mok Gyeong-un, who was in the middle of displaying half of his sword movements, stopped and looked at him.

Then Yang Jeong made a fist-and-palm salute and said,

“There’s no need to deny it, you have undoubtedly inherited the martial arts of the Moon Vein. I, Yang Jeong, acknowledge you as the successor of the Moon Vein.”

-Murmur murmur!

The surroundings stirred at this proclamation.

Although he had been accepted as a disciple of the Shadow Clan Master, there were still many in the Society who regarded Mok Gyeong-un merely as a hostage from the Orthodox Sect.

They couldn’t help but be surprised that he was now acknowledged as the successor of the Moon Vein, one of the Three Veins, by the Earth Vein.

Amidst this, an aide of Yang Jeong, the head of the Earth Vein, whispered,

“Even if you acknowledge him as the Moon Vein, why did you stop him? Head.”

“What’s the point in defeating an opponent who has shown all their cards before even performing the Ritual of the Three Veins?”

“Head, even so.....”

“Enough. It’s only meaningful to defeat an opponent at their best.”

This was the reason why Yang Jeong, the head of the Earth Vein, had stopped Mok Gyeong-un in the middle of displaying his sword movements.

It wasn’t out of disrespect or hasty acknowledgment.

He simply wanted equal conditions to the point where words couldn’t describe it.

Seeing this, Mo Yak let out a sigh.

‘I had hoped the head of the Earth Vein wouldn’t acknowledge him.’

Now there was no other choice.

Or rather, the fact that the Society Leader, who had first suggested giving other Veins a chance by proposing the Ritual of the Three Veins, remained silent at Mok Gyeong-un’s appearance might mean he had known about this all along.

-Clench!

Mo Yak bit her lip hard and looked at Young Master Na Yul-ryang.

Before Mok Gyeong-un appeared, the only hope was to participate in the Ritual of the Three Veins and overcome the head of the Earth Vein.

But now the situation had turned for the worst.

No matter how much she supported her lord Na Yul-ryang, having experienced Mok Gyeong-un's monstrous martial prowess, she couldn't dare predict his victory.

However,

-Clench!

She could see Young Master Na Yul-ryang's fist tightening.

Moreover, his eyes were still full of fighting spirit.

Seeing this, Mo Yak felt ashamed for a moment.

Her lord hadn't given up, yet she was about to advise him to withdraw, thinking it was a fight without hope.

If so, there was only one thing she should do.

It was to create a situation even slightly advantageous for Na Yul-ryang.

"Please wait a moment!"

Mo Yak stepped forward and shouted.

At this, everyone's attention turned to her.

Some people from Na Yul-ryang's faction who had thought she was a man were startled to see her with her hair down and her chest exposed.

Regardless, she paid no attention to this and shouted,

"Although the Society Leader suggested giving other Veins a chance through the Ritual of the Three Veins, this is still absurd no matter how you look at it."

"Absurd?"

One of Yang Jeong's eyebrows raised.

He had acknowledged him as the successor of the Moon Vein, but who was this woman to interfere like this?

At this, Yang Jeong spoke in a cold voice.

"This is not a matter for a young lady like you to interfere with."

"I apologize for disturbing your mood. However, even if we are to perform the Ritual of the Three Veins, I believe one should meet at least the minimum qualifications."

"Minimum qualifications? What are you talking about? Beyond this....."

"The Ritual of the Three Veins is not simply to discuss martial arts. This is the place to decide the leader of our Society. How can one lead the Society if it's decided simply based on superior martial arts?"

“So what are you trying to say?”

“Even if he has inherited the martial arts of the Moon Vein, unlike Head Yang Jeong who leads the Earth Vein or Young Master Na Yul-ryang whom I serve from the Heaven Vein, he was originally a hostage from the Orthodox Sect.”

“.....”

At these words, even Yang Jeong fell silent, as if his enthusiasm had cooled.

Mo Yak, not missing this opportunity, continued her speech.

“Of course, one of the Three Society Leaders, the Shadow Clan Master, has accepted him as a disciple, but if someone who was originally a hostage from the Orthodox Sect, without any proper foundation in our Society, participates in the Ritual of the Three Veins just because he inherited the Moon Vein, and by any chance becomes the successor, who would properly follow him?”

-Murmur murmur!

There was a stir here and there at Mo Yak’s words.

This was because many agreed with her words.

Regardless of inheriting the Moon Vein or his martial prowess, Mok Gyeong-un was an outsider and had been brought in as a hostage.

How could such a person have the foundation to lead the Heaven and Earth Society?

‘Good.’

As the reaction gradually spread, she inwardly rejoiced.

If it were only about martial prowess, Mok Gyeong-un would be the most advantageous, but leading an organization wasn't a matter that could be solved with that alone.

'I need to push this firmly.'

She had to use this opportunity to prevent Mok Gyeong-un from participating in the Ritual of the Three Veins.

It was right at that moment.

"Heh heh heh. How interesting to say that this old man's disciple lacks a foundation."

'!?'

At the voice infused with internal energy, everyone's gaze turned somewhere.

There stood a middle-aged man who appeared to be in his late forties, with his hands behind his back.

The moment they saw him, everyone couldn't hide their surprise.

There was one person whose recent transformation beyond the Wall had spread throughout the entire Society.

It was none other than Baek Sa-ha, the Annihilating Poison King.

Chapter 403 – Ritual of Three Veins (3)

"Heh heh heh. How interesting to say that this old man's disciple lacks a foundation."

The surrounding area buzzed with commotion at these words from the Annihilating Poison King Baek Sa-ha.

-Murmur murmur!

“Did the Annihilating Poison King just call him his disciple?”

“He certainly did.”

“No way. What’s going on?”

It was understandable, given that even when Shadow Clan Master, one of the Three Clan Masters who could be considered a high-ranking executive, took Mok Gyeong-un, a hostage from the righteous faction, as a disciple, it caused considerable controversy.

But the Annihilating Poison King was one of the Five Kings, considered the greatest fighting force in the Heaven and Earth Society.

For him to step forward and officially call Mok Gyeong-un his disciple at what was essentially an official emergency gathering was tantamount to a public announcement.

‘So he’s finally revealing it.’

Mo Yak clicked her tongue inwardly.

In fact, she knew that the Annihilating Poison King had some kind of relationship with Mok Gyeong-un, as the Young Master Na Yul-ryang had mentioned something after regaining consciousness from his injury.

However, she had assumed that the reason for not making this public was out of consideration for Mok Gyeong-un’s background.

She didn't expect him to step forward at such a crucial moment.

-Goooo!

The Annihilating Poison King Baek Sa-ha revealed his characteristic aura as he opened his mouth.

"If the foundation is the problem, our Baek family is willing to provide any support necessary. No one can disregard my disciple."

The surrounding murmurs fell silent all at once in the face of his aura.

It was only natural that the average members would be overwhelmed, as the influence of the Baek family, a sect specializing in poisons, was counted among the top five within the Heaven and Earth Society.

However, Mo Yak didn't show much reaction to this.

'It's fine.'

This much had already been anticipated.

Although the addition of the Annihilating Poison King's Baek family's power to the Shadow Clan couldn't be ignored, public opinion against allowing Mok Gyeong-un, a hostage from the righteous faction, to participate in the Ritual of the Three Veins was still stronger with just these two factions supporting him.

Moreover, since the forces supporting Young Master Na Yul-ryang and the Head of the Earth Vein were still overwhelmingly dominant, if they could just push the negative public opinion a little more...

But it was at that moment.

“Oh my, oh my... Seems like you’ve already forgotten.”

-Swish!

Jang Neung-ak, the second disciple of the Society Leader, stepped forward elegantly, unfurling his fan.

All eyes turned to him.

Come to think of it, he was the one who had first introduced Mok Gyeong-un as the successor of the Moon Vein.

‘What trick are you trying to pull?’

Mo Yak had been curious about his intentions, wondering why he suddenly put Mok Gyeong-un, who had inherited the martial arts of the Moon Vein, into this situation, especially since Na Yul-ryang was already aiming for the Society Leader position despite his lack of ability.

Was his goal to disperse the factions as much as possible?

No, if that were the case, it would only disperse his own faction, so what was he up to?

-Zzzzt!

At that moment, Young Master Na Yul-ryang, who had been glaring at Jang Neung-ak, frowned and brought his hand to his right eye.

What’s this?

Despite not uncovering his eye patch to open his Demon Eye, he felt a strange discomfort that made his eye twitch.

Puzzled by this, Na Yul-ryang glared at his second senior disciple, Jang Neung-ak, with sharpened eyes.

‘...Could it be?’

Just then, unexpected words spilled from the mouth of the second young master, Jang Neung-ak.

“I, Jang Neung-ak, though the second disciple of the Society Leader, have been moved by the character and martial prowess of Mok Gyeong-un, the successor of the Moon Vein present here, and have decided to serve him.”

‘!!!!!!’

The plaza erupted into commotion once again at this sudden declaration.

Everyone had assumed that Jang Neung-ak, known for his capricious nature and skill in strategy, had some ulterior motive for bringing Mok Gyeong-un, who had inherited the Moon Vein’s martial arts, into the picture.

But this was a completely unexpected development, leaving everyone shocked.

“What? How could the Second Young Master...?”

“Serve a mere hostage from the righteous faction as his lord?”

“My goodness.”

The impact was tremendous.

This wasn’t just anyone, but one of the Society Leader’s disciples.

Jang Neung-ak had been one of the most likely succession candidates after Young Master Na Yul-ryang. For him to publicly support someone other than his own senior disciple naturally caused confusion.

Moreover,

The advanced disciples of the Five Mountains Alliance, which Jang Neung-ak led, gathered around him.

They were Ko Yeon-hu, the Grand Leader of the First Mountain's Hegemon Group; Seo Hye-in, the Leader of the Fourth Mountain's Rising Mist Group; and Jeo Mo-pal of the Fifth Mountain's Giant Rock Fist.

Although two of them, Wi Maeng-cheon of the Second Mountain and Ho Jong-hyeok of the Third Mountain and leader of the Indestructible Group, had lost their lives, their forces remained intact with him.

Naturally, this led to the question,

"Wait, doesn't this mean that the Guardian Clan Master, father of Grand Leader Ko Yeon-hu, is also supporting this?"

Ko Yeon-byeok, one of the Three Clan Masters known as the Guardian Clan Master.

He was a master of the Fist, known as the Iron-Blooded Man, and was responsible for guarding the outer castle of the Heaven and Earth Society.

-Clench!

Mo Yak bit her lip hard.

She never expected the Second Young Master Jang Neung-ak, of all people, to come out like this.

She hadn't anticipated at all that he, who had never hidden his desire to become the Society Leader, would give up on this ambition.

This was even more surprising given his alliance with Wi So-yeon, but what kind of bolt from the blue was this?

It was as if the entire force of the Second Young Master Jang Neung-ak had been added to Mok Gyeong-un's side.

'Wait... Could it be?'

Mo Yak hurriedly looked around, searching for Wi So-yeon, the youngest disciple of the Society Leader.

Recently, she had managed to kill Ho Jong-hyeok, the son of the Axe-Breaking King, through a scheme, leaving traces of the Bright Sun Sword Technique, the secret martial art of the Bright Blade King Son Yun, to break their alliance.

However, since she hadn't yet confirmed whether they had noticed the scheme and were just putting on a show or not, she was looking for Wi So-yeon with a sense of dread.

If by any chance Wi So-yeon's faction also unexpectedly supported Mok Gyeong-un, it would be tantamount to nearly half of the forces joining him.

However,

'She's not here.'

Wi So-yeon was nowhere to be seen.

Even Son Yun, the Bright Blade King who supported her, and his disciples were absent.

Gi Ok-ryeon, Wi So-yeon's confidant, also seemed to be missing.

Coincidentally, Gi Ok-ryeon's father, the Sun Rock Valley Master, was away from the association due to a mission.

'Did they succeed in the Elder Hall?'

Come to think of it, they had said they would secure Wi So-yeon in the Elder Hall.

Perhaps that's why Wi So-yeon wasn't showing up despite the emergency gathering.

In any case, it was fortunate that she didn't appear and unnecessarily show her support.

Moreover,

-Swoosh!

Mo Yak turned her head to look at one of the female executives standing behind Na Yul-ryang.

She was Hang Yeo-ryang, one of the Four Valley Masters known as the Sound Valley Master.

Originally, Hang Yeo-ryang had publicly supported the Second Young Master Jang Neung-ak.

This was due to her friction with the Bright Blade King Son Yun, who supported Wi So-yeon, the youngest disciple.

However, when Jang Neung-ak and Wi So-yeon formed an alliance, Mo Yak had managed to wedge herself between them and successfully bring the Sound Valley Master Hang Yeo-ryang under their wing.

‘It was good that we recruited her even though the Young Master didn’t approve.’

The Sound Valley Master was such an unpredictable character that everyone in the association was wary of her.

However, her power was not something that could be easily ignored.

‘We still have the upper hand.’

She had to admit it.

That guy’s caliber was not one to be under someone else, leaving aside orthodox and unrighteous factions.

But it’s not like this side had been sitting idle either.

There was a hidden card that even the Elder Hall hadn’t noticed until the end.

She had intended not to reveal this in case of emergencies, but given how the situation had turned out, to clearly dominate in terms of power...

-Thud!

At that moment, someone approached, setting down a large axe on the ground.

It was Ho Tae-gang, one of the Five Kings and one of only two people in the Heaven and Earth Society to receive the title of Eight Stars.

Everyone was momentarily speechless at his appearance, covered entirely in blood.

Nevertheless, he approached Mok Gyeong-un without any hesitation, knelt on one knee, placed a hand on his chest, and paid his respects.

-Murmur murmur!

The society members were once again astounded by this sight.

Although the Second Young Master Jang Neung-ak had said he would support Mok Gyeong-un, seeing this beast-like man, who had received the title of Eight Stars and was known for his strong pride, kneeling down was truly shocking.

But it didn't end there.

-Rumble rumble rumble!

At that moment, another group began to arrive from the entrance of the plaza.

The one leading them was none other than,

“The Corpse Blood Valley Master?”

The figure walking in with a demon mask and red robes fluttering was indeed the Corpse Blood Valley Master, Lee Ji-yeom.

Having been stationed furthest outside the outer castle, he had only just arrived.

Despite being a founding contributor, he had been pushed away from power, but he still commanded considerable forces, making his sect an unfortunate one that had been pushed out and almost confined outside the outer castle.

Thanks to this emergency gathering, he had entered the inner castle after a long time.

But as soon as he reached the center of the plaza,

-Thud!

“Corpse Blood Valley Master Lee Ji-yeom pays respects to his lord, Young Master Mok Gyeong-un.”

‘!!!!!!’

Everyone was not just surprised but utterly bewildered at the sight of Lee Ji-yeom kneeling before Mok Gyeong-un.

This was true even for Vice Leader Mong Seo-cheon, who was watching from the top of the main platform.

“No. What is this...?”

He was already surprised by the number of forces supporting Mok Gyeong-un, but he never expected even the Corpse Blood Valley Master to follow him, let alone the Destruction King Ho Tae-gang, one of the Eight Stars.

Even the Society Leader seemed quite surprised by Mok Gyeong-un’s support base exceeding expectations, his eyes gleaming with interest.

‘The Corpse Blood Valley Master... Ah. So that’s why.’

They were forces that had supported the Moon Vein long ago.

Because of that, they had been pushed out beyond the outer castle despite being founding contributors.

If that child was indeed the will of the specter as he had predicted, it wasn't incomprehensible that the Corpse Blood Valley Master Lee Ji-yeom would follow him like this.

However,

'The word "impressive" is no longer sufficient.'

In just half a year, and considering the time spent on confidential missions, the actual period of his presence wasn't that long, yet he had managed to make so many follow him.

It was truly astonishing that his qualities as a leader were to this extent.

'Was that why?'

The Society Leader's gaze became enigmatic.

-Clench!

Mo Yak's lips were bleeding from how hard she was biting them.

She had tried to manipulate public opinion to prevent Mok Gyeong-un from participating in the Ritual of the Three Veins by emphasizing his background as a hostage from the righteous faction.

However, it had already reached a point where that was no longer possible.

The forces supporting Mok Gyeong-un had already surpassed half of those within the Heaven and Earth Society.

'Damn it.'

Even if she revealed her hidden card, there was no way to overturn the supporting forces and prevent Mok Gyeong-un's participation.

Her eyes welled up with tears of frustration.

She had wanted to use her intellect to somehow create a stepping stone for Na Yul-ryang to become the Society Leader, but now it seemed that plan was crumbling, leaving her utterly devastated.

-Pat!

Someone placed a hand on her shoulder.

"This is enough."

It was Na Yul-ryang.

"Young Master..."

"Mo Yak, you have more than fulfilled your role as my Zhang Liang."

Zhang Liang.

He was the strategist of Emperor Gaozu of Han.

Despite his high praise, tears streamed down her face as she felt she had ultimately failed to be of help.

Removing his hand from her shoulder, Young Master Na Yul-ryang walked into the empty center of the plaza with determined eyes and spoke loudly.

“Now that the Heaven Vein, Earth Vein, and Moon Vein have all come forward, what is there to hesitate about? Let us proceed with the Ritual of the Three Veins.”

At his words, Yang Jeong, the head of the Earth Vein, also stepped forward.

“This is what we’ve been waiting for. Now, let’s see which of the Earth Vein, Heaven Vein, or Moon Vein is most suitable to be the leader of this association through the Ritual of the Three Veins!”

Unlike his spirited and boisterous voice filled with fighting spirit, Yang Jeong’s expression wasn’t as bright as before.

This was because the successor of the Moon Vein, revived after a hundred years, had more supporting forces than expected.

No matter how much he had raised the power of the Earth Vein to its peak, it was inevitable to feel psychologically intimidated when faced with so many followers.

However, he soon erased these distracting thoughts from his mind.

What mattered in the end was the Ritual of the Three Veins.

Regardless of the number of supporting forces, the one who achieved final victory here would become the next master of the association.

-Step step step!

At that moment, Mok Gyeong-un walked towards the center of the plaza where they were standing.

Perhaps because it seemed that the Ritual of the Three Veins to determine the next successor of the association was finally beginning, the atmosphere became increasingly charged.

As he walked forward, Mok Gyeong-un spoke.

“Now that I’ve announced the revival of the Moon Vein in front of everyone, I’ve achieved my primary objective.”

“Primary objective... Hmph!”

Young Master Na Yul-ryang snorted at those words.

He was determined to settle things here and now, fighting to the death given how things had turned out.

Even if Mok Gyeong-un possessed overwhelming skills, it was still uncertain since he hadn’t opened his Demon Eye yet.

But then,

“The entertainment ends now.”

“What?”

-Tap!

Mok Gyeong-un, having reached the center, stood arrogantly with his hands behind his back and then opened his mouth, his voice infused with qi, as if intending for everyone to hear.

“I proclaim to all.”

His voice echoed like thunder.

The qi in his voice was so strong that those with weak internal energy covered their ears in pain.

But Mok Gyeong-un's next words shocked everyone in the plaza.

"The Heaven and Earth Society will disappear by my hand, by Heavenly Demon's, today."

'!!!!!!'

Chapter 404 – Heavenly Demon (1)

[If Cheong-ryeong wants, shall we rebuild the Heaven-Earth Moon Society?]

[Heaven-Earth Moon Society.....]

[Yes, what do you think?]

[Hmph, I refuse.]

[You're quite resolute.]

[There's no need to consider this one with such things.]

[Does it seem like consideration?]

[You want to resolve my grudge. There's no need to go to such lengths for the dead.]

[.....Is that really true?]

[.....]

[The revival of the Moon Vein. The extinction of the Heaven and Earth Society. Is that the end? Will that fulfill everything Cheong-ryeong desires?]

At Mok Gyeong-un's question, Cheong-ryeong stared blankly at the red sunset with a strange look in her eyes.

Then she turned her gaze to stare directly at Mok Gyeong-un.

After looking at him like that, Cheong-ryeong opened her mouth.

[.....You asked if I have no wishes? Then you fulfill them.]

[Me?]

[Yes.]

[Then, the Moon Vein again.....]

[There's no need to be bound by names. What's important is the will contained within. And you have inherited the Moon Vein and already surpassed this one.]

[.....]

[Long ago, this one wanted to become a great master leading a new world and the founder of a new society.]

Though buried in deep resentment, that was once a wish she had wanted to fulfill.

Cheong-ryeong stood up, her back to the sunset, and said with a radiant smile.

[If you fulfill that, I might be pleased.]

[Become a great master who embraces all.]

Cheong-ryeong's wish.

It was no longer just her wish.

"I proclaim to all."

A strong voice that resonated like an echo.

The internal energy infused in it was so strong that those with weak inner power covered their ears in pain.

"The Heaven and Earth Society will disappear by my hand, by Heavenly Demon's, today."

'!!!!!!'

Everyone's faces became shocked.

All the people of the Heaven and Earth Society, who thought the Ritual of the Three Veins would soon take place, were so surprised they almost doubted their own ears.

However, they soon came to their senses.

This was because of the title that shocked them even more than the declaration against the Heaven and Earth Society.

“Heavenly Demon?”

“Did he just say Heavenly Demon?”

The plaza stirred more than ever before.

There was a being who was causing a storm in the martial arts world of the Central Plains with his reputation.

A being who single-handedly destroyed the Shaolin’s One Hundred and Eight Arhat Formation with just one step, and subjugated and sealed off the Tang Family of Sichuan, one of the Seven Great Families called a pillar of the Righteous Alliance.

And recently, new rumors had begun to circulate.

The rumor that even the Spiritual Sword Sanctuary, called the holy land of swordsmanship, had submitted to this being was spreading quickly.

Although the latter rumor hadn’t spread widely yet, the upper-level sects had vaguely heard of it.

Jonggak, one of the Three Clan Masters who had joined urgently after engaging in a fierce battle at Young Master Na Yul-ryang’s estate, muttered in a trembling voice.

“The Seventh Heaven.....”

The Heavenly Demon of the Seven Heavens.

The martial arts world of the Central Plains recognized him as the Seventh Heaven and a great master.

But now, is this person claiming to be that being with such an enormous reputation?

Everyone was stirring, but their expressions showed they couldn't believe it.

'Heavenly Demon?'

Even the forces under Mok Gyeong-un, who could be considered allies, were equally surprised by this.

The Shadow Clan Master was no longer surprised by anything since the moment he declared Mok Gyeong-un to be the avatar of the Holy Fire, but it wasn't the same for Baek Sa-ha, the Annihilating Poison King, and Ho Tae-gang, the Axe-Destroying King, who were among the Five Kings.

From their perspective, they couldn't help but be surprised by this truth they naturally didn't know.

'That child is the Heavenly Demon?'

'Heavenly Demon? The one who subjugated the One Hundred and Eight Arhat Formation in one step.....'

Not only the Heaven and Earth Society, but even they, who had their own reputation in the martial arts world, couldn't maintain their composure in the face of the title of Heavenly Demon.

'Good heavens! Master is that... that Heavenly Demon?'

Even Go Chan, the guard possessing the body of Jang Neung-ak, the second disciple of the Heaven and Earth Society Leader, was so surprised that his mouth gaped open and he couldn't close it.

He too had heard the rumors, given his position as a disciple of the Society Leader.

'How can this be.....'

He couldn't help but be more shocked than others.

When they first met, Mok Gyeong-un hadn't learned any martial arts at all – well, he was extraordinary as a person, but he had no martial arts skills.

He had come to know that Mok Gyeong-un had tremendous talent in martial arts while watching him closely, but even so, how could something like this happen?

'Half a year..... It's only been half a year.'

To receive the title of Heaven, considered the pinnacle, after learning martial arts for just half a year.

This must be unprecedented throughout the history of the martial arts world.

Go Chan, who had watched his entire growth process, couldn't help but be seized by trembling.

At that moment, someone shouted with a voice like a lion's roar.

"You dare! How dare you point your blade at the Heaven and Earth Society!"

The protagonist of that shout was none other than Yang Jeong, the head of the Earth Vein.

Like everyone else, he had been momentarily shocked into silence by the title of Heavenly Demon, but soon he couldn't suppress his rising anger along with his doubts.

Whether or not this guy was really the Heavenly Demon, he had bared his hidden fangs towards the Heaven and Earth Society just before the important Ritual of the Three Veins.

This was absolutely unforgivable, regardless of whether he was a descendant of the Moon Vein or not.

-Ching!

Yang Jeong, drawing his treasured sword, the Earth Force Sword, pointed its tip at Mok Gyeong-un and shouted.

“I’ll ask once more. Are you declaring war on our Society now?”

The crowd held their breath as they watched his outcry.

Then Mok Gyeong-un spoke in a dry voice.

“It’s not a declaration of war, but what will happen from now on.”

‘!?’

The atmosphere rapidly chilled at Mok Gyeong-un’s words, which were beyond arrogant and bordered on madness.

Who would have thought he would show such boldness in the heart of the Great Heaven and Earth Society, which divides the martial arts world into three parts, even after learning his identity and being surprised?

-Woong!

A blue sword energy rose from Yang Jeong’s treasured sword, the Earth Force Sword.

Along with it, his revealed aura even caused a pressure of internal energy in the surroundings.

As Yang Jeong revealed his pent-up energy like this, exclamations flowed from here and there.

Even the executives who had predicted to some extent how strong he had become were amazed, as Yang Jeong's aura seemed to have reached the extreme of the Transformation Realm.

Yang Jeong, who had revealed his true energy, opened his mouth.

"Regardless of your identity, I thought a talent who could revive the glory of the Moon Vein had appeared, but it turns out you were just a shameless bastard. I'll behead you right here to our Society's....."

-Chang!

At that moment, sword energies clashed, and a sword cry that seemed to tear apart rang out along with blue sparks.

Yang Jeong looked with a hardened face at someone standing with their back to him in front of him.

It was Young Master Na Yul-ryang.

-Woong!

Holding the sword hilt with both hands and trembling slightly, he looked quite strained.

Yang Jeong unconsciously swallowed dry saliva.

If Na Yul-ryang hadn't intervened midway, he would have been struck while proudly spewing his anger.

-Swish!

Young Master Na Yul-ryang's two feet were pushed back little by little.

‘Kuk.’

Na Yul-ryang’s expression wasn’t good.

Although he had reached the extreme of the Transformation Realm and learned the Bright Moon Water Step, one of the greatest lightness techniques in history, allowing him to block it hurriedly with super-high-speed movement, he was clearly inferior in terms of internal energy.

He was exerting all his strength holding the sword hilt with both hands, but that Mok Gyeong-un bastard was holding his sword with one hand, his face expressionless as if he wasn’t exerting any particular effort.

The eyes of the Heaven and Earth Society members, who until now had been expressing doubts about whether Mok Gyeong-un was really that rumored Heavenly Demon, widened.

Na Yul-ryang, being pushed back, shouted.

“He’s truly a master of the Profound Realm. We must join forces!”

At this cry, even those under Na Yul-ryang began to recognize the seriousness of the situation.

This was because Na Yul-ryang was emotionless and cold-blooded, but his pride was so strong that it was extremely rare for him to ask for help from someone with his own mouth.

So if someone like him was saying to attack together, just how strong must the opponent be?

At that moment, Mok Gyeong-un said with gleaming eyes.

“Your internal energy has increased from before.”

“What?”

-Swish!

As Mok Gyeong-un immediately stretched out his hand, the surprised Na Yul-ryang hurriedly flew his body backward.

-Papak!

Na Yul-ryang, who had retreated more than ten steps in an instant, rubbed his right eye with a distorted expression.

‘When did he take off the eye patch?’

Somehow, the eye patch he had been wearing was now in Mok Gyeong-un’s left hand.

Mok Gyeong-un, who had removed the eye patch, smirked and then threw it, saying.

“You’ve acquired a new eye.”

Mok Gyeong-un could see it clearly.

The vast demonic energy flowing from Na Yul-ryang’s golden pupil, focused to a point, was further activating his physical abilities and even increasing his internal energy.

On the other hand, Na Yul-ryang, looking at Mok Gyeong-un with his right eye where the demonic eye was revealed, felt his breath catch for a moment.

This was because,

‘.....Is this bastard suppressing his energy?’

He could feel something ferocious that couldn’t be measured from Mok Gyeong-un, but it was visible that he was suppressing it and not revealing it.

Does that mean even that one sword strike just now was minimizing his strength?

-Sss!

Cold sweat began to form again.

As much as he hated to admit it, this was definitely not an opponent he could face alone.

However, if there was one positive thing, the situation had changed from before.

When they were facing off at the estate, it was an internal fight within the Society, so according to the law of the strong, he could fully accept his defeat as the weaker one, but not now.

Mok Gyeong-un had declared war on the Heaven and Earth Society.

This meant he had truly become an enemy, not just an internal power struggle.

‘I don’t know why Master wanted to give opportunities to other Veins besides his disciples, but in this situation, Master will have no choice but to step in.’

An enemy who had surpassed the Transformation Realm.

If that Mok Gyeong-un bastard was really the Heavenly Demon who had caused such a stir in the world, his opponent should be not himself, but the Society Leader, the absolute master who leads the Heaven and Earth Society.

But for some reason, seeing that there was still no reaction, was he still observing the situation?

Or could it be that he was trying to use this as a test?

‘.....’

Na Yul-ryang inwardly clicked his tongue.

He didn’t want to admit it, but if it was the Master he knew, he was certainly capable of doing such a thing.

So he might still be observing the situation.

If so, for now, he should try to defeat that bastard through a joint attack with Yang Jeong, the head of the Earth Vein.....

It was at that very moment.

-Swish!

Mok Gyeong-un moved.

Na Yul-ryang, who had been keeping his eyes on him, tried to avoid this by using super-high-speed movement with the Bright Moon Water Step.

However,

-Puk!

“Kkeuk!”

A scream burst from Na Yul-ryang’s mouth as fingers dug into his right eye in an instant.

‘How?’

No, it wasn’t a question of how.

It was because that bastard was much faster than him, so he couldn’t avoid it.

-Chwak!

At that moment, Yang Jeong, the head of the Earth Vein, who had also been keeping his eyes on Mok Gyeong-un, flew in like lightning to try and cut off the left hand that was digging into Na Yul-ryang’s eye.

“Haap!”

However,

-Chang!

Mok Gyeong-un lightly blocked Yang Jeong’s sword by moving his right hand in that position.

Not only that, but after blocking the sword, he immediately performed a sword technique change, twisting the sword’s trajectory and stabbing at Yang Jeong’s brow.

‘Huh?’

-Pat!

Yang Jeong hurriedly stamped the ground and flew his body backward to avoid this, and in that moment, he shot sword energy towards Mok Gyeong-un.

-Chwak!

Mok Gyeong-un tried to strike down the incoming sword energy with the demonic sword Evil Commandment Sword.

In that gap, Na Yul-ryang, whose eye had been stabbed, simultaneously thrust with a sword technique that raised sword energy towards Mok Gyeong-un's neck.

At this, Mok Gyeong-un smirked and then,

-Chang!

-Puk!

"Kkeuk!"

Along with striking down Yang Jeong's ejected sword energy, he kicked Na Yul-ryang in the abdomen, sending him flying back.

A brief confrontation between three peerless masters that occurred in an instant.

The mouths of the Heaven and Earth Society members watching this couldn't close.

'This, this can't be.'

'How could he... against two masters of the Transformation Realm.....'

Even though it wasn't a proper technique battle, no one had predicted that two peerless masters who had reached the extreme of the Transformation Realm would be pushed back like this.

Now they began to realize that Mok Gyeong-un was indeed the rumored Heavenly Demon.

-Drip drip!

"Kuk."

Na Yul-ryang, who had been sent flying back and barely regained his posture, glared at Mok Gyeong-un while covering his bleeding right eye area.

In Mok Gyeong-un's right hand was Na Yul-ryang's golden pupil, the demonic eye.

'Damn it.....'

He had lost his demonic eye before even properly fighting.

Then Na Yul-ryang frowned.

This was because Mok Gyeong-un looked at the demonic eye he had gouged out with interest, and then proceeded to put it in his mouth.

-Chew chew!

'!!!!!!'

Everyone watching this scene felt a chill run down their spines.

They were already shocked by the cruelty of gouging out Na Yul-ryang's eyeball in an instant, but to eat it right there – this kind of vicious madness was unprecedented.

After chewing and swallowing Na Yul-ryang's eyeball like that, Mok Gyeong-un looked over Na Yul-ryang and Yang Jeong in turn.

-Flinch!

The two who met his eyes couldn't help but feel intimidated by the pressure, without even realizing it themselves.

Then Mok Gyeong-un opened his mouth.

"Kneel."

Chapter 405 – Heavenly Demon (2)

"Kneel."

Young Master Na Yul-ryang and Yang Jeong, the head of the Earth Vein, who had been intimidated and shrinking under the pressure, had their expressions turn hideously distorted.

Where could there be such humiliation?

Although he had given them justification by declaring war himself, the two masters who had reached the extreme of the Transformation Realm had briefly joined forces, yet were still pushed back.

And now, not content with that, he was telling them to kneel?

-Grind!

This was something they had never heard even in the war against the Righteous Alliance.

‘.....He’s changed.’

On the other hand, Mok Gyeong-un’s subordinates couldn’t help but be inwardly surprised at this imposing aura and changed manner of speech that exuded authority.

Mok Gyeong-un had always spoken politely with his unique manner of speech, regardless of who he was addressing.

This could be taken lightly, but with this change, those who supported Mok Gyeong-un realized that he truly intended to walk the path of hegemon.

‘Hehehe. Yes, this is it.’

Go Chan, possessing the body of the second young master Jang Neung-ak, couldn’t hide his elation.

Even though he had become a spirit servant, until now he couldn’t even guess what purpose Mok Gyeong-un was moving towards.

However, on the other hand, he had thought:

What if this monstrous master, whose true intentions were unfathomable and unpredictable, decided to walk the path of hegemon?

What kind of waves would each of his steps cause in the martial arts world?

And now, as it was really becoming a reality, Go Chan felt exhilarated, like when he first stepped into the martial arts world a long time ago.

This feeling wasn't his alone.

Baek Sa-ha, the Annihilating Poison King, spoke to Ho Tae-gang, the Axe-Destroying King, in a somewhat excited voice.

"Axe-Destroying King. My blood is boiling after a long time."

"It seems you haven't just rejuvenated your face. But, I feel the same."

After the great war between the orthodox and unorthodox sects, there had been small conflicts for a long time, but a period of calm had arrived where the three divided forces maintained the status quo while balancing each other.

This was largely due to the fact that the Society Leader had remained in seclusion for well over ten years, citing illness.

But now, seeing Mok Gyeong-un's appearance with dignity and authority that evoked thoughts of hegemony, they began to feel their long-buried fighting spirit stirring.

"Ha!"

'.....Was this what he meant?'

Vice Society Leader Mong So-cheon, who was watching this through the window of the Society Leader's quarters at the top of the main platform, was at a loss for words.

Even when he had seen him to assign a confidential mission, just before entering the Corpse Blood Valley, he had shown an incredible increase in capability to the point where one might wonder if this was the same person who had almost no martial arts skills.

But now, to overwhelmingly dominate two peerless masters who had reached the extreme of the Transformation Realm, who could be said to be almost at the level of the Eight Stars, simultaneously?

This was a rate of progress that simply couldn't be explained by innate martial talent alone.

[Vice Society Leader. No, Father. From now on, he will create the era.]

Now he finally understood why his son Mong Mu-yak, who had been as cold and rational as himself, had changed to become so blindly devoted to that Mok Gyeong-un.

'I thought there would be some exaggeration.....'

Perhaps the anecdote about destroying the Shaolin's One Hundred and Eight Arhat Formation in one step, or the rumor about single-handedly subjugating the Tang Family of Sichuan, a pillar of the Righteous Alliance, might be somewhat close to the truth.

Of course, he still couldn't believe the former anecdote about the incident at Shaolin.

-Flinch!

At that moment, Vice Society Leader Mong So-cheon seemed to realize something and looked at the Society Leader in front of him.

Although he hadn't given any definite answer to his son Mong Mu-yak, he was a member of the Heaven and Earth Society and the right-hand man of the Society Leader.

It wasn't a situation where someone like him should be admiring such overwhelming martial talent.

At this, he hurriedly said,

"Society Leader, right now....."

-Swish!

Before his words could finish, the Society Leader raised his hand.

As Vice Society Leader Mong So-cheon looked puzzled, the Society Leader opened his mouth.

“For now, we observe.”

At these words, Mong So-cheon frowned.

If he could push back even when two peerless masters who had reached the extreme of the Transformation Realm joined forces, it meant he was truly a master of the Profound Realm who had crossed the Wall of Walls.

In reality, the only one in the Society who could face him alone was the Society Leader, who had received the same title of Heaven.

He couldn't understand why such a person wanted to observe this situation.

“But Society Leader. If even those who support that guy join in and rise up, it could lead to a massive internal war.”

The forces that had said they would support Mok Gyeong-un, who was to participate in the Ritual of the Three Veins, already exceeded half of the Society.

The only hope was that now that they knew Mok Gyeong-un's true ambition was to destroy the Heaven and Earth Society, they would not cooperate and defect.

But if even more than half of them there cooperated, an uncontrollable situation would unfold.

“Society Leader!”

"I said we observe."

However, the Society Leader was utterly resolute.

Vice Society Leader Mong So-cheon simply couldn't understand this judgment of his.

He prided himself on knowing him better than anyone else, not just as his right-hand man but as a childhood friend, but at some point, it had become difficult to read his thoughts.

Even now, in a situation where the Society itself could be shaken, why was he saying he would observe? Wasn't this tantamount to neglect?

'Could it be that even in this situation, he's trying to test them?'

'Them' referred to Yang Jeong, the head of the Earth Vein, and Young Master Na Yul-ryang.

Although Mok Gyeong-un had suddenly declared war and revealed his fangs, defecting, these two were still strong candidates for succession.

The fact that the Society Leader hadn't stepped forward yet, despite the somewhat dangerous situation, might be to watch how they deal with the crisis.

It could be said to be both bold and magnanimous, but this was a dangerous gamble.

It was a situation where he could potentially lose those successor candidates.

It was at that moment.

-Rumble!

Then, about a hundred martial artists wearing red fox fur cloaks rushed in in perfect unison, surrounded Mok Gyeong-un, and formed a sword formation.

“What are you all doing?”

Yang Jeong, the head of the Earth Vein, shouted at the Earth Vein’s Red Wind Squad, who had come forward without his order.

He was already caught up in shame because they, who had not only crossed the Wall but reached its extreme, had been pushed back by Mok Gyeong-un’s momentum even when they attacked simultaneously, and now with them stepping forward, his pride could only be further damaged.

Then Jin Mu, Yang Jeong’s aide and the captain of the Red Wind Squad, shouted.

“How can we, as subordinates, stand by and watch an enemy who disrupts our Society and threatens our lord? Please forgive our rudeness. Red Wind Squad!”

-Chak!

As they took their sword stances, the energy in the surroundings began to rise.

The energies aligned through the sword formation began to interlock and multiply.

-Gooooo!

The Red Wind Squad, composed solely of masters at the Peak Realm, was the Earth Vein’s finest military force, consisting of martial artists with extensive real combat experience.

To nurture them, Yang Jeong had lived in the battlefield in the northern regions for over ten years.

As a result, the skills of the Red Wind Squad and their joint attack through the sword formation could be said to rival even the Shaolin's One Hundred and Eight Arhat Formation or the Wudang Sect's Taiji Sword Formation.

"Everyone, let's help the Young Master repel this enemy of our Society!"

At that moment, Mo Yak's shout rang out.

Having judged that Na Yul-ryang, who had already lost his demonic eye and been injured in the brief confrontation, and Yang Jeong, the head of the Earth Vein, had no chance of victory, her only recourse was to mobilize all available forces.

The executives and martial artists under Na Yul-ryang responded to her cry.

"Waaaaaah!!!!"

"Follow the Young Master!"

As Na Yul-ryang had built up a force amounting to about 40% numerically, when they moved to act, their numbers were so great that the ground shook and trembled.

However,

-Bang!

Ho Tae-gang, the Axe-Destroying King, slammed his axe down in front of them and shouted.

"If you want to face our lord, you'll have to get past this old one first!"

-Hissss!

“The same goes for this old man.”

Beside him, Baek Sa-ha, the Annihilating Poison King, stepped forward, scattering poison energy.

At the momentum of these two masters of the Transformation Realm, Na Yul-ryang’s forces, who were about to step forward, flinched for a moment, but being numerically far superior, they tried to ignore this and push through.

“They’re shielding a traitor who has bared his fangs at the Society! They are no longer allies of our Society! Attack!”

Jonggak, the Void Clan Master, shouted.

But then,

“Oh ho ho. Is that so? But if we attack like that, which side do you think will be more numerous?”

-Shing!

As Hwan Ya-seon, the Shadow Clan Master, stepped forward drawing his sword, the executives and Society members who had been silently watching and supporting Mok Gyeong-un began to step forward.

Seeing their actions, the Society members under Na Yul-ryang couldn’t hide their bewilderment.

They had believed that at least these people wouldn’t side with a traitor trying to overthrow the Society.

“N-No. Are you lot trying to rebel?”

“How is it rebellion for subordinates to follow their lord?”

-Whoosh!

Lee Ji-yeom, the Corpse Blood Valley Master, came forward menacingly, holding a sword with flickering flames.

After refining the improved Crimson Flame Sword Art and gaining complete control over his Fiery Yang Qi, his capabilities had increased dramatically, reaching the early stages of the Transformation Realm.

Because of this, even the executives couldn't hide their surprise at his changed aura.

‘So it's come to this.....’

Vice Society Leader Mong So-cheon's expression darkened.

He had thought that even if they supported Mok Gyeong-un because of the Moon Vein, since the period wasn't that long, loyal Society members would defect to some extent.

If not, it would be tantamount to rebellion, and he had expected they wouldn't easily go along with it, but that prediction had been completely off the mark.

Nearly 80% were following him.

The few who hadn't stepped forward were personnel at the level of branch heads under the second young master Jang Neung-ak, but they had followed Jang Neung-ak's choice rather than truly pledging loyalty to Mok Gyeong-un, so they couldn't commit rebellion and had defected.

As a result,

-Rumble!

The forces of both sides facing each other became almost equal in numbers, at least on the surface.

As this many people faced off, the atmosphere became not just heavy, but tense.

No one had expected that the Society Leader's urgent summons would lead to internal war like this.

But here, no one could back down.

'In the end.....'

'Are we heading towards a bloody civil war?'

Everyone was maintaining their distance while facing off with tense gazes.

It was then.

-Bang!

-Crack!

At that moment, the sound of someone taking a step was heard from somewhere.

Everyone's gaze turned in that direction.

But the eyes of the Society members who saw this couldn't help but widen.

"Kkeuk."

“Cough!”

“Kek!”

-Thud! Thud! Thud!

The hundred members of the Red Wind Squad who had been surrounding Mok Gyeong-un while forming a sword formation suddenly clutched their chests, coughed up blood, and collapsed.

‘What?’

‘Wh-What is this?’

It happened so suddenly that they all couldn’t understand what was going on.

This was the same for Yang Jeong, the head of the Earth Vein.

How could the Red Wind Squad, who could be called the Earth Vein’s finest elite, collapse so helplessly when all he did was take a step?

At that moment, everyone here recalled one thing.

‘The Heavenly Demon’s Domineering Steps!’

Because it had destroyed the Shaolin’s One Hundred and Eight Arhat Formation in a single step, the martial arts world called this one step the Heavenly Demon’s Domineering Steps.

Seeing this, the Society members’ expressions darkened.

They had thought that destroying the One Hundred and Eight Arhat Formation in one step must have had some exaggeration mixed in, but who would have known they would actually see it with their own eyes?

But then, an even more astonishing sight appeared before their eyes.

-Woong!

Mok Gyeong-un, who had felled the Earth Vein's elite numbering over a hundred with the Heavenly Demon's Domineering Steps, rose into the air with his hands behind his back.

"Sky-Soaring Void Path!"

This was the Sky-Soaring Void Path, called the pinnacle of lightness techniques.

It is literally the highest realm of lightness techniques where one can reach the level of flying in the sky.

Mok Gyeong-un, rising into the air like that, opened his mouth.

"Kneel. Those who do not submit will only meet death."

A voice that resounded in all directions.

No sooner had those words ended than black energy began to flow from Mok Gyeong-un's entire body.

-Gooooo!

It was demonic energy.

As the immensely ferocious demonic energy was released, it covered all directions, making the entire plaza suffocating.

This appearance of Mok Gyeong-un was truly like that of an absolute being.

Under this pressure, at some point, some of the Society members who had been facing off unknowingly became suppressed and lowered their heads.

Mok Gyeong-un's momentum had reached its peak to that extent.

'This won't do!'

Thinking that morale would be broken before they even fought at this rate, Na Yul-ryang stepped forward.

"No matter how strong you alone may be, our Society will never kneel. And you haven't yet faced the true strongest of our Society."

At these words, the Society members under Na Yul-ryang shouted in unison.

"Waaaaaaah!!!!"

That's right.

Before the Seventh Heaven, they had someone who was called the Six Heavens and ruled over the martial arts world of the Central Plains.

It was the Heaven and Earth Society Leader.

They believed that if he stepped forward, the situation would be reversed.

At that moment, Mok Gyeong-un smirked.

Then,

-Swish!

He grasped his sword and extended it upwards.

Then,

-Goo! Flutter flutter!

“Wh-What is this.....”

“What? How is this.....”

The Society members holding swords couldn't hide their bewilderment.

This was because the swords they were holding began to move on their own, helpless against the powerful internal energy.

Those with weak inner power or who couldn't withstand it eventually lost their grip on their swords.

-Pa pa pa pak!

Thus, numerous swords rose into the air.

Seeing this sight, the pupils of the Society members looking up shook as if an earthquake had occurred.

This was the same for the subordinates under Mok Gyeong-un, who could be considered allies.

‘Is this..... Flying Sword Technique?’

‘How profound must his internal energy be to control so many swords?’

No, is this even possible in the first place?

As everyone was shocked like this, Mok Gyeong-un pointed his sword at the Society members following Na Yul-ryang who were facing off.

Then,

-Cha cha cha cha cha cha chak!

The numerous swords that had risen immediately aimed at them.

But it didn’t end there.

Mok Gyeong-un’s left pupil turned golden, just like when Na Yul-ryang had opened his demonic eye, and then the swords were imbued with black sword energy.

-Woooong!

‘!!!!!!!’

Chapter 406 – Heavenly Demon (3)

It was a fragment of the future seen through the energy left in the Holy Fire Spirit.

It might be a moment from one of the many branching paths that may or may not come to pass.

However, among those many potential branches, there was one sight that gave him a fresh shock.

That intensity made him recreate something that was nearly impossible.

-Pa pa pa pa pak!

Numerous swords rose into the air.

The pupils of the Society members looking up at this sight shook as if an earthquake had occurred.

This was the same for the subordinates under Mok Gyeong-un, who could be considered allies.

'H-How can he control so many swords?'

'Can he really control this many swords?'

Simply lifting desired objects into the air through void manipulation is possible even for masters at the Transcendent Realm.

And when one becomes a master of the Transformation Realm, their understanding of energy increases, allowing them to handle it more delicately.

And the realm of swords that peerless masters vaguely guess at.

It's called the Sword Riding Technique or the Technique of Riding Swords with Energy.

When one reaches the Profound Realm, called the supreme realm in handling energy beyond the Wall of Walls, they can handle swords with internal energy as if riding horses.

As their realm increases, masters broaden their thinking through enlightenment.

And depending on the breadth of that thinking, the detailed handling of energy also changes, but techniques as precise as the Sword Riding Technique, which can even recreate sword movements, were inevitably limited in number.

‘!?’

The pupils of the Society Leader, who had been watching the situation like an observer, trembled.

The number of swords floating in the air slightly exceeded a hundred at a glance.

He too could lift that many swords.

However, handling them delicately would be limited to at most twelve swords.

Any more than that exceeds the level that internal energy consumption and mental power can handle.

‘.....Is this just for show to gain the upper hand? Or is it really possible?’

Whatever it is, there will be tremendous mental consumption.

Does he have confidence in dealing with the aftermath?

Or is it possible because it’s the will of a spirit that has endured 100 years?

-Cha cha cha cha cha chak!

While even the Society Leader was amazed, Mok Gyeong-un pointed his sword at the Society members following Na Yul-ryang who were facing off.

Then,

-Cha cha cha cha cha cha chak!

The numerous swords that had risen immediately aimed at them.

But it didn't end there.

Mok Gyeong-un's pupils turned golden, just like when Na Yul-ryang had opened his demonic eye, and then the swords were imbued with black sword energy.

-Wooooong!

‘!!!!!!!’

The Society members under Na Yul-ryang couldn't help but be even more shocked as they watched this.

“I-Is this Sword Riding Energy?”

“M-Monster. Is this really possible with so many swords?”

“.....Impossible.”

“Wh-What kind of internal energy is unlimited?”

They were already overwhelmed by just the Sword Riding Technique state, but the moment they saw the swords imbued with incredibly vicious black sword energy, they couldn't help but be seized by trembling and fear, beyond just hostility.

Is this the true power of the Heavenly Demon of the Seven Heavens?

'What in the world?'

Young Master Na Yul-ryang was surprised to see the sky covered not just with the Sword Riding Technique but with Sword Riding Energy, but he was even more shocked to see Mok Gyeong-un's golden pupils in the void beyond.

That was clearly almost identical to when he had opened his demonic eye.

'.....It can't be.'

It was hard to believe.

That bastard had eaten his eye.

But had he not only eaten the eye, but also absorbed the power contained within it?

It's not like he had the eye transplanted through a technique like himself.

The words of Yul-myeong, the messenger from the Elder Council, flashed through Na Yul-ryang's mind.

[Hu hu hu. Don't compare such things. This is a spirit beast..... Moreover, it's the demonic eye of the Lion-Grasping King, one of the Six Demons, a being infinitely close to a divine beast]

[Lion-Grasping King? You mean the Two-Tailed Demon?]

[Yes.]

[The conclusion is that this eye belongs to one of the stronger Two-Tailed Demons, isn't it?]

[You're enjoying tremendous luck, but your evaluation is quite disappointing.]

[It's still just an eye. Of course, thanks to this eye, my blind spots will disappear. I'm grateful for that.]

[It's not just blind spots. You must have had many strengths with your previous eye, but the eye you have now is on a completely different level.]

[A different level?]

[You might have difficulty handling it properly because it's just been transplanted, but when you can properly absorb and internalize the power this eye possesses in the near future, I can tell you one thing for certain.]

[What is that?]

[You'll be able to compete with the Society Leader not in his current ill state, but in his prime.]

'Able to compete with Master in his prime?'

Although Master is said to be ill, he is one of the six pinnacles in the Central Plains.

Is such a thing possible even with the eye of a Two-Tailed Demon, a being different from humans?

Na Yul-ryang acknowledged that the power of the transplanted eye was much greater than his previous one, but he considered this as just flattery from the Elder Council to create a debt.

But is that the power of the demonic eye?

‘This can’t be.....’

Someone was watching this from afar.

It was Grand Divination Master Myeong-ryul.

Myeong-ryul couldn’t help but be inwardly shocked to see Mok Gyeong-un’s eyes becoming similar to the demonic eye of the Lion-Grasping King.

How can a mere human, even if he learned sorcery, eat the eye of a Two-Tailed Demon and internalize its power?

It would be difficult to properly utilize it unless it was transplanted through a technique or refined into a magical tool.

Is that guy really human?

At that moment, Mok Gyeong-un, floating in the air, opened his mouth.

“Someone from sometime called this Heaven’s Work Flash. Ah. Of course, this probably won’t be that bright.”

The sword energies imbued with black color filling the sky.

It was darkness itself.

“.....”

“The time for mercifully talking things out is over. This is the last chance. Kneel. Those who do not submit will die.”

An imposing voice echoing and resonating in all directions.

At Mok Gyeong-un’s final warning, the crowd was enveloped in silence.

If those flew towards them, it would be no different from hell unfolding.

Pale-faced, they seemed to have lost their will to fight against Mok Gyeong-un’s absolute power, looking around here and there, gauging the situation.

No matter how afraid they were, no one had knelt yet, so being the first to submit would inevitably draw attention.

However, someone took that courage.

-Thud!

It was a martial artist at the level of a branch head.

“Branch Head Yun Myeong!”

“No, how could you!”

At this, other branch heads nearby quietly rebuked him.

But his mind didn't change.

Having spent forty years in the Society, he had experienced numerous battlefields.

Even he had never seen such a sight before.

Even the Heaven and Earth Society Leader, one of the Six Heavens, seemed to have never shown such a thrilling and overwhelming majesty.

"I'm sorry. I..... I don't think I can do this."

"Huh! Branch Head Yun Myeong!"

It was then.

-Thud! Thud!

Branch Head Yun Myeong's action literally became the starting point.

Various Society members from Na Yul-ryang's side who had been gauging the situation began to kneel here and there.

Seeing this sight, the pupils of the executives and subordinates under Mok Gyeong-un trembled with excitement.

Even they felt inwardly fortunate that he was their lord and on their side, given Mok Gyeong-un's overwhelming majesty.

Amidst this, seeing people kneeling noticeably here and there, they felt not just proud of their lord but as if their own shoulders were rising.

-Thud! Thud!

The speed and sound of people kneeling increased gradually.

Nearly 30% of the opposing forces had knelt, and those around them were bewildered as they tried to stop this by rebuking them here and there, but to no avail.

It was then that someone stepped forward and shouted.

“Kal!”

The shout that spread like a lion’s roar was so strong that it shook eardrums, causing those with weak inner power to cover their ears and look at the source.

It was Yang Jeong, the head of the Earth Vein, walking towards where Mok Gyeong-un was while raising sword energy.

“All members of our Society, grit your teeth and come to your senses! We are martial artists of the great Heaven and Earth Society! How can we so easily submit to a group of rebels, even if the enemy is strong? On the battlefield, anyone can die whether the enemy is strong or weak. It’s a matter of resolve. Everyone, raise your fighting spirit. I will lead the charge!”

The role of a general or leader doesn’t come simply from strength alone.

Their role is to lead everyone while also drawing out their morale and fighting spirit.

An army full of fighting spirit and high morale can sometimes create miracles, defeating large armies with small numbers.

Yang Jeong, the head of the Earth Vein, who had extensive battlefield experience even in recent times, knew this and tried to raise their morale somehow to prevent them from submitting.

And his stepping forward like this was also to show everyone, including the Society Leader, that he was the most suitable candidate as the next successor.

His cry had a surprisingly significant effect.

“Head Yang Jeong’s words are right! Everyone, come to your senses!”

“Let’s follow Head Yang Jeong and protect the Heaven and Earth Society!”

“Waaaaaah!!!!”

The Society members shouted, burning with fighting spirit.

Seeing them like this, Mok Gyeong-un said with a dry gaze.

“Truly moths to a flame.”

“You don’t know until you try!”

With those words, Yang Jeong, the head of the Earth Vein, flew towards Mok Gyeong-un.

Before he stepped forward like this, someone’s voice had rung in his ear.

It was Hang Yeo-ryang, the Sound Valley Master, one of the three Valley Masters.

-Head.

‘Hm?’

-This is Hang Yeo-ryang, the Sound Valley Master. I'm speaking to your ear with a small technique so only you can hear, so please don't show any reaction.

'.....'

-Young Master Na Yul-ryang is injured, so you're the only one who can face that guy here, which is why I'm telling you this.

'.....'

-As far as I know, no matter how high a realm one reaches and how broad their thinking becomes, there's a limit to human mental power, so it's impossible to precisely handle that many Sword Riding Energies.

That was correct.

However, even if he couldn't handle them precisely, if he just fired them randomly at this dense gathering of allies, the damage would be indescribable.

As if reading his thoughts, Sound Valley Master Hang Yeo-ryang sent a voice transmission.

-Even so, if those fall, the damage will be tremendous. We need to stop it before that.

'How?'

How could this be stopped?

Then she said,

-I have a secret technique of sound energy. I don't know if it will work on a great master at the Profound Realm, but it should at least disrupt his mind for a moment.

'Ah?'

-In that gap, please attack that guy, Head.

At these words, Yang Jeong, the head of the Earth Vein, looked at her with a somewhat puzzled expression.

She was clearly under Na Yul-ryang.

For someone like that to give such an opportunity to him instead of her lord.

If this works, he would likely receive support from many Society members as a hero.

-Honestly, I don't care whether it's Young Master Na Yul-ryang or you who becomes the leader. As long as it's not someone from the Orthodox Sect or related to the Bright Blade King. Hu hu hu.

So that was it.

Anyway, that woman was always hard to understand.

However, now was not the time to suspect whether she was up to something else, as it was a crisis itself.

For whatever reason, at this point when the Society Leader still hadn't stepped forward, someone had to come forward to reverse this situation.

'That someone is me!'

-Pat!

Yang Jeong, who had been continuously gathering energy, was about to unleash his secret technique.

At that moment, Sound Valley Master Hang Yeo-ryang put her hands together towards Mok Gyeong-un, leaving a gap in the middle, then expanded her abdomen and,

“Kyaaaaaaaaaaaaah!”

She unleashed her sound energy secret technique.

‘!?’

Those nearby were surprised by her sudden cry, but fortunately, this secret technique was the worst method that concentrated sound waves infused with internal energy on a specific target, causing bleeding from nine orifices and rupturing internal organs.

It was a technique that consumed nearly half of one’s internal energy and took a long time to prepare, making it difficult to use during a fight, but it was fully possible now.

This sound couldn’t be blocked by covering one’s ears.

Even if one blocked all the holes in their body with internal energy, the moment even a little sound entered, it would spread through the body like poison, causing pain.

As the pain disrupted one’s mind, a gap would form, and naturally, one wouldn’t be able to maintain the Sword Riding Energy-

-Puk!

At that moment.

“Kek!”

Sound Valley Master Hang Yeo-ryang’s eyes widened as if they would tear.

Something was seen piercing her swollen abdomen.

It was so transparent that it was almost impossible to distinguish with the naked eye, but it was clearly a sword.

‘N-No way..... Formless.....’

-Put!

With her abdomen pierced before she could even unleash her secret technique, she spat out blood rising in her throat due to the sharp sword energy spreading throughout her body.

At almost the same instant, Yang Jeong, who was about to unleash the secret technique of the Earth Vein’s sword technique, felt something was off.

According to her words, Mok Gyeong-un should have been disrupted by the sound energy for at least a moment, but there was nothing like that.

Rather,

-Swish!

As he aimed his sword downwards,

-Chwa chwa chwa chwa chwa chwa!

At the same time, black streaks of light began to rain down like a downpour towards the Society members under Na Yul-ryang.

‘!!!!!!’

This was the same for Yang Jeong, who was flying towards Mok Gyeong-un.

The speed of the incredibly vicious black streaks of Ejected Sword Energy was close to divine speed, leaving no time to avoid or defend.

-Cha cha cha cha chang!

“Keheop!”

The Earth Vein’s sword technique secret skill, Earth Dragon Ascending to Heaven, had enough power to blow away a small mountain peak, but the moment the Ejected Sword Energies struck, he couldn’t exert any force.

He was pinned straight to the ground.

-Kwa kwa kwa kwang!

It wasn’t just him.

As the falling black streaks of light raged in all directions, screams of pandemonium erupted here and there.

-Chwa chwa chwa chwa chwa chwa!

-Kwa kwa kwa kwa kwa kwang!

“Keuak!”

“Kek!”

Some executives thought it was just an empty threat for intimidation, but that was their misconception.

‘M-Monster.....’

‘This isn’t human.’

They couldn’t help but be shocked by the Ejected Sword Energies flying ingeniously towards all Society members except those who were kneeling.

-Wudeuk! Wudeuk!

Mok Gyeong-un’s forehead and around his eyes were covered in fine blood vessels, and his golden-dyed pupils were vibrating tremendously in an instant, gazing at numerous people.

It was a level of calculation and spatial awareness ability that was close to impossible even for the breadth of human thought at the peak of enlightenment.

Chapter 407 – Heavenly Demon (4)

Chwa chwa chwa chwa chwa chwa chwa!

-Kwa kwa kwa kwa kwa kwang!

As the black streaks of Ejected Sword Energy rained down like a downpour, all directions were dyed in pandemonium.

The eyes of those kneeling widened.

They couldn't help but be shocked by the Ejected Sword Energies flying ingeniously towards the Society members on Na Yul-ryang's side, excluding themselves.

-Wudeuk! Wudeuk!

Mok Gyeong-un's forehead and around his eyes were covered in fine blood vessels, and his golden-dyed pupils were vibrating tremendously in an instant.

There's a limit to the visual information that normal human eyes can process in an instant.

Humans are designed to accept only what their thoughts and mental power can endure, but Mok Gyeong-un's eyes had evolved once again after absorbing Na Yul-ryang's demonic eye.

The demonic power of the three eyes, the spirit eye, and the unknown power of Na Yul-ryang's eye harmonized ingeniously, elevating his eye power to an even higher dimension.

-Flutter!

Through the spirit eye, he grasped the flow of all energies, achieving accurate spatial perception. The demonic power of the three eyes played the role of calculating and distinguishing these energies. The eye power absorbed from Na Yul-ryang supported this enormous amount of information, combining spatial perception and calculation ability.

Of course, what's amazing here is that even though the eye power supports it, it's naturally the brain and mental power that sustain this.

-Wudeuk wudeuk!

Mok Gyeong-un's mental power, which was enduring an enormous amount of information that would have caused a normal person's brain to overload and burst, had already surpassed human limits.

-Chwa chwa chwa chwa chwa!

"Kek!"

"Keuk!"

This precise targeted Ejected Sword Energy that Mok Gyeong-un was unleashing rapidly erased the lives of Society members supporting Na Yul-ryang's side by sniping their vital points.

The speed was beyond imagination.

In just a count of ten, hundreds of lives were lost.

'Th-This isn't human.'

'How can this be?'

'S-Save me.'

The Society members were helpless against the black streaks of Ejected Sword Energy targeting them, and this was instantly covering the venue in terror.

"Kyaak!"

-Cha cha cha cha chang!

'Damn it!'

Young Master Na Yul-ryang was blocking the continuously striking Ejected Sword Energies.

He had no choice but to devote all his efforts to protecting his loyal subordinate Mo Yak and himself, let alone counterattacking.

-Chang!

Every time he struck down the black sword energy, it felt like his palm gripping the sword was being torn.

No, it was already torn and stained with blood.

Even he, who had reached the extreme of the Transformation Realm, was barely managing to block this, so the outcome for others was obvious without looking.

Just hearing the numerous blood splatters and screams of pandemonium around, this place was hell itself.

'Endure..... I must endure.'

Na Yul-ryang gritted his teeth as he blocked the Ejected Sword Energies while embracing Mo Yak.

No matter how much of a monster that guy is, it's truly impossible to maintain such an incredible technique for long.

Unless his mental power and internal energy have reached the realm of the divine and are unlimited, there will surely be a limit.

If he can just endure until then, surely an opportunity will.....

‘No!’

This wasn’t a situation to wait helplessly for that opportunity while being overwhelmed.

At that moment, Na Yul-ryang, who had thought of a brilliant plan, shouted.

“Charge forward!”

‘!?’

At Na Yul-ryang’s shout, the Society members under him couldn’t help but be puzzled for a moment.

They were already struggling to block or dodge these Ejected Sword Energies, so what nonsense was this to charge forward in this situation?

However, they soon understood Na Yul-ryang’s true intention.

‘Ah!’

That’s right.

Although that monstrous guy was targeting those who hadn’t knelt, he was achieving this with almost no damage because there were no allies around them.

However, the moment they engage in battle and get entangled, the situation will become more complex.

“The Young Master’s words are right!”

“Attack them!”

Even now, dividing attacks between those who have submitted and those who haven’t must be causing severe mental consumption and overload on the brain and eye power, but what if it goes beyond that?

It will become so difficult that such classification will become meaningless.

If he fails even once, even allies will be harmed, and if that happens, he won’t be able to continue this mad act any longer.....

-Kwang! Chwaaaak!

“Keuak!”

“Kek!”

“That’s assuming you can break through us.”

Ho Tae-gang, the Axe-Destroying King, swung his massive axe infused with strong energy, splitting the heads and bodies of eight people in one stroke.

Faced with his rough momentum, the branch head-level masters from Na Yul-ryang’s side who had tried to break through couldn’t hide their bewilderment.

If it were just him, a gap might have formed somehow, but,

-Sss sss sss sss sss!

“Heh heh heh. If you can, try to get past this old man.”

With Baek Sa-ha, the Annihilating Poison King, blocking the front while spraying dense poison energy with both hands, along with top-tier masters from the Society like Shadow Clan Master Hwan Ya-seon, Corpse Blood Valley Master Lee Ji-yeom, and the second young master Jang Neung-ak, it was difficult to break through and induce a melee.

Moreover,

-Pa pa pa pa pa pak!

The intervention of other top-tier masters who had appeared from somewhere made it even more so.

“Kwa ha ha ha ha ha! To think so many have gathered here! Who will entertain this monk a bit more?”

“M-Mad monk? How is this crazy monk here?”

With the addition of Ja Geum-jeong, the fallen monk, and,

-Pa pa pa pa pa pak!

Ma Ra-hyeon in a mask, who was sweeping through the enemies with storm-like lightness techniques as if the wind god was enraged, even fewer gaps were forming.

‘Damn it!’

‘Where did these monsters come from?’

As things weren’t going as intended, the executives and Society members on Na Yul-ryang’s side couldn’t help but become increasingly anxious.

-Cha cha cha cha cha chang!

‘!?’

Na Yul-ryang’s eyes narrowed as he blocked the Ejected Sword Energies.

He felt the energy of the Ejected Sword Energies striking around gradually diminishing.

He wondered if it was because too many lives had been lost.

But then,

“Hiiik!”

-Thud! Thud!

People kneeling were seen here and there.

They were all trembling, pale-faced, and terrified.

Seeing this, Na Yul-ryang could understand.

‘.....Oh no.’

While many were dying from the Ejected Sword Energies, just as many were submitting, unable to overcome their fear.

At first, it was almost proportional, but increasingly it wasn’t.

If they could do something, there might be a chance for a reversal to revive morale, but those who were helplessly overwhelmed by the continuously striking Ejected Sword Energies had no choice but to mentally submit.

-Kwajik! Kwang! Kwang!

Those who didn't submit had their vital points or bodies cut by the Ejected Sword Energies, or simply lost their lives.

In this situation, it was impossible not to be afraid.

The overwhelmingly strong power and cruel results completely destroyed their fighting spirit.

-Euddeuk!

Is this how we lose?

Na Yul-ryang, gritting his teeth, felt his chest growing hotter and hotter.

It was a strange emotion he had never felt before.

'Why? Why?'

That monster was killing so many Society members, saying he would erase the Heaven and Earth Society from the world, yet the Society Leader, who could be called the owner of the Society, still hadn't stepped forward.

He's the one who even feigned illness for over ten years to find hidden traitors.

So why can he just observe even in this life-or-death moment?

Society Leader, no, Master, what are you thinking.....

-Chaaaaaang!

It was at that very moment.

Along with a loud metallic sound that seemed to tear eardrums, an enormous sound of air being split rang out, causing tremendous air pressure in the surroundings.

-Paaaaaang!

Simultaneously, that guy's indiscriminate Ejected Sword Energies that had been raining down until now finally stopped.

Wondering what had happened, they saw the sight of Mok Gyeong-un and the Heaven and Earth Society Leader clashing swords in mid-air.

“Waaaaaaaaah!!!!!”

The moment they saw this sight, the Society members all shouted in unison.

It was truly strange.

In fact, regardless of the reason, many had lost their lives due to his observation.

If he, the supreme master, had stepped forward earlier, the situation might have been different.

Yet, the Society members weren't angry.

Rather, when the Society Leader, the owner of the Society and one of the Six Heavens, stepped forward, their morale explosively increased.

“It’s the Society Leader!”

“The Society Leader has stepped forward!”

It was as if a savior had appeared.

This was a strange phenomenon that even Na Yul-ryang, his disciple, couldn’t understand.

‘Why?’

Aren’t they angry that the Society Leader didn’t step forward earlier?

Or is it because his weight as the leader or as a great master is so absolute?

Whatever it was, it didn’t matter.

Even he felt that feeling disappear at some point.

-Gulp!

Na Yul-ryang too swallowed dry saliva and watched the two with tense eyes.

It was the moment when two peerless masters at the level of great masters, who had received the title of Heaven, called the peak of the martial arts world, clashed.

The future of the Society would be decided by this confrontation.

In other words, only the Society Leader could be the sole savior.

-Woooong!

The demonic sword Evil Commandment Sword and the Society Leader's treasured sword Predestination[1] clashed, ringing out sword cries.

Mok Gyeong-un, who had blocked the hegemonic sword strike the Society Leader had launched after jumping down from the main platform, smirked and opened his mouth.

"I thought you'd keep observing."

At these words, the Society Leader's eyes narrowed.

It was because Mok Gyeong-un's martial prowess completely surpassed his predictions.

He had thought some sacrifice was unavoidable to give the Earth Vein a chance and to resolve the grudge of the spirit, but if he had observed any longer, thousands, no, tens of thousands would have lost their lives.

That's why he finally couldn't hold back and stepped forward.

"Will your grudge only be resolved after killing everyone? Spirit."

"Spirit?"

Mok Gyeong-un's eyes glinted.

When they first met, he had appeared to be suffering from illness, but when they met again, he realized this was all a scheme and that he was no ordinary person.

But now he called him a spirit.

It seemed he knew something.

‘.....Heart.’

No, maybe it was natural for him to know.

Unlike his disciples, the Society Leader was a descendant who had inherited the blood of Bi Yeong-hon of the Heaven Vein, whom Cheong-ryeong had mentioned.

He might also know the secret of the secret manual made from Cheong-ryeong’s heart from when she was alive, which had contained her vengeful spirit for a long time.

If so,

-Chang!

Mok Gyeong-un immediately deflected the Society Leader’s treasured sword Predestination with counter-force.

The Society Leader’s eyes glinted as his body was pushed upwards.

‘He still has this much internal energy left?’

The Society Leader had thought Mok Gyeong-un had consumed almost all of his true energy firing those many Ejected Sword Energies.

Yet he not only blocked his sword strike but even deflected him upwards.

He couldn't help but genuinely stick out his tongue in amazement.

However, this power probably,

'Stems to some extent from a power beyond human?'

-Pang!

At this, the Society Leader stomped the air, using the Void Stepping technique to stop his rising body.

'I need to subdue him first.'

After stopping his body like that, the Society Leader immediately took a sword stance with his right hand while grasping his sword with his left hand.

Then, around him,

-Cha cha cha cha cha cha chang!

Suddenly, about twelve swords flew in and formed a sword formation in mid-air along with Sword Riding Energies.

The Society Leader, surrounded by Sword Riding Energies like spreading wings, aimed at Mok Gyeong-un and said,

"Spirit. Let me show you that I too can handle Sword Riding Energies in this way, though not as much as you."

Heaven Vein Sword Technique

Attack and Defense as One, Sword Riding Energy Twelve Sword Heaven Formation.

‘Here it comes!’

Vice Society Leader Mong So-cheon and some executives recognized the Society Leader’s secret technique.

Originally called the Eight Sword Heaven Formation, it uses eight Sword Riding Energies to perform a nearly perfect technique with no gaps in both offense and defense.

They had seen the Society Leader defeat numerous opponents with this during his heyday.

‘As expected, he’s gotten even stronger.’

Ho Tae-gang, the Axe-Destroying King, also recognized this and clicked his tongue.

What illness?

Even with just eight swords, he had almost no match, but the fact that he had increased it to twelve swords in over ten years meant he hadn’t neglected training even in his mind.

Baek Sa-ha, the Annihilating Poison King, also couldn’t take his eyes off it.

‘A sword formation of Sword Riding Energies for attack and defense as one, composed of twelve swords.’

He must have filled all the empty directions.

It must be even more perfect than before and without gaps, so its power must be incomparable.

On the other hand, Mok Gyeong-un is currently in a state of high internal energy consumption and mental exhaustion.

It could be dangerous if he let his guard down.

‘Could this be what he was aiming for?’

If their capabilities are similar, in the end, the one in the best condition will decide the outcome.

In that respect, Mok Gyeong-un, who had been firing Sword Riding Ejected Sword Energies non-stop until just now, could be said to be at a disadvantage.

Even if this was intentional, it wasn’t a situation where he could be blamed.

Mok Gyeong-un had declared war on the Heaven and Earth Society itself.

He wasn’t in a position to complain about fairness or express dissatisfaction no matter what strategy was taken.

That’s why the Heaven and Earth Society Leader might be hurrying to use his full power.

“This is the maximum power I can show from now on. Your true energy consumption must have been great, so spirit, you too should use your full power.....”

“You’ll regret it.”

“What?”

-Woooong!

It was before those words could even finish.

Energies began to condense into sharp forms around Mok Gyeong-un.

Seeing this sight, the Society Leader's eyes, who had intended to settle the match in one go with full power from the start, gradually widened.

That thing forming even energy into the shape of swords was clearly,

'No way?'

Three ethereal swords made of utterly transparent energy forming around Mok Gyeong-un.

'!!!!!!'

They were undoubtedly Invisible Swords.

The Society Leader, who had merely thought he had some superhuman power added due to being possessed by a spirit, was genuinely shocked.

The being before his eyes.

He had reached the Life and Death Realm, surpassing even the Profound Realm which could be called the supreme state.

Chapter 408 – Heavenly Demon (5)

The Profound Realm, which can be called the supreme state.

It means that one's enlightenment about martial arts has reached the heavens (profound).

Countless martial artists who hone their skills strive their entire lives to reach harmony beyond the wall and touch the heavens.

However, only a very few reach that harmony, and even fewer reach the higher realm of touching the heavens.

The reality was that many couldn't surpass the stages of first-rate, peak, and transcendent even if they devoted their whole lives, but among these numerous martial artists, there were undoubtedly born geniuses.

Bi Jung-seon, the current Heaven and Earth Society Leader, was one such genius.

He walked a smooth path with his innate martial talent from a young age and reached the Transformation Realm without ever hitting a wall of enlightenment.

[.....Indeed. So that's how it is.]

This was his father's reaction to his talent.

His father, who had never shown proper interest in his mother or himself to the point of seeming heartless, changed from the moment he crossed the wall.

He even personally guided his martial arts training to help him become stronger.

At first, Bi Jung-seon was skeptical of his father's interest, which only appeared when he was twenty-nine.

However, as his father's attention and care continued, he didn't dislike it and became even more devoted to martial arts. After great effort, he reached the Profound Realm, called the supreme state.

[Ha..... Hahaha! Hahahahaha!]

On the day he reached the Profound Realm, he was overjoyed.

Although his path upward had been smooth until then, reaching the Profound Realm was different.

He too had hit a wall and stagnated for a long time.

But after overcoming that hardship and gaining enlightenment, breaking through the wall to reach a state that only three in the current martial arts world had achieved, it was natural that he couldn't contain his joy.

[Father! Father!]

Bi Jung-seon thought his father would be greatly pleased when he learned of this.

He rushed to tell his father with excited expectations, but,

-Flinch!

Bi Jung-seon discovered a new face he had never seen on his father before.

[Indeed..... Indeed, that's how it is.]

His father's eyes and face as he answered as if pleased were not of pride towards his son.

It was closer to the look of a predator or plunderer eyeing their prey.

Yes, it was greed.

Reading this incomprehensible, alien emotion from his father, contrary to what he had expected, he became trapped in an even longer stagnation than before from that day on.

After the day of the great calamity, the martial arts world entered a long period of stagnation.

Although many martial arts texts and records from the old martial arts era were lost, the few remaining ancient books revealed that there existed an even higher realm beyond the Profound Realm which is also called the supreme state.

That was the Life and Death Realm.

[The extreme realm that can be achieved if one can transcend their will at the boundary between life and death.]

Three ethereal swords made of utterly transparent energy forming around Mok Gyeong-un.

They were undoubtedly Invisible Swords.

The plaza below stirred greatly as some recognized this.

“This can’t be.....”

“Invisible Swords?”

Invisible Swords.

A technique only possible for those who have reached the extreme of swordsmanship, requiring not just an understanding of swords but also enlightenment about energy beyond the Profound Realm.

Which means,

“L-Life and Death Realm!”

Those who knew of the existence of the Life and Death Realm couldn’t hide their shock.

There was no doubt.

The three Invisible Swords that Mok Gyeong-un was now displaying showed that he had reached the Life and Death Realm.

-Clench!

Young Master Na Yul-ryang’s fist tightened at the sounds of exclamation and shock from around.

‘Mok Gyeong-un..... You.....’

His mind wasn’t closed, so he acknowledged that the other had become stronger than him.

However, within that acknowledgment, he had thought it was only possible because Mok Gyeong-un had gone outside the Heaven and Earth Society and encountered various opportunities.

That’s why he thought Mok Gyeong-un had reached the Profound Realm before him.

But now, to hear that he had surpassed the Profound Realm and reached the legendary Life and Death Realm that even his master, the current Society Leader, hadn’t reached, he was so angry he felt sick.

‘.....Were you playing with me?’

From the beginning, he had reached a realm where he could kill him in an instant.

Yet he didn’t, and he didn’t reveal this.

Just from that, Na Yul-ryang could understand.

That he no longer existed in that guy’s eyes.

‘You, to me! Keuuuu.’

It’s frustrating.

This is the first time in his life he’s felt this frustrated.

He thought he finally had a worthy rival, but that was just his own delusion.

‘Young Master.....’

Mo Yak’s heart ached seeing him like this.

Seeing her lord Na Yul-ryang, who had never lost confidence for a moment and was so arrogant, feeling jealous and suffering because of someone like this, her heart hurt.

Why did such a monster appear before Young Master Na Yul-ryang, who was called a genius that might appear once in hundreds of years?

Mo Yak looked up at Mok Gyeong-un floating in the air above the plaza.

-Swish!

Mok Gyeong-un moved.

The moment he extended his sword forward,

-Swish!

One of the three Invisible Swords beside him rushed towards the Society Leader.

Its speed was so fast that its form disappeared as it moved, making it difficult to see with the naked eye.

However, to the Society Leader facing him,

‘It’s coming.’

He could clearly see the Invisible Sword aiming to pierce his chest in one go.

As the Society Leader extended his sword, four of the twelve Sword Riding Energies spread like wings around him overlapped like a shield, and,

-Chaaaaaang!

Blocked the incoming Invisible Sword.

-Paaang!

However, even though he blocked the Invisible Sword by crossing four Sword Riding Energies, its power was so strong that the Society Leader's body was pushed back.

'To this extent.'

The Society Leader inwardly stuck out his tongue.

He had expected it to have power surpassing sword energy since it was a Invisible Sword called the extreme of swordsmanship, but it was beyond that.

And,

-Woong!

'Side!'

As he stretched his hand to the Society Leader's right side, four Sword Riding Energies unfolded sword techniques as if four masters were launching a joint attack, creating dozens of sharp trajectories.

-Pa chi chi chik!

Blue sparks flew like lightning between those trajectories as one Invisible Sword was forcefully breaking through.

'If there's no gap, you'll create one by force?'

-Flinch!

The Society Leader's eyes, which had been sticking out his tongue, turned somewhere.

-Swish!

The Society Leader hurriedly moved his left hand holding the sword.

Then two of the remaining Sword Riding Energies guarding his side flew in the direction where the Society Leader extended his sword.

-Shu suk!

There was no one there, but,

-Chang!

Someone appeared in the middle of the Sword Riding Energies' trajectory and struck them down.

It was Mok Gyeong-un.

Mok Gyeong-un, who had reached a realm where he could handle Invisible Swords, had already reached a level where he could traverse space with super-high-speed movement regardless of ground or air, and if one were to be careless even for a moment here, they would lose track of his whereabouts.

However, befitting his title as one of the Six Heavens and a great master who had reached the extreme of the Profound Realm, the Society Leader exerted superhuman concentration.

-Chang!

Not only did he block the Invisible Sword that Mok Gyeong-un had swung directly after suddenly penetrating right in front of him with his treasured sword Predestination, but he also sent two Sword Riding Energies rushing towards Mok Gyeong-un's back and left ribs.

Of course,

-Pa cha cha chang!

Mok Gyeong-un easily deflected the two Sword Riding Energies just by tracing a full moon-shaped trajectory with his Invisible Sword.

And not stopping there,

-Pat!

In an instant, he struck the Society Leader's right shoulder with his left hand holding the sword, and,

-Puk!

"Kuk."

-Clang!

Made him drop his treasured sword Predestination from his hand.

With his right arm temporarily numbed by the sword energy penetrating his shoulder, the Society Leader had no choice but to create distance.

"Ha!"

The Society Leader swung his sword towards Mok Gyeong-un with a shout.

Then the twelve Sword Riding Energies around him all flew in at once, forming a formation to target Mok Gyeong-un's major vital points.

‘Twelve Sword Heaven Formation 3rd Form: Infinite and Endless!’

The power of this combined sword formation created by the Sword Riding Energies surpasses normal techniques.

This won’t be enough to defeat Mok Gyeong-un.

However, it should at least buy time to create distance from him.

But,

-Cha cha cha cha cha chang!

The twenty-four forms of the 1st technique of the Demonic Sword Technique that Mok Gyeong-un unleashed with his Invisible Sword created exquisite sword trajectories, blocking the formation of the twelve Sword Riding Energies.

Not stopping there, as the 2nd technique followed, emitting sword energy, the Sword Riding Energies couldn’t escape from the interlocking trajectories and eventually lost their power and were deflected.

-Pa cha cha cha cha chang!

As a result, nearly half of the sword hilts were even destroyed.

‘This.....’

As blue energy and sword fragments scattered in all directions like oxidizing, Mok Gyeong-un’s Invisible Sword penetrated through, and,

-Chwak!

“Kkeup!”

Cut off the right arm of the Society Leader who was trying to create distance somehow, like lightning.

Only when the Society Leader’s arm was cut off did the two figures become visible to the naked eye, causing exclamations and sighs to cross below the plaza.

‘H-He did it!’

‘To cut off the Society Leader’s arm!’

Those who exclaimed were the supporting forces who had decided to follow Mok Gyeong-un.

They had been unable to contain their tension as it was a battle with the Society Leader, the leader of the Heaven and Earth Society and its strongest master, but the moment they saw the Society Leader’s arm being cut off, they couldn’t help but burst into cheers.

“Waaaaaah!”

On the other hand,

‘Aah.....”

The side filled with sighs was in a completely opposite mood.

It was a battle between the peaks of the martial arts world who had received the old and new titles of Heaven, a life-and-death competition between absolute beings who had reached the highest realms of the extreme of the Profound Realm and the Life and Death Realm.

Although Mok Gyeong-un, the new Heaven called the Heavenly Demon, had reached the Life and Death Realm, the Society Leader had been at the peak of the martial arts world for a long time, and his vast experience couldn't be ignored, so those watching couldn't help but hold a glimmer of hope.

However,

'This can't be.....'

'As expected.'

The gap coming from their realms.

It was something that even the Society Leader, called the current peak of the martial arts world, couldn't overcome.

In the end, can't he surpass the wall of the Invisible Sword, the extreme of swordsmanship?

-Swish!

Mok Gyeong-un aimed his Invisible Sword at the Society Leader's neck, as if to finish the match.

Then the Society Leader, pressing an acupuncture point to stop the bleeding on his cut arm with somewhat rough breathing, shook his head and opened his mouth with difficulty.

"Grudges are truly frightening."

"....."

"Did the anger towards that person make even a mere ghost-possessed body reach such a realm? Spirit, no, Ryu So-wol, the originator of the Moon Vein."

‘!?’

At these words, Mok Gyeong-un’s eyes sharpened.

He had thought that the Society Leader, being from the Heaven Vein clan, might know something, but he didn’t expect Cheong-ryeong’s real name to be mentioned from his mouth.

Chapter 409 – Encounter (1)

“Grudges are truly frightening.”

“.....”

“Did the anger towards that person make even a mere possessed body reach such a realm? Spirit, no, Ryu So-wol, the originator of the Moon Vein.”

‘!?’

At these words, Mok Gyeong-un’s eyes sharpened.

He had thought that the Society Leader, being from the Heaven Vein clan, might know something, but he didn’t expect Cheong-ryeong’s real name to be mentioned from his mouth.

As if reading Mok Gyeong-un’s thoughts, the Society Leader spoke in a solemn voice.

“Did you think I wouldn’t know? From the beginning, that secret manual couldn’t be touched or learned due to the overwhelmingly strong grudge. The moment I knew you had mastered it, I realized you were inside that body.”

Secret manual.

It was the medium made from the heart that had sealed Cheong-ryeong's vengeful spirit.

The fact that he knew this much about it meant that the current Society Leader had likely inherited all these secrets from his predecessors.

-Disciple.

'.....'

-Kill him.

Cheong-ryeong's voice, filled with anger, boiled.

Having waited only for this moment, she seemed unable to contain her anger any longer.

Seeing her reaction, Mok Gyeong-un called out to her through voice transmission.

-Cheong-ryeong.

-Don't even dream of trying to stop me. Don't you understand after hearing what these damn clan members are saying? If you don't do it, I'll manifest myself directly and tear this descendant of that bastard limb from limb.

-I have no intention of stopping you. But please wait a moment.

-What are you telling me to wait for? Right now.....

-I told you.

-What?

-If we're going to do it, we should do it properly.

-.....

He had declared war in front of all the Heaven and Earth Society members, saying he would make this enormous organization disappear.

And in front of all of them, he had shown overwhelming power and dyed the plaza of the main building Heavenly Cherishing Hall, which could be called the symbol of the Heaven and Earth Society, in pandemonium and blood.

Seeing this, she had felt immense joy after 100 years.

-Aah.

Finally, the moment she had waited for so long had arrived.

Now, with the bloodline of the Heaven Vein, the descendant of Bi Yeong-hon who could be called the pinnacle and end of this revenge, right before her eyes, what was he trying to do here?

Recognizing her existence means he knows what his predecessors did.

Of course, he was mistaken in thinking she had possessed this disciple, but in the end, she and the disciple were indeed together, so this wasn't particularly important.

-What more are you trying to do here? It will all be over if we just kill this guy.

-It would be good if that alone would resolve your grudge, Cheong-ryeong, but it doesn't seem to be the case. Surely there are things that bother you as well?

-.....

At Mok Gyeong-un's words, Cheong-ryeong fell silent.

Things that bother her.

Yes. Besides the grudge, there are certainly questions.

From why she had been sealed in the secret manual made from her heart for nearly 100 years, to how she had been trapped, who did this and why – she was curious about everything.

But the ancestor of this guy who she truly wanted to vent her grudge on must have died long ago, so would anything change by hearing something from his descendant?

Wouldn't it rather make her more frustrated by the fact that she couldn't directly vent her grudge on him?

Cheong-ryeong was rather afraid of that.

-Disciple..... I.....

Just as she was about to say something, the Society Leader exhaled a strange sigh and opened his mouth.

"Haah. No matter how deep your grudge, you shouldn't have acted recklessly and revealed yourself like this, Ryu So-wol."

".....What do you mean by that?"

Mok Gyeong-un asked without any denial, as if he were Cheong-ryeong himself.

At this question, the Society Leader uttered words that were difficult to understand.

“We thought it would get better if we made it as distant as possible or cut off the obsession, since no method could burn or tear it. But thanks to your grudge, no less intense than that person’s madness, it was all in vain. No, was it this one’s foolishness for not calculating that?”

-Swish!

Mok Gyeong-un aimed his Invisible Sword at the Society Leader’s chin.

If he thrusts now, it will be fatal.

“You’re speaking in a way that’s hard to understand. That person’s madness? Who do you mean by ‘that person’? Are you talking about your dead ancestor?”

“Dead ancestor..... Do you really think so? Ryu So-wol.”

“.....What?”

At Mok Gyeong-un’s retort, the Society Leader snorted as if exasperated and said,

“Are you pretending not to know? Or have you forgotten?”

“.....”

“Whatever the case, my plans have already gone awry. Trying to pull that person out of the quagmire, trying to return the Society to its original state.....”

-Flinch!

It was before his words could finish.

Mok Gyeong-un raised one eyebrow and looked down at the plaza.

This was because sinister energies were rising faintly from various places all around.

The Society Leader let out another sigh and said in a meaningful voice,

“In the end, you end up drawing them in.”

-Wudeuk! Wudeuk!

At that moment, some of the Society members where the sinister energies were spreading suddenly clutched one of their eyes and writhed in pain.

“Kkeup!”

“Wh-What is this.....”

Unlike their painful writhing, their bodies gradually showed movements different from their own will.

It looked as if they were losing control over their own bodies.

Just a little while ago.

The atmosphere in the plaza was extremely divided.

From the moment the Society Leader's arm was cut off, the forces supporting Mok Gyeong-un couldn't hide their joy, cheering loudly, while the forces under Young Master Na Yul-ryang rapidly sank into depression.

It was the worst possible situation, with nearly half having already submitted and countless lives lost to the Sword Riding Ejected Sword Energies, tilting the balance of power.

'.....Damn it.'

Even Na Yul-ryang, who was caught up in extreme jealousy and anger towards someone for the first time, seemed to think it was already difficult to turn the tide, his lone left pupil gradually filling with resignation.

-Murmur murmur!

An arm lying on the ground.

The expressions of all those who had stepped back in a circle were beyond shock, even dazed.

Who could have imagined such a thing?

This was the same for Na Yul-ryang.

'Master..... was overwhelmed?'

Even being called such a genius and growing stronger quickly, he had never imagined the reality of surpassing his master.

But it happened right before his eyes.

Because of this, morale had already reached a point where it couldn't be revived.

If the Society Leader, one of the Seven Heavens called the peak of the current martial arts world, couldn't handle him, no one could stop that monster.

Even if he tried to join forces with others.....

-Clench!

It would just be a meaningless death.

A situation where no outcome could be expected brought a suffocating sense of frustration.

Na Yul-ryang's pupils moved back and forth.

He had always been emotionally dry to the point of being cold-blooded, and arrogant and full of confidence, so he had never cared about others' opinions in his life.

But this time was different.

If he had simply been defeated, he would have accepted it as just being weak himself.

But in a fight where the fate of countless people hung on his shoulders, showing nothing but helplessness without being able to do anything, he was seized by a strong sense of shame he had never experienced before.

[To think you're only this capable, yet you claim you'll lead us?]

[It's laughable that you aimed for the Society Leader position.]

[To think we bet our lives trusting such a guy.]

It was truly strange.

Usually, no one dared to look at him like this.

But their gazes were utterly cold.

Although they couldn't say it out loud, their eyes clearly seemed to blame and criticize him.

'Little rats.'

He wanted to kill them all.

But he knew why they resented him, and he held back, thinking it would only make him look ugly if he got angry here, but his feelings were getting more and more mixed up.

Since everything had gone to hell anyway, should he just vent his feelings and end it?

If he just tore and ripped apart everything he saw, maybe he'd feel a little better.....

-Clench!

"Young Master!"

At that moment, Mo Yak grabbed both cheeks of Na Yul-ryang, who was about to fall into a state of madness from shame and anger.

Instinctively realizing that he was about to break down, she felt she had to hold onto his sanity somehow.

“Young Master, come to your senses! You’ve never been shaken by such things before. Since when did you start caring about others’ eyes?”

At her words, Na Yul-ryang opened his mouth in a depressed voice.

“.....It’s all over already. Mo Yak.”

At those words, Mo Yak barely held back the lump in her throat and shook her head vigorously.

This was absolutely not his fault.

That was literally like a natural disaster.

Even the current peak of the martial arts world couldn’t do anything against such a monster, so what could Na Yul-ryang do, no matter how much of a genius he was called?

She gently caressed Na Yul-ryang’s cheeks and said,

“Young Master. This is..... All because you’re pathetically weak.”

‘!?’

At Mo Yak’s completely unexpected words, Na Yul-ryang’s expression distorted.

Seeing his face like that, Mo Yak suddenly showed a bewildered expression and her left eyelid trembled.

‘Th-This.....’

Why did she say such a thing?

She had intended to say it was absolutely not his fault.

But words completely different from her will came out of her mouth.

Mo Yak tried to say that these words were not of her own will.

However,

“Because of your incompetence and weakness, you’ve driven all these people to their deaths. Do you want comfort when you should take your own life and it wouldn’t be enough?”

Words contrary to her will continued to come out of her mouth.

At these words from her, Na Yul-ryang’s expression went beyond distortion to become terrifying.

“.....What are you?”

Although he was mentally cornered to the point of almost falling into madness, a shred of reason remained.

Even if others feared him and turned their backs, Mo Yak would never do such a thing.

She was a companion who would walk with him even if the end of the road was hell and destruction, never one to let go of his hand.

Just as Na Yul-ryang’s lone pupil was about to be dyed with doubt and anger,

“You absolutely.....”

-Puk!

At that moment, the thumb of Mo Yak’s left hand, which had been caressing Na Yul-ryang’s cheek, dug into his empty right eye socket.

“Keuk!”

He couldn’t stop her finger from digging in for a moment due to being off guard, but he was able to grab it belatedly.

-Pak!

Na Yul-ryang grabbed her wrist and tried to remove it.

However, not only Mo Yak’s arm that had dug in, but even her finger didn’t budge.

To the bewildered Na Yul-ryang, Mo Yak opened her mouth with a chilling smile.

“I’ve waited quite a while for this moment.”

“Keuuuu.”

“You’ll soon forget that weakness.”

‘!?’

In Na Yul-ryang's lone pupil, he saw the bizarre sight of Mo Yak's left pupil splitting into a cross shape, with another pupil rising from within.

'This is.....'

"Ugh."

Na Yul-ryang's head tilted back.

Along with this, he felt something strange and chilling gradually filling his empty right eye socket, which had been taken by Mok Gyeong-un.

Then Na Yul-ryang felt his mind becoming hazy.

He was clearly looking ahead, but everything became blurry and his consciousness gradually became muddled.

Eventually, Na Yul-ryang's empty eye socket was suddenly filled, and a golden pupil like the one Mok Gyeong-un had taken appeared.

It didn't end there.

-Puk!

Mo Yak forcibly pulled out her own eyeball that had split into a cross and protruded, without any hesitation.

It should have been painful, but Mo Yak was rather smiling eerily.

Eventually, Mo Yak brought her extracted eyeball to Na Yul-ryang's forehead, and,

-Shu ru ru ruk!

The eyeball, as if alive, spewed out blood vessels, which dug into the flesh of his forehead.

As the blood vessels that had dug in wriggled and moved, the forehead area split and a space opened.

Then the eyeball Mo Yak was holding popped into that space.

With this, Mo Yak lost consciousness and collapsed to the ground like a puppet with its strings cut.

Na Yul-ryang, who now had three eyes including the one embedded in his forehead, muttered to the fallen Mo Yak.

“It was worth preparing for this possibility.”

Then he raised his head.

Na Yul-ryang’s three eyes were precisely focused on one figure floating in the air.

It was Mok Gyeong-un.

Na Yul-ryang’s lips curled up ominously as he looked at Mok Gyeong-un.

“So you were inside?”

Na Yul-ryang’s three pupils sparkled as if filled with ecstasy.

Chapter 410 – Encounter (2)

Young Master Na Yul-ryang's lips curled up ominously as he looked at Mok Gyeong-un.

"So you were inside?"

Na Yul-ryang, who had the eyeball from Mo Yak's left eye implanted in his forehead, had an atmosphere quite different from before.

Unlike his usual self, who showed only arrogance and bluntness due to being unfamiliar with emotions, he now exuded a certain ease.

He put one hand behind his back and raised the other.

Then,

-Chak! Chak! Chak!

Lim! Byeong! Gae!

He formed abbreviated hand seals and snapped his fingers.

-Ttak!

It was at that moment when he snapped his fingers.

-Gooooo!

As spell power spread in all directions, demonic powers that had been trapped here and there began to be released.

The released demonic powers,

-Kwa deuk! Kwa deuk!

“Kkeup!”

“M-My eye suddenly!”

As Society members here and there suddenly clutched their left or right eyes and writhed in pain, those around them couldn't hide their bewilderment.

This wasn't just happening to Na Yul-ryang's side, but also among some of the Society members who had come under Mok Gyeong-un.

As those around checked on the suffering Society members, asking if they were alright,

“Hey. Hey, why are you..... Huk!”

“Wh-What is this? Your..... your eye?”

They couldn't hide their shock at seeing their eyes.

The eyes of those who had been clutching them in pain split into a cross shape, revealing a bizarre eye that had been hidden inside.

The sight was so bizarre it was almost disgusting.

But the surprises didn't end there.

-Puk!

-Kwa deuk!

“Kek!”

“You..... What is this.....”

Those who had been clutching their eyes in pain suddenly attacked those nearby.

The Society members, who were off guard seeing their comrades suffering, couldn't help but fall victim to these sudden attacks.

This wasn't just happening among ordinary Society members, but also mixed in with some at the level of branch heads and grand branch heads.

“Keheok..... O-Oh Branch Head.....”

“Keu heu. The time has finally come.”

“Keuuuu. Grand Branch Head Gi Yun..... Wh-Why are you doing this?”

“You fool. Do you still see me as Grand Branch Head Gi Yun?”

With screams erupting from all directions and incidents occurring here and there, even the leaders and executives of each faction were at a loss for how to deal with this situation for a moment.

What on earth is happening right now?

‘.....’

The Society Leader's pupils trembled as he looked down at the plaza below.

Like the Elder Council, he had somewhat guessed that there would be hidden individuals.

But even he hadn't predicted this.

It was difficult to count the exact number as they were scattered here and there, but at a glance, it seemed that nearly 20% of the Society members had been unknowingly infiltrated.

To think they had hidden so many minions, were they preparing for this situation?

-You've worked hard, my child.

At that moment, a voice echoed in the Society Leader's ear.

The moment he heard that voice, the Society Leader's gaze immediately turned somewhere.

It was towards his chief disciple, Na Yul-ryang.

'!!!!'

The moment he saw him, the Society Leader's expression hardened terribly.

'So it's come to this.....'

Even though he had innate martial talent surpassing his own, since he wasn't of the Heaven Vein bloodline, he thought it would be enough to just keep him away from the Society Leader position.

But when did he plant an eye so close?

Did he read several moves ahead of even himself?

-I thought the grand plan might be disrupted by variables, but you're performing your filial duty so admirably.

The Society Leader gritted his teeth at the voice he heard.

-Euddeuk!

He's indeed excited.

Probably because of this being?

The Society Leader's gaze turned to Mok Gyeong-un.

He had never left that place, so revealing himself like this must be to absolutely not miss this moment.

-Clench!

'Even if things have gone awry, I can't let it go as he wishes.'

If that happens, everything will truly go according to its will.

The Society Leader clenched his left fist and opened his mouth, looking at Mok Gyeong-un.

"Ryu So-wol. I don't know if you'll believe this one, but how about joining hands for a moment?"

At this proposal, Mok Gyeong-un, who had been looking down at the plaza below, raised his head and answered.

“Join hands?”

“This one’s thoughts differ from that person’s. To set everything right..... Kek!”

It was then.

The Society Leader, who had been speaking, suddenly clutched his chest.

Then the blood vessels in the exposed parts of his skin bulged out black and turned blue, changing to look almost like he had fallen into qi deviation.

The Society Leader looked at Young Master Na Yul-ryang with bloodshot eyes.

He was smiling at him.

‘All..... I thought..... I had removed..... everything.....’

Was there still a remaining restriction?

Realizing this, the Society Leader’s eyes filled with anger.

He had prepared so much to overturn everything while restraining himself, but it all turned out to still be playing in the palm of his hand.

It was at that moment.

-Chak! Chak! Chak! Chak!

Mok Gyeong-un formed abbreviated hand seals with his left hand.

Byeong! Tu! Yeol! Jin!

They were the hand seals of the Nine Character Revival Technique.

Instantly, an immense spell power filled the area around the Society Leader.

-Gooooooooo!

Then,

-Paaaaaa!

Four pillars appeared around him.

Originally, people without spell power wouldn't be able to see this, but the Society Leader could see these pillars.

This was created by Mok Gyeong-un using spell power and techniques.

-Swish!

Mok Gyeong-un put his sword-holding fingers to his lips and muttered softly.

"Four Peaks Linking Technique."

-Chwaaaaa!

At that moment, the four pillars connected, creating a massive surface.

As a result, the Society Leader became trapped in a space created by spell power.

But when this happened,

-Sss sss!

The blood vessels that had been bulging out of his skin began to subside little by little.

‘This is?’

The Society Leader’s eyes glinted.

He had heard from Vice Society Leader Mong So-cheon that the one who inherited the Moon Vein’s sword techniques had talent in sorcery and had become a disciple of Sorcerer Jo Ui-gong, who was under the head of the Primal Killing Pavilion.

Although he had emphasized sorcery because there were things to prepare for his plans, he hadn’t paid much attention to it, thinking how much could he have learned given that its system was perhaps even more complex than martial arts.

But looking at it now, it seemed to be at a level beyond that.

However, even if possessed, can a vengeful spirit handle spells, which could be considered a power opposite to it, in this way?

It was at that moment of puzzlement.

-Swish!

Mok Gyeong-un extended his hand.

At that instant, the Society Leader, who had just escaped the pain of the restriction while trapped in the Four Peak Linking Formation, was pushed back and flew into the main building, breaking through a window.

-Kwang!

After sending the Society Leader flying like that, Mok Gyeong-un then looked at Young Master Na Yul-ryang.

An incomparable demonic power and strange energy, far beyond that of others who had another eye appear within their eyes, was emanating from him.

He looked almost like a different person.

No, had he become a different person?

‘That eye.....’

An eye had sprouted on his forehead.

After staring at this for a while, Mok Gyeong-un then,

-Kung!

Landed right in front of Na Yul-ryang from mid-air.

As Mok Gyeong-un landed, the ground cracked and shockwaves spread out, causing those nearby to be thrown back.

“Euhuk!”

“Wh-What energy.....”

-Pa pa pa pa pang!

Due to the shockwaves and aftermath, soon only Mok Gyeong-un and Na Yul-ryang remained within that radius.

Na Yul-ryang smiled and opened his mouth.

“I didn’t expect sorcery to be possible with that body. Not bad.”

“That eye..... You’re indeed not Na Yul-ryang.”

“Na Yul-ryang? Aah. Of course not. That child is sleeping peacefully in here.”

Na Yul-ryang patted his chest.

Then he looked in the direction where the Society Leader had been sent flying and said,

“Thanks to that foolish boy, I thought the grand plan might get a little tangled, but fortunately, everything is returning to its place.”

“Grand plan?”

“Yes. I’ve been drawing a big picture. There was a variable like you, but that’s a part I can overcome easily enough.”

With those words, Na Yul-ryang extended his hand towards Mok Gyeong-un.

And then he said with a smile,

“That guy made some initial moves, but I’ve prepared a lot for you. Come with me. So-wol.”

No sooner had those words ended.

-Jjeojjeok!

The wooden doll in Mok Gyeong-un’s bosom cracked.

This was because it couldn’t withstand the spirit power of Cheong-ryeong inside.

Cheong-ryeong, trying to forcibly break out of it, spoke to Mok Gyeong-un in a voice filled with ecstasy and anger.

-Disciple..... It’s him. It must be him.

In Cheong-ryeong’s view, she saw a different appearance, not Na Yul-ryang.

He was the being she hated so much, the one who had ripped out her heart and made her face death.

It was Bi Yeong-hon of the Heaven Vein.

However, Mok Gyeong-un was looking with a different perspective from Cheong-ryeong.

That is,

“So you’re Mok-gan.”

‘!?’

At those words, Na Yul-ryang’s smiling expression froze coldly and became strange.

Then he tilted his head slightly and opened his mouth with narrowed eyes.

“.....I didn’t expect those words to come from your mouth.”

-Disciple, what are you saying now? Although he has an eye on his forehead, he’s clearly.....

-Cheong-ryeong. This guy is Mok-gan.

-The Mok-gan..... He is.....

Cheong-ryeong’s words trailed off.

Her mind became complicated.

The shell was clearly Young Master Na Yul-ryang, but what was inside was undoubtedly him.

But he’s Mok-gan?

The Mok-gan she had learned about while being with Mok Gyeong-un, that is, the being combining ‘eye’ (mok)) and ‘mountain’ (gan)), Three-Eyes (Sam-ahn,)), was the leader of the Secret Society.

What on earth is going on here?

As she was puzzling over this, Na Yul-ryang raised one eyebrow and said,

“You..... Are you really So-wol?”

At his question, the corners of Mok Gyeong-un’s mouth slowly raised.

-Shwaaa!

-Flinch!

It looked like he was smiling, but as a chilling and enormous killing intent rose from within that smile, Na Yul-ryang’s eyes immediately sharpened.

No matter how she had become a vengeful spirit, the Ryu So-wol he knew would never make such a face.

This was something only one who had committed slaughter, pandemonium, blood, and pain..... all of those things, could possess.