

Level 4 Human in a Ruined World

#Chapter 61 - Read Level 4 Human in a Ruined World Chapter 61

Chapter 61

[Translator – Night]

[Proofreader – Gun]

Chapter 61: The Pestilent Sword (2)

‘.....’

Yeongwoo confirmed the fearful cat pointing to the advertiser’s mark and hardened his expression.

「Fearful Cat」 – Epic Compass

【Indicates a threatening target.】

【–Empty slot–】

According to the tooltip of this item, when there is a ‘threatening target’ nearby, the cat wakes up and points to the target.

It probably means to be prepared for a threat.

But what exactly does the term ‘threat’ mean in this context?

Generally, it would refer to a strong target or someone with aggressive intentions, but based on Yeongwoo’s experience, this item didn’t operate on such a simple principle.

Just looking back to when he encountered the original owner of this item, Shin Youngju, it is clear.

At that time, Yeongwoo had no intention or ability to fight against Shin Youngju, who had been continuously wary of him.

However, when the fearful cat pointed him out as a threatening target, the situation changed.

Eventually, Shin Youngju, who had been constantly vigilant against Yeongwoo, carried out a surprise attack, and in the end...

'I survived, and Shin Youngju died.'

However, if she hadn't attacked first, Yeongwoo would never have drawn his sword.

Far from harming the opponent, he even felt admiration for Shin Youngju, who had supported the city of Chungju.

In other words, at that time, if this compass hadn't pointed at Yeongwoo, Shin Youngju might not have suffered any harm.

Of course, in the end, Yeongwoo killed Shin Youngju, so from a consequential perspective, the fearful cat was right.

No, it turned out right.

Kwaaa...!

A sound resembling a roar echoed from beyond the sky covering Icheon City.

It was clear that the advertiser had come even closer.

And around this time, another group of cyclists passed by Yeongwoo and Jongsu along the edge of the road.

Some of them glanced at the conspicuously white foreign car, but most fixed their gaze forward as if eager to get out of here as soon as possible.

"We're almost there."

Jongsu murmured quietly, scanning the rear seat through the rearview mirror.

In response, Yeongwoo looked through the car window at the crimson pillar of light signalling the advertiser's arrival.

Gooo...!

A mark incomparable to the creatures like monsters or mutants, but more like a tornado than a light pillar this time.

"Icheon's Strongest Sword might be around here. So, if you see anyone suspicious, stop the car early"

It was not only a matter of security on this side but also a concern that the car, which had to present a gift to the advertiser, might be damaged.

Then, Jongsu turned around with a face that seemed impossible.

“Even if it’s the Strongest Sword... wouldn’t they have run away after seeing that?”

It was a fairly reasonable opinion.

Unlike monsters or mutants, this time, the enormous mark appeared without warning, and only Yeongwoo could see the timer.

In other words, from the perspective of Icheon citizens, including the Strongest Sword, it was a situation where an unknown giant mark fell on their heads.

Whether mutants would appear in the place where the mark fell, or something even more ominous, was unknown.

Therefore, it was natural for humans to instinctively take cover and watch.

However, Yeongwoo’s thoughts were a bit different.

“We saw it on the way here, right? The Strongest Swords have all disappeared.”

“Oh, yes. That’s right.”

Jongsu nodded after a moment.

Since leaving Chungju, they had passed through two regions, Eumseong and Yeosu, but in both places, the Strongest Swords had vanished.

They had either lost their titles to the Strongest Swords from other regions or had been killed by the Strongest Swords who came down from Seoul to find mutants.

“But here, the Strongest Sword is guarding the place perfectly. Moreover, this is the closest city to Seoul among all the cities we’ve seen so far.”

“Oh, right.”

Jongsu finally nodded.

Whether the Strongest Sword had been deprived of their title by the Strongest Swords in other regions or killed by the Strongest Swords coming down from Seoul, Icheon was unable to do anything about it.

“Maybe the Icheon Strongest Sword is not an ordinary person.”

Yeongwoo said this while looking at the ‘fearful cat.’

Perhaps what this fellow is pointing at is not the advertiser but the Icheon Strongest Sword.

And if that's really the case...

Kiiing!

“.....!”

Before Yeongwoo could fully form his thoughts, Jongsu abruptly slammed on the brakes, bringing the car to a stop.

He then leaned against the tightly gripped steering wheel, closely observing the scenery ahead.

“Hyungnim, isn't that...?”

Jongsu uttered uncertainly.

This was understandable as the number of people who had entered their sight was in the hundreds.

Due to the wind blowing the advertiser's mark right in the middle of an apartment complex, numerous people were fleeing in a panic.

This excluded only the two individuals standing near the apartment entrance.

And precisely these two were the cause that prompted Jongsu to hit the brakes.

Swoosh.

Jongsu instinctively reached for his sword hilt, and Yeongwoo tapped the driver's seat.

“Why draw your sword? Not even other Strongest Swords could touch those two.”

“W-well...”

“Jongsu, please wait here. I'd like to resolve this peacefully through conversation.”

Of course, Yeongwoo wasn't entirely sure about his words.

* * *

Kwaaa...!

Once again, the red sky flashed, and the residents who were evacuating shouted in terror.

They would probably never return to Icheon.

Whether swept away by abnormal weather on some national highway or arriving safely in another city, it didn't matter.

"What the hell is going on?"

44-year-old Kim Byungcheol was dismayed.

He couldn't find any trust in the eyes of the residents passing by.

No matter how much of a Strongest Sword he was, it was clear that he couldn't handle this situation.

And there was quite a reasonable diagnosis for such a conclusion.

"....."

Even Byungcheol himself had no idea what was happening right now.

"It's probably mutants, right? There's nothing else that could come again, is there?"

Seeing Byungcheol's face stiffen, the man next to him spoke in a polite tone.

This man in police uniform was 28-year-old Kwon Taeyoung, a rookie officer at Icheon Police Station.

And the original profession of Kim Byungcheol 139, the Strongest Sword being guarded by this rookie cop, was also...

"I can't do police work anymore."

Icheon Police Station Chief, Superintendent Kim Byungcheol.

He intentionally wore a police uniform and worked to show that law enforcement still existed to the citizens.

But just like the uniform that had quickly torn apart due to the fierce battles, the law enforcement he tried so hard to preserve became meaningless in just two days.

What was the meaning of having police in a city without citizens?

Moreover, even if he searched for a new city, if such incidents could happen anytime in the future...

"....."

As Byungcheol gazed up at the crimson pillar of light with a disheartened expression, Taeyoung, who had been surveying the surroundings, opened his mouth in surprise.

“Chief...?”

“...What’s going on again?”

In fact, there was nothing more surprising than the city disintegrating in midair.

[Translator – Night]

[Proofreader – Gun]

Turning his head following Taeyoung’s gaze with a puzzled expression, Byungcheol soon wore a similar expression to the rookie cop.

“...?”

In the distance, a man covered in gold from head to toe was getting out of a white Audi.

“No way.”

Although it looked quite different from what they had imagined, the end was coming in any case.

Byungcheol, turning away from the swirling crimson pillar of light, stared at the bizarrely dressed man in his thirties approaching from the other side.

Upon seeing this, Taeyoung placed his hands on his belt and spoke with a voice tinged with fear.

“Um, doesn’t he have a lot of equipment?”

“Yeah. This guy feels different this time.”

Byungcheol said, wrinkling his nose as he took a deep breath.

Right now, he was looking at the outsider who had the smallest physique among those who had visited this place yet was adorned with the most equipment.

“How many people has he killed? And even the Strongest Swords...”

In this world, there are three main ways to obtain ‘equipment’: defeating mutants, killing those who have defeated mutants, or accumulating a large amount of karma and meeting a merchant.

However, since merchants had only appeared less than a day ago, the only option for someone to have such a large amount of equipment was to defeat the Strongest Swords.

And even then, a few wouldn't be enough.

And in reality, this guy deliberately came to Icheon, not staying in his territory.

It was certainly not a mistake; he could easily check the regional status just by turning his eyes a bit.

[Currently staying in the area of 'Icheon.'

[The Strongest Sword in this area is 'Kim Byungcheol139.' Rank 2, 6 defenses.

In other words.

'Even this time, a Strongest Sword came to kill me.'

Although it was a situation that could instill fear, Byungcheol had a corner of belief.

That was his trusty companion slung diagonally on his waist, a .38 caliber revolver.

Not a fake one, but a real pistol.

Unsealing cost: 1 million, bullet cost: 200,000 each.

To acquire this deadly weapon, he had spent almost all of the 3 million rewards obtained by defeating mutants.

He had even bought two guns, giving one to the rookie officer Kwon Taeyoung.

This was a gesture of respect and a token of trust to the rookie cop who had returned to the station on the first day of the reset.

Of course, it was a fact that a partner with sufficient firepower was needed.

"Do you still have a bullet left?"

Byungcheol asked without taking his gaze off the golden outsider, and Taeyoung quickly nodded.

"Yes, I have one bullet left."

"I only have one bullet left now too. So, we have to shoot carefully. When the time comes, aim precisely."

“Yes, yes! Of course!”

The original five rounds of live ammunition were now reduced to just two.

Thanks to the numerous powerful individuals, including the Strongest Swords, who had invaded over the past two days.

Fortunately, the majority had retreated upon seeing the unsealed guns, but for the very few who stubbornly challenged them, using expensive bullets became inevitable.

‘Whether it’s a Strongest Sword or not, if it’s a human being, you can’t avoid bullets. And that applies to you too.’

While firmly grasping this reality, Byungcheol slowly pulled out the revolver with his right hand.

Once again, he hoped the opponent would retreat peacefully.

If a new mutant appeared from behind the glowing pillar, he might have to use bullets on him.

The metallic footsteps of the golden outsider began to be heard.

The distance between them and the Icheon police improved, and both sides’ shooting accuracy increased.

The distance gradually shortened to about 15 meters, and at this point, Byungcheol aimed his gun at the opponent and shouted.

“Stop moving! If you take another step, I’ll shoot!”

Taeyoung also moved along the diagonal to aim at the opponent, reducing the evasive angle.

It was a tactic to limit the evasive angle, a kind of pincer movement.

However, with a somewhat surprised expression, the golden outsider, Jung Yeongwoo 07, slowly raised both arms.

“Are you the police? It seems there’s a misunderstanding. I didn’t come here to harm anyone...”

During Yeongwoo’s dialogue, a chilling roar echoed from the sky, sounding like the cry of a giant beast or the creaking of a ship.

Everyone raised their gaze to the sky.

Simultaneously, their pupils dilated, tinged with iridescent colors.

Finally, the red sky opened, and dozens of gigantic heads descended, coiling around the glowing pillar.

These heads were connected by neural networks emitting iridescent light, and each emitted an indiscernible sound, screaming in their own ways.

“Oh, what is that...?”

Byungcheol muttered, unable to comprehend the spectacle, and Taeyoung, who had been standing on the diagonal, suddenly vomited.

His brain couldn't process the situation, and malfunctioned.

“Ugh...!”

“Taeyoung.....!”

While Byungcheol was calling out to his startled partner, the golden outsider, who had been standing on the diagonal, opened his mouth.

“I think I unintentionally caused a lot of trouble. That... is my advertiser.”

[Translator – Night]

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Chapter 62

[Translator – Night]

[Proofreader – Gun]

Chapter 62: The Pestilent Sword (3)

“What... is? What?”

How many people could instantly connect this situation with the word ‘advertiser’?

Byungcheol, who didn't immediately understand Yeongwoo's words, mumbled with his gun tightened even more.

“What are you saying now? Explain properly!”

“That’s an advertiser. They came to visit me to make an advertising contract.”

Yeongwoo slightly moved his chin to indicate the extraterrestrial being on the other side.

Of course, that was an advertiser who came from outer space.

And the other party was likely well aware of it without needing an explanation.

“An advertisement...?”

Byungcheol, who finally clearly understood Yeongwoo’s line, made a more complicated expression.

—Huh...!

Meanwhile, the ‘advertiser’ who had almost completely wrapped around the pillar of light and descended began to make noise.

—U...!

The first few times, it was a sound at the level of an unintelligible roar.

—Yeong...!

As time passed, it became inevitable to think that it was trying hard to pronounce something.

At least as much as Yeongwoo.

“...Could this be.”

Chills ran down Byungcheol’s spine along his spine.

And by this time, the advertiser had completed the problem sentence and spoke.

—Yeongwoo...!

Yeongwoo!

The pronunciation was clear enough to evoke the letters ‘Yeongwoo’ in the mind, even for someone who didn’t know the name Jeong Yeongwoo.

The monster had been practicing human speech.

“What?”

Realizing this fact belatedly, Byungcheol turned around as if possessed.

Then.

—Yeongwoo...!

He shouted the word 'Yeongwoo' again, as if confirming that he pronounced it correctly.

"...Damn it."

Finally, cold sweat began to form on Byungcheol's forehead.

It was due to the uncomfortable fear of the fact that the monster with dozens of heads entwined like a rosary had learned human speech.

However, the unpleasant experience did not end here.

—Jeong... Yeongwoo!

The advertiser, who perfectly learned the two letters 'Yeongwoo,' pronounced the last letter 'Jeong' in one go.

—Jeong Yeongwoo!

Perhaps he had grasped how to make human sounds.

The radio that had only made noise had finally found the correct frequency.

"Jeong Yeongwoo...?"

Byungcheol, sensing that the sound the monster had been practicing was a person's name, turned his gaze back to the golden foreigner.

"Didn't that thing say it came to meet you earlier? Then that must be..."

As much as Byungcheol's trembling voice, the muzzle of the gun was also shaking.

Yeongwoo, in response, stared at the muzzle and slowly moved his lips.

"Yes. I am Jeong Yeongwoo."

Finally, the name of the foreigner was revealed.

And simultaneously, the advertiser thundered with a voice like thunder.

—Jeong Yeongwoo...! Contract! For... us... came!

Although the intonation was a mess, the sentence he pronounced was quite intact.

It had been only a few minutes since he arrived on Earth, and he had already learned the language here.

‘Come to think of it, without an intermediary....’

Yeongwoo realized that the being in front of him was something different from the extraterrestrial beings he had encountered so far.

Even just looking at the beings who came to Earth as traders, communication was possible only through intermediaries.

They could only convey heat, noise, and breathing directly, without the need for an intermediary.

On the other hand, this advertiser.

—Jeong Yeongwoo! For the contract! We came!

Not only did he facilitate this meeting without the intervention of an intermediary, but he was also self-correcting awkward intonations.

“We...?”

Byungcheol, who had been listening to the monster’s sounds, turned around with a face of realization.

Then, he aimed his gun at the extraterrestrial being entwined in the pillar of light.

He judged that the monster descending from the sky was more dangerous than Jeong Yeongwoo, who was from the same species but had come alone.

‘Right. He didn’t come alone.’

Yeongwoo also carefully observed the being’s appearance at the word ‘we’ pronounced by the advertiser.

Thud.

The giant organism firmly wrapped around the glowing pillar was a form with dozens of heads adorned with iridescent light.

Each head looked so different that one might think they belonged to different species, not to mention different planets.

Some heads resembled rocks with undulating membranes on the surface, reminiscent of fish, while others looked strangely eerie with numerous eyes, resembling Earth's animals but without eyes.

“What on earth is that...?”

Byungcheol, who found a head similar to a human among the colorful heads, made a sound as if he were about to cry immediately.

The head with strong cheekbones, a large nose, and a sharp bandit beard was rolling its protruding eyeballs, looking down below.

‘There was another species similar to humans.’

Yeongwoo also quickly found the bandit head but was not as shocked as Byungcheol.

It was because he had already met a trader similar to humans before.

During the bidding for the trade, the wandering traders Volthak, who had revealed the ‘breathing’ sound, had talked about it.

‘Then are dozens of advertisers gathered here?’

As Yeongwoo approached to get a closer look at the advertiser, Byungcheol shouted, aiming the gun at the extraterrestrial being entwined in the pillar of light.

“Wh-what’s going on now?”

“We need to send that thing back quickly.”

To do that, they had to proceed with the advertising contract first.

“...”

Yeongwoo, glancing at the young policeman still struggling on the ground, passed by Byungcheol and headed towards the advertiser.

Clank, clink.

As Yeongwoo made a metallic sound and approached the pillar of light, the dozens of heads, each looking elsewhere, all turned their gaze towards him.

Then.

—Ah...!

They all exclaimed at once.

As if they were saying He was suitable for the model they desired.

—Jeong Yeongwoo!

The advertisers shouted Yeongwoo's name once again.

It seemed as if they were confirming whether the person standing in front of them was indeed Jeong Yeongwoo.

So, Yeongwoo said/

“Yes. I am Jeong Yeongwoo 07, the strongest in Gyeongbuk, the human of Earth.”

He recited the lines that the intermediary Kubu had mentioned to him sometime, a phrase that was likely the ‘Universal Greeting’ at that time.

The probability was high because Kubu had done something called the ‘Universal Greeting’ back then.

Then, to prove his identity, he tapped his left chest and displayed his title.

Paat!

『Gyeongbuk's Best Sword』

A title interface bestowed by some kind of system overseeing the reset.

I don't know, but wouldn't advertisers from outer space also trust the reset system?

[Translator – Night]

[Proofreader – Gun]

‘Now, what's next?’

As Yeongwoo waited for reactions while scanning through dozens of heads one by one, heads with eyes soon rolled their eyeballs.

—Nice to meet you. Jeong Yeongwoo 07, the human of Earth and the strongest in Gyeongbuk!

Their intonation had become much more natural by now.

—We are “Dogo”...! We heard the call of “Morning Star” first.

When Dogo and Morning Star were pronounced, waves of intangible vibrations could be felt in the air, and each time, Yeongwoo could clearly understand the meaning of those words.

Dogo....

Although it was a proper noun he heard for the first time in his life, Yeongwoo could grasp the meaning as if he had known it for a long time.

‘It wasn’t just a name for one person; it was Dogo.’

Dogo.

A galactic weapons brand and a joint-stock company with multiple shareholders.

In other words, Yeongwoo was now standing in front of the shareholders of a galactic weapons company.

‘So, am I supposed to become the advertising model for a weapons company?’

Yeongwoo was taken aback by the unexpected identity of the advertiser.

But why...?

Why would a galactic weapons company advertise on Earth, overlooking other planets?

Just as Yeongwoo’s skepticism began to rise, ‘Dogo’ started uttering strange lines.

—Confusion! Civil war on Earth!

—Will “Dogo” be destructive even on this world?

“What...?”

—We will investigate the outskirts of Earth, together with Jeong Yeongwoo 07!

“Oh my goodness.”

Yeongwoo unknowingly touched his forehead.

Considering the sequence of lines, this seemed to be...

“...An advertising concept.”

* * *

Promoting “Dogo,” a galactic military company that supports the outskirts of a planet where civil war has erupted...

Understanding this far, Yeongwoo had another question.

Anyway, if it’s an advertising contract, there must be conditions, right?

Like using only weapons supported by Dogo or exposing the brand name at specific moments.

“Uh... for now, I understand that this is a brand advertisement. So, what exactly am I supposed to do?”

When Yeongwoo asked this, the shareholders of Dogo instantly straightened up.

Paat!

Then, simultaneously, a system message appeared in Yeongwoo’s view.

“Dogo requests access to data for Jeong Yeongwoo 07. Will you approve?”

[Requested Data]

- Unique code
- Language used
- Quest slots

“Ah.”

It was a situation similar to when Yeongwoo first dealt with the intermediary Kubu.

The only difference was that Kubu had requested only unique code and language data, while Dogo added quest slots to the request.

“...”

After a moment of contemplation, Yeongwoo approved the data access.

With that, Dogo’s contract proposal was conveyed through the system message.

「Contract: Dogo-49523-IIIIII_II-2nd Tier」

(Required) [Utilization of Grade 2 advertising space]

- The logo of the headquarters will be printed on the trajectory of the weapons.
- Before major battles, you must publicly announce that you fought with Dogo's support.

(Required) [Grade 3 Exclusive Quest]

- Receive bonuses for achieving exclusive quests.

(Optional) [Grade 2 Exclusive Quest]

- Receive ad fees only through achieving exclusive quests.
- The total ad fee executed will increase approximately 40 times.

#Basic ad fee: Estimated 10 million Karma per week.

#Basic contract period: 4 weeks.

“...Crazy.”

This was truly an interstellar advertising contract.

While the utilization of advertising space seemed reasonable from an Earthling's perspective, the crucial parts, such as the payment method for advertising fees and the scale of additional executions, were beyond expectations.

‘The basic ad fee is estimated to be 10 million Karma per week, and they even offer up to 40 times...?’

Of course, in this case, Yeongwoo had to perform the quests designed by Dogo to receive the ad fees, so it might be a tricky clause.

But still, 40 times.

In simple Karma conversion, it was 4 billion.

And that was a weekly payment of 4 billion.

‘If the quests are too difficult, and I can only do one out of ten, it's still four times the ad fee. This is worth a try.’

And from Dogo's perspective, wouldn't they want the model to survive as long as possible for promotion?

Therefore, Yeongwoo didn't think of it as an impossible clause that would stab him in the back.

‘Let’s give it a try. It’s worth a shot. I will make the most out of it’

In the worst-case scenario, he would simply go around announcing the support from Dogo for free for about a month.

Yeongwoo blinked his eyes a couple of times, then shouted loudly towards Dogo’s shareholders.

“I’ll accept the contract! Including the Grade 2 quest...!”

[Translator – Night]

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Chapter 63

[Translator – Night]

[Proofreader – Gun]

Chapter 63: Audi on its way to space

-Good. Grade 2 quest.

The shareholders of Dogo seemed satisfied with Yeongwoo’s acceptance of the contract.

Then, they drew a string of characters in a form that Yeongwoo had never seen before, illuminating their bodies in the air.

Swaat!

These characters, arranged like scattered wedges, were the signature of the intergalactic weapon brand ‘Dogo.’

‘Ah.’

In other words, the shareholders of Dogo had signed the contract.

Pang!

Following that, Dogo’s signature soared into the sky, and a new system message appeared in Yeongwoo’s view.

「Contract: Dogo-49523-III_II-Tier 2 has been concluded.」

An advertising contract between a planetary resident and a cosmic-scale corporation, executed in just two days after the reset.

“...”

As Yeongwoo made a shocked expression, the shareholders of Dogo, wrapped in a pillar of light, began to weaken.

Finally, they seemed to be leaving this place.

Of course, one more procedure remained as announced earlier.

-Return the favor, waiting for you.

Dogo requested a souvenir in their unique ‘alien-like’ tone, and Yeongwoo only now worried about Jongsoo’s safety.

Even here, it seemed like not a single police officer could breathe properly.

Swoosh.

As Yeongwoo looked at the white Audi parked on the other side, Byungcheol, who was pointing the barrel towards the sky, widened his eyes.

“What’s this now?”

“Before sending the advertiser back, you have to give them a gift.”

“A... gift?”

Byungcheol made another puzzled expression.

But anyway, it was a relief that they would be leaving soon.

“Then let’s quickly give it and send them off. Hurry up.”

While Byungcheol said this, Detective Kwon Taeyoung’s labored breathing was coming up from the ground.

In response, Yeongwoo nodded and raised his hand.

“Jongsu!”

As if waiting, the white Audi started rolling.

Vroom...

Approaching under the red sky, a 4-seater convertible glided smoothly on the Icheon City road.

“ ... ”

As Yeongwoo and Byungcheol stared blankly at the strange scene of a foreign car sliding under the red sky, Jongsu's head popped out from the Audi that had just stopped in front of the two.

“It seems to have been resolved through conversation? I was curious about what was happening.”

Jongsu's gaze, saying this, was focused on the gun that Byungcheol was holding.

On the other hand, Byungcheol was bewildered by Jongsu's completely unshaken appearance in front of the gun.

“...Who are you?”

Byungcheol asked Yeongwoo while keeping the gun at the ambiguous point between the sky and the ground.

“He's my partner.”

Yeongwoo gave a brief reply while looking at Jongsu.

Unlike the young detective wandering around on the ground, Jongsu was in a state where not even a single breath was disturbed.

‘Is it simply because he's bold? Or perhaps...’

Was it because of the original fate that was supposed to die today?

Even though the original fate was reset, Jongsu himself had often talked about the nuance that he was living as an extra.

Therefore, he might be more immune to various fears compared to others who are strongly attached to life.

“Now is the time to present this?”

Finally, Jongsu stroked the steering wheel, and his eyes sparkled.

“Yes. I don’t know how to convey it... If we park in front there, won’t they just take it themselves?”

As Yeongwoo pointed to the apartment parking lot in front of the advertiser, Jongsu’s head lifted into the air.

It was time to observe the appearance of the advertiser who would soon receive the souvenir.

“... ”

With a gulp, Jongsu’s Adam’s apple moved noticeably.

Even if he didn’t know, facing such a giant creature must have been frightening.

Of course, Yeongwoo had no intention of sending Jongsu alone.

“Don’t worry, I’ll go with you.”

As Yeongwoo opened the passenger seat door and sat on the seat, Jongsu smiled with a relaxed face.

“Indeed, you are loyal, sir.”

“Rather than loyalty... it’s my deal.”

* * *

The distance from the point where Yeongwoo and Jongsu were to the advertiser was about 140 meters.

Although it would be a distance that they could reach in the blink of an eye by stepping on the accelerator, Jongsu almost drove at a constant speed.

“By the way, how do we let them know that this car is the souvenir?”

“We can tell them verbally. The contract was practically done through conversation.”

If there was a problem, it would be whether the other party would like the gift or not.

Vroom...

While the two were having a brief conversation, a heavy shadow was cast over the white Audi.

Finally, they arrived in front of the strange-looking advertiser again.

“...Why on earth is something like that here? Wasn't the reset supposed to end among humans?”

While Jongsu swallowed another heavy spit and looked up at the advertiser, Yeongwoo looked around with a troubled expression.

“Shit.”

“What's the matter, brother?”

“All the cars around here look the same.”

“Yes?”

When Jongsu, who was absentmindedly looking out the window, heard Yeongwoo's words, he belatedly slapped his knee.

“That's right. It's a parking lot.”

Currently, the two had placed the Audi in the underground parking lot of an apartment.

Therefore, it was natural that there were vehicles everywhere.

Although they were all turned into stones, in the eyes of the extraterrestrial visitors, they would all look like similar objects.

“Ah... I should have chosen a yellow car back then. Even if it's just a noticeable color, it might have looked special.”

While Jongsu mumbled awkwardly like this, something crossed Yeongwoo's mind.

“Jongsu.”

“Yes, sir.”

“Does this car have ambient lights?”

Ambient lights.

Indirect lights inside a vehicle, and for Mercedes-Benz, a competitor, the illumination crossing the front side of the car interior was once a signature.

And Audi, too, Yeongwoo knew, had introduced a similar form of mood lighting.

He was well aware of this because a YouTuber he used to follow enjoyed driving an Audi.

Of course, there was a high probability that the person was now somewhere in the lineup for mutants.

“Ambient lights...? Well, I don’t know much about Audis.”

Jongsu scratched his cheek, fiddling with the control panel.

Then, after a while.

“Oh, this seems like it.”

With Jongsu’s line, a vibrant neon sign-like lighting along the curves inside the car increased.

Pop!

[Translator – Night]

[Proofreader – Gun]

“Uh... it seems a bit too bright. Should I lower it?”

“No. It’s just right. Open the roof in this state.”

With these words, Yeongwoo opened the passenger door and stepped outside.

Soon after, the ceiling of the white Audi folded backward, and a purple light spilled out, as if a treasure chest were opening.

“It’s my souvenir.”

Yeongwoo pointed to the Audi with his palm, timing it perfectly.

The current time was 8:23 PM.

The Audi convertible, with the roof fully open, and the lights shining brightly in the darkening twilight, looked quite precious.

At least enough for a weapon manufacturing company from outer space to find interest in it.

-What is that? That.

Vroom...

As dozens of shareholders began to tighten the light pillar to get a closer look at the souvenir, Yeongwoo debated whether he should explain more.

He then remembered that when the other party introduced themselves, they mentioned the unique noun 'Dogo.'

"This is... Audi, a special means of transportation."

With Yeongwoo's words, the shareholders echoed in unison with fluent pronunciation.

-Audi.

Perhaps now Audi could also be considered a cosmic brand.

"On Earth, we move with this. As you can see, we are small in size and move slowly."

While Yeongwoo pretended to walk slowly in front of the shareholders, he thought that to them, it might look like a single ant wriggling around.

Anyway, whether Yeongwoo's efforts were virtual or if the Audi emitting a mysterious light pleased them, the shareholders gave positive feedback.

-Audi, good.

Then, suddenly, their bodies twitched.

"...!"

That's a characteristic seen when those guys are touching something.

Yeongwoo felt a chill down his spine and shouted.

"Jongsu! Come out right now!"

His intuition told him that the shareholders seemed to be attempting to take the souvenir.

"Hurry!"

As Yeongwoo urged with a scream, Jongsu, who was staring blankly at the advertiser enveloped in a glow, hurriedly jumped out of the car.

And then.

-Kit!

The golden goblin hiding in the back seat leaped agilely, and almost at the same moment, a laser beam descended from the sky, striking the Audi.

Swoosh...

Paaaang!

“Gasp!”

“Ahh!”

The pitch-black surroundings suddenly became as bright as daylight, to the extent that the dark sky appeared in broad daylight.

Those guys indeed possessed tremendous physical force.

“C-Crazy.”

It was like the spectacle on the first day of the reset when ‘lives’ were flying, amplified thousands of times.

Unconsciously, Yeongwoo took a step back.

—Jeong Yeongwoo 07!

Voices of shareholders echoed in the bright white view.

Just as Yeongwoo was about to respond.

Shooo!

The excessively bright view returned to its original state in an instant, and everything disappeared.

The Dogo shareholders, the crimson light pillar, the enormous laser beam, and the Audi, all gone.

“Ugh.”

As he exhaled the breath he had been holding, Yeongwoo noticed Jongsu sitting on the ground, rubbing his buttocks.

“A-Are you okay?”

“Yes? Ah... yes, I’m fine.”

Jongsu blinked his eyes, looking at the clear night sky as if it had become clear just now.

“Gone... right? They’re gone?”

Jongsu’s eyes seemed to plead, wishing it to be true.

Yeongwoo looked at his partner, then shifted his gaze to where the advertisers were.

There, something faintly remained in the place where the crimson light pillar had been just a moment ago.

“...?”

At first, he thought it was an afterimage due to the intense light he had seen, but...

“What is that?”

Seeing Jongsu discover the same thing, it seemed not to be an illusion.

Clearly, something remained.

“Be, be careful... Hyung-nim.”

Gradually, as Yeongwoo approached the mysterious entity, Jongsu also stepped to the side, drawing his sword, preparing for any unforeseen circumstances.

On the other hand, Yeongwoo was thinking.

‘What on earth is this?’

Completely captivated by curiosity, he continued to approach the unidentified entity.

With each step he took, the outline and color of the target became clearer.

This felt similar to the first day of the reset when he could recognize the currency exchange assigned to him.

‘Dogo’ must have left something for their advertising model.

In other words.

‘This might be a return gift for the souvenir.’

Finally, when Yeongwoo took a step right in front of the entity, the problematic object turned dark.

Srrruuuk!

And as the color rose, the size of the revealed object was much larger than expected.

Since the height of the object had already exceeded Yeongwoo's stature.

“...!”

Even Yeongwoo, who belonged to the bold group among humans, was momentarily stunned by the overwhelming sense of unease emanating from the situation.

Shortly after, even Byungcheol, who was observing the scene from afar with a gun in hand, rushed over.

“What on earth is happening now?”

Because.

Shwaaat!

The shape of the object, which emitted a fierce steam as if it had completed its mutation, was undeniably an egg.

Despite the shiny surface, it was a gigantic pitch-black egg that gave an inexplicable chill.

“Hyung-nim...”

Jongsu alternately looked at Yeongwoo and the egg with an expression of astonishment, and Byungcheol, with a shaky gun barrel, couldn't figure out where to aim.

And in the midst of this chaos.

Squeak!

The souvenir left by the extraterrestrial munitions company began to crack open.

[Translator – Night]

[Proofreader – Gun]

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Chapter 64

[Translator – Night]

[Proofreader – Gun]

Chapter 64: Strong Tiger's Early Appearance (1)

“What’s this again?”

Byungcheol, holding a gun, shouted with a face that seemed about to cry right away.

No wonder, considering that things beyond the common knowledge of the solar system were happening one after another.

Crack!

Even in the midst of this, black cracks, large and small, continued to appear in the jet-black egg.

“Could it be... hatching?”

As Yeongwoo opened his eyes wide, something flickered between the cracked surface of the egg.

It emitted a biological vitality in abundance.

Srip.

Something massive wriggled inside the dark shell.

“What... is this?”

Yeongwoo, who knew well that this was a souvenir left by advertisers, was still perplexed.

Being a weapon manufacturing company, he expected equipment items, not throwing some creature, especially of this size.

Moreover.

“Why is it so big?”

As Yeongwoo took a few steps back to properly gauge the size of the egg, a significant change occurred in the ‘souvenir’ that had only shown signs of hatching until now.

-Squeeeak!

Long cries accompanied black steam spraying from inside the shell.

“Huh?”

“Ugh!”

Just in case it was a toxic substance, all three people stepped back, and in doing so, an unexpected presence pushed its way into the space created.

Chug!

It was none other than.

-Squeeeak!

A large iron horse, about two meters tall, belonging to the mammalian order Perissodactyla, a livestock horse that had coexisted with humanity for thousands of years.

[PR/N: The name Perissodactyla means “odd-toed.” This group of ungulates includes horses, tapirs, and rhinos. The name of their order derives from the fact that their middle toe is larger than the others, and the plane of symmetry of the foot passes through it, a condition called mesaxonic.]

However, it couldn’t be confirmed whether it truly belonged to the Perissodactyla order, given its black iron-plated exterior and the black smoke emanating from its nose.

“That... could it be a horse?”

Jongsu asked Yeongwoo while awkwardly holding an early bird.

And around that time.

Chug!

The iron horse approached Yeongwoo, crushing the road surface with its steel hooves.

-Squeeeak!

The cry still sounded unfamiliar.

Due to the high stature of the iron horse, it exuded tremendous intimidation just by looking at it, but Yeongwoo was relieved to see the Dogo’s wedge pattern engraved on its exterior.

‘It seems to be Dogo’s product. I don’t know if it’s a real creature or a robot.’

Although its appearance resembled Earth's horse, it couldn't be known why Dogo left it as a gift.

Maybe this gift was a means of transportation, and that's why they sent a similar type of gift.

Shwik!

As the iron horse took another breath, black smoke spewed violently from its nostrils.

Was that also a staged performance to mimic a 'horse,' or was it really a breathing animal?

“...”

Seeing the iron horse approaching and standing quietly by his side, Yeongwoo slowly raised his hand to its long neck.

Tap.

“...!”

The creature's body, once touched, was surprisingly warm.

Like Earth's warm-blooded animals.

However, the tooltip that appeared afterward clearly indicated that this existence was definitely not of Earthly origin.

「Negwig」 – Unknown Grade

【Adapts to any planet.】

“...Negwig?”

As Yeongwoo muttered the name written in the tooltip, the iron horse Negwig fluttered its iron ears, gleaming with purple pupils.

-Squeak!

That creature's name was indeed Negwig.

“Unbelievable.”

Jongsu, who belatedly realized that the iron horse was a gift to Yeongwoo, sheathed his sword and breathed a sigh of relief.

On the other hand, Byungcheol, as soon as he grasped that the situation was under control, felt an overwhelming anger welling up within him.

“No, damn it...”

It was because he realized that Icheon City had been sacrificed for the absurd business of that golden foreigner.

“Hey, you son of a bitch. Why did you have to come here of all places?”

Hwak!

The gun, now without direction, aimed precisely at Yeongwoo’s head.

But the trigger wasn’t pulled.

Before committing murder, Byungcheol, formerly a police officer, needed a justifiable reason.

But did the foreigner in front of him have any charges worthy of that?

Crimes like disturbing public safety by invoking the existence of space, rebellion, obstructing official duties—there was no way to define it.

Moreover, there were no direct casualties from this incident.

“This damn world.”

In the end, Byungcheol reluctantly lowered the gun.

He couldn’t find a reason to harm the other person beyond being angry.

Seeing him hesitating, Yeongwoo, who had been silently watching, bowed slowly.

“I’m sorry. I tried to find a place with as few people as possible just in case something like this happened...”

“Ah, it’s fine. Everything’s already messed up.”

After spitting out a bitter breath, Byungcheol shifted his gaze to Officer Kwon Taeyoung, who was cautiously walking over from the other side.

“Taeyoung.”

“Captain.”

Taeyoung also held a gun, but seeing that Byungcheol wasn't in a combat stance, he let the gun hang loosely on the ground.

"It seems the situation is over."

"Are you okay?"

"Yes. It's very good to be alive."

Taeyoung said this while still looking at Negwig with an unbelieving gaze.

"Anyway... what's going to happen to us now?"

Taeyoung's vague question almost perfectly represented the situation of the two police officers.

In an instant, their foundation of life, the city that made them exist as police officers, was lost.

On the first day of the reset, Taeyoung returned to the police station immediately, as he had no family to take care of separately.

Byungcheol, having been separated from his wife, naturally continued his police duties.

Ironically, only those without anyone to take responsibility for were carrying the 'social obligation.'

To be faithful to one's work, to uphold the law...

Of course, now even the place to fulfill these obligations has disappeared, but still, the two men remained police officers.

"Taeyoung, let's go to Seoul."

"Yes? Seoul?"

At the mention of Seoul, an instinctive fear flashed in Taeyoung's eyes.

Until now, not only lawless individuals from the provinces but also looters from Seoul had invaded Icheon, and all of them were ruthless in both skill and character.

"Yes, Seoul. What are we going to do by staying here? Are we going to become robbers starting tomorrow?"

"That's not it."

Taeyoung made a dreadful expression.

Both Byungcheol and Taeyoung were inherently not likely to become villains.

[Translator – Night]

[Proofreader – Gun]

That's why they continued to protect the police station even after the reset.

"Then, let's go and see how fucked up it is there."

Byungcheol said this while opening the revolver's cylinder to check a single bullet.

Click.

Taeyoung also had only one bullet in his gun.

In other words, entering the lawless zone that was Seoul while continuing to be police officers was practically suicidal.

"..."

At this, as Taeyoung tightened his grip on the gun, trying to put on a resolute expression, Yeongwoo interjected into their conversation.

"You're going to Seoul? How is the situation there?"

"...?"

"Hmm?"

* * *

Seoul.

The largest city in South Korea with a population of 9.43 million.

Considering commuters from Gyeonggi Province and elsewhere, the actual population staying in Seoul would be much higher.

Moreover, the time when the 'reset' occurred was around 10 a.m. on Tuesday, the time when the population in Seoul was at its peak.

What exactly happened in Seoul at that time?

“The currency exchange center tore people apart, completely ruining the situation. An uncontrollable panic situation must have occurred.”

According to Byungcheol, the appearance of the currency exchange center made people leave their places they were guarding, in other words, their workplaces, changing everything.

The social structure that had been maintained, at least in form, was destroyed in one fell swoop.

Afterward, through the looting battle at the currency exchange center, morality was broken, and most conflicts were resolved through duels between the parties instead of police calls.

“Probably, seeing people in police uniforms turning into robbers, everyone realized. The end has come in the worst possible form.”

Taeyoung, staring into empty space with a vacant gaze, was describing the scenes he had personally witnessed yesterday.

The sight of his police station colleagues threatening citizens and robbing them.

“Even though the population of Icheon is only 220,000, there were incredible events. Children organizing robbery gangs... Well, they weren't much different from the adults.”

Saying this, Byungcheol habitually searched for his cigarettes in his pocket, then made a bitter expression.

“Even if everything didn't turn to stone, it wouldn't have turned into a lawless land so easily.”

Just as the military has a deterrent effect on war just by its presence, law enforcement also has a deterrent effect on crime.

However, due to the all-encompassing petrification phenomenon, all deterrent forces disappeared.

There were no CCTV cameras anywhere, and even if a murder occurred on the street, it couldn't be reported to the police.

In other words, the deterrent forces that operate in the majority of situations have become solely dependent on individual morality.

“In fact, only the area near City Hall and Terminal is managed here. We don't know what's happening in the reservoir area below.”

So how serious could the situation be in Seoul, which is much larger and more complex than Icheon?

"I heard that they dominate even the monsters from the Gyeonggi region in Seoul. I also heard that they might harm people."

When Yeongwoo subtly brought up the rumors he collected while passing through Yeosu, Byungcheol showed a hint of recognition.

"Yes. I went there once too. They even gave themselves new names... what was it?"

At this point, Taeyoung, who had been listening, chimed in.

"Hunters."

"Oh, right. Hunters. Probably named because they hunt monsters. So, in essence, we should consider them as criminals who happen to be strong enough to avoid punishment."

Byungcheol's forehead wrinkled as he recalled the memory.

Even though they were able to make those guys turn around peacefully thanks to the guns, the unpleasant glares they received were not easily forgotten.

"So, are you going to Seoul just to punish those so-called hunters?"

As Yeongwoo alternately examined the two guns, each holding only one bullet, Byungcheol cleared his throat.

"We need to see the situation in Seoul first. If really absurd things are happening, we have no choice but to suppress them with force."

While saying this, Byungcheol added that there might be police officers like them in Seoul.

People who are trying to maintain order in any way possible.

"We need to let them know that law enforcement still exists. That way, at least some form of deterrent will be established."

"..."

But can they survive even a day in Seoul with just two bullets?

Yeongwoo felt both respect and sympathy for the other side.

Then, suddenly, his vision flashed, and a new quest appeared.

Tang!

[Dogo] “Strong Tiger’s Early Appearance”

Engage in 0/2 duels with targets with a total ability score of 3,000 or higher.

5 million karma

You must disclose the fact of Dogo’s support in this duel.

‘Huh...?’

It finally came.

Dogo’s exclusive quest.

Reading the quest content with half expectation and half concern, Yeongwoo paused at the part where the total ability score of the duel targets had to be 3,000 or higher.

A total ability score of 3,000 means that the target has acquired at least 3 million karma.

In other words, it referred to the most Strongest Swords who monopolized the rewards for mutations.

‘Either a Strongest Sword or someone at the Strongest Sword level, I have to fight twice.’

And as far as Yeongwoo knew, there was only one place around here where such a mission could be quickly accomplished.

That was none other than...

‘Seoul.’

[Translator – Night]

[Proofreader – Gun]

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Chapter 65

[Translator – Night]

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Chapter 65: Strong Tiger's Early Appearance (2)

"I'm also going to Seoul."

When Gyeongbuk's Strongest Sword, Jeong Yeongwoo 07, said this, the expressions of the two police officers who had decided to go to Seoul became inevitably complicated.

It was because of the particularly special identity of the opponent.

'...Gyeongbuk's Strongest Sword.'

Byungcheol cautiously scanned the golden-haired outsider's head, which he had overlooked due to the shock of their intense first meeting.

The existence of the Strongest Sword in this world was almost always a gangster or a murderer.

Structurally, there was no other way.

Becoming the Strongest Sword meant either boldly committing a murder on the first day of the reset to catch the system's eye, or assassinating an established Strongest Sword.

The process of becoming a local Strongest Sword was already treacherous enough, so how would it be to unify a large region like Gyeongbuk?

But why would such a person go to Seoul of all places?

In the eyes of Byungcheol, a police officer, it looked like a massive bomb was rolling down the powder keg, ready to explode.

"Ahem."

Byungcheol, trying to maintain a calm face, asked the usual question.

"Excuse me, but... why are you going to Seoul?"

"Well..."

Yeongwoo scratched his chin and looked at iron horse, Negwig.

If he answered that he was going to fight against high-level experts with a total ability score of over 3,000, it would complicate the situation.

So, Yeongwoo's chosen answer was.

“I’m going to spread money.”

“?”

“What?”

The expressions of the two police officers twisted at once.

They completely did not understand what Yeongwoo was talking about.

“What is that...”

“Didn’t you choose the exclusive 3 million karma when you caught the mutant?”

When Yeongwoo asked this, Kim Byungcheol 139, the Strongest Sword, widened his eyes.

“No way.”

Finally, he realized what the outsider was talking about.

?Choice Reward?

[3 million Karma]

Or

[Grant 30,000 Karma to all residents in the area]

A dilemma quest, ‘Quantum Choice,’ in which only the one who defeats the mutant receives the reward.

Byungcheol, the Strongest Sword, had faced this choice before and, after much consideration as a police officer, ultimately chose the exclusive 3 million karma.

He judged that it was better to grab a large sum for himself and establish order, rather than giving money to citizens whose ratio of villains was unknown.

Of course, underneath that judgment was the survival instinct that wanted to live first.

After all, wasn’t Byungcheol a person before being a police officer?

“Yes, I chose 3 million.”

Byungcheol deliberately straightened his chest to hide his conscience.

Yeongwoo nodded as if to say that it wasn't a bad choice.

"Not a bad choice. Of course, I suffered a bit because I couldn't do that."

"....!"

At Yeongwoo's words, Byungcheol made an expression of disbelief.

"You chose 30,000?"

More precisely, he couldn't believe that Yeongwoo became the Strongest Sword even after giving up 3 million karma.

But the truly unbelievable statement was next.

"Yes. Four times so far."

"Four times...?"

As Byungcheol echoed Yeongwoo's words as if possessed, he noticed Yeongwoo's strange attire and shut his mouth.

He soon realized that his current appearance was the result of an incredible feat.

"What... what happens if you choose 30,000?"

Byungcheol, who decided to believe the outsider's statement, asked vaguely.

However, since Yeongwoo had no remaining commemorative coins and no way to show his achievements, it was best for him to point towards Seoul and say this.

"Golden rain falls. It's faster to understand when you see it yourself."

"Ah..."

Golden rain.

It was a natural occurrence, but it was a sight that Byungcheol had never seen in his entire life.

"But the Strongest Swords in Seoul probably wouldn't want to choose 30,000."

"Strongest Swords?"

Yeongwoo, hearing Byungcheol express "Strongest Swords" in the plural, asked again.

“Are there multiple Strongest Swords in Seoul?”

“Each district has a Strongest Sword. Of course, someone could be the Strongest Sword in Seoul, like you being the Strongest Sword in Gyeongbuk.”

“Oh, then there might be a Gangnam Strongest Sword.”

Jongsu, who had been listening to the conversation, chimed in.

It turned out that the story he had jokingly shared with Yeongwoo before was true.

Seoul, consisting of 25 districts.

With each district having a larger population than most provincial cities, it wasn't surprising that there was a Strongest Sword in each.

“Oh, so if there's a Strongest Sword in each district, there might be mutants too...”

Adding to Yeongwoo's statement, Byungcheol continued.

“Mutants would probably be scattered in each district.”

“Incredible.”

Twenty-five mutants falling from the sky every day.

And twenty-five Strongest Swords waiting for them.

“Hyung-nim, Seoul might be more terrifying than you think.”

Jongsu shivered, recalling a dreadful scene.

Yeongwoo also felt a chill in his spine when he imagined 25 red pillars of light shooting down.

But what was even more concerning was...

“If mutants fall twenty-five at a time... assuming that no one dropped the golden rain, it means 75 million karma is released every day under the assumption that everyone receives 3,000 karma.”

Of course, there was also the possibility that the city could be destroyed by a large number of mutants and monsters.

Yeongwoo never thought that way, though.

“From what I see, it’s unlikely that mutants and monsters are targeting Seoul from the Gyeonggi region. Currently, Seoul is digesting the allocated amount for themselves.”

In other words, some of Seoul’s Strongest Swords likely secured an enormous amount of karma.

“If you’re really going to Seoul to spread the golden rain, Mr. Yeongwoo, you’re in for a tough time.”

Byungcheol chuckled.

It was a self-deprecating remark, as his own situation wasn’t much different.

In response, Yeongwoo shrugged his shoulders.

“So, what I’m suggesting is...”

Swoosh.

As Yeongwoo stroked Negwig’s lower back, he raised his head and his eyes lit up.

“Because we are both in a position to be hated in Seoul... How about joining forces?”

* * *

Union with Gyeongbuk’s Strongest Sword, Jeong Yeongwoo 07.

In reality, for Byungcheol and Taeyoung, who only had two bullets, there was no reason to refuse this proposal.

At least, Jeong Yeongwoo, who showed no animosity towards them, seemed better than the unknown rogues in Seoul.

Of course, it was uncertain how vicious the outsider would become if a conflict of interest arose...

‘Rather than being slaughtered as soon as we get to Seoul, it might be better. It’s a compromise instead of the worst-case scenario.’

What was even more worrying was...

Current time: 8:49 PM.

[Translator – Night]

[Proofreader – Gun]

The grand lodging service is about to begin in approximately 10 minutes.

'Isn't this next to Yongin? As long as we finish checking in before 11 PM, we should have enough time to reach Yongin.'

Even though there are no more vehicles available for travel, there is Negwin from the advertiser.

Why not take this opportunity to test its performance?

"...."

As Yeongwoo was silently observing Negwig, Byungcheol, who was still uneasy about something, asked him.

"...Is there another issue?"

"No, it's not that. It's just that it might be difficult for all four of us to ride."

"Where... Oh, you mean that?"

Byungcheol pointed at Negwig and spoke.

Then, with a horrified expression, he turned his head.

"We have a patrol car to ride."

As Byungcheol said this, they could see a patrol car parked in a corner of the parking lot.

It was obvious that everyone would pay attention to the conspicuous car, which they planned to take to enter Seoul.

"Rumors will spread quickly. There will be rumors that strange people have arrived from somewhere."

Yeongwoo's eyes blinked widely.

It seemed that they were going to take the horse for another spin this time.

"Feel free to do as you please. The important thing is to get into Seoul by tomorrow afternoon."

1 PM.

It was the time Yeongwoo empirically learned for the appearance of mutants.

Of course, it was unknown whether this law would apply to Seoul, which consisted of 25 districts.

“At 1 PM... We'll need to move quickly.”

Byungcheol had encountered mutants as a Strongest Sword before, but this was the first time he was going to find mutants in a different region.

Moreover, it was Seoul, not any other area.

Therefore, the Strongest Swords of Seoul were likely to be more significant obstacles than the mutants themselves.

“Anyway... Should we head straight to Yongin?”

Byungcheol asked Yeongwoo, and in the meantime, Taeyoung started running towards the patrol car.

“Yes. It seems safer to find accommodation around Yongin. Besides, there won't be any mutants appearing today.”

“Got it. By the way, Yeongwoo, are you really going to ride that thing? If it's slower than a car, it could be a disaster.”

Byungcheol expressed his concern while pointing at Negwig.

Indeed, it was a mature concern.

In response, Yeongwoo looked at the legs of iron horse Negwig, made of gleaming black steel.

“Well, I don't know. Is the patrol car full of gas? You might have to step on the gas all the way to Yongin.”

“Ha-ha, is that so?”

Yeongwoo's playful remark made Byungcheol laugh, but soon after, he solidified his expression and instructed Taeyoung to check the remaining gas in the patrol car.

* * *

「The lodging service has started.」

「From now on, all buildings classified as 'residences' will be affected by the lodging system and become inviolable.」

At 9:00 PM sharp, a terrifying sound from Yeongwoo's wristwatch announced the start of lodging, followed by consecutive messages.

「Anyone can occupy a desired residence by paying karma for a certain period.」

「During the lodging time, access to the space can be controlled, and accommodating guests is also possible.」

The content was the same as what he saw last night.

Therefore, it was expected that similar events would unfold tonight.

People knocking on others' doors because they didn't secure a residence in time, and in the end, the extraordinary climate sweeping away those who couldn't enter anywhere.

「By the way, today's nighttime weather is a heatwave.」

「Be cautious of severe sunburn.」

‘A heatwave...’

The weather information appeared, and by this time, Yeongwoo and his party, fully prepared to depart, stood side by side on the road connecting Icheon and Yongin.

Yeongwoo and Jongsu were on the back of iron horse Negwig, while Byungcheol and Taeyoung were in the patrol car.

“Ah... But what if this guy really isn't as fast as the old man said? What do we do, Hyung-nim?”

Jongsu, who was sitting closely behind Yeongwoo, alternately looked at the patrol car and Negwig, expressing his concern.

Despite being from outer space, could this creature, in the form of a horse, run faster than a car?

‘Of course, it should be fast.’

Unlike Jongsu, Yeongwoo had no worries at all.

“If this thing couldn't run faster than Earth's means of transportation, Dogo wouldn't have engraved their logo on it. It's probably indirect advertising even at this moment.”

“Advertising? Who's looking at this now?”

While Jongsu shrugged his shoulders and looked around, the sign to start from the patrol car finally came.

“Go ahead! We’ll catch up with your speed!”

A road of approximately 30 kilometers from Icheon to Yongin.

On this road, a horse from outer space and a patrol car from Earth started running side by side.

-Snort...!

As they looked at the road ahead, Negwig, too, seemed excited, emitting a sharp neigh.

And then,

Shurk!

Suddenly, it spewed out a narrow band from its side, wrapping tightly around the lower halves of Yeongwoo and Jongsu.

“Huh?”

“Whoa!”

This thing, firmly fastening the rider’s legs around Negwig’s waist, was probably...

“Could this be a safety be—!”

Just as Jongsu was about to declare the identity of the ‘band,’ Negwig shot out at a bullet-like speed.

[Translator – Night]

[Proofreader – Gun]

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Chapter 66

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Chapter 66: Strong Tiger’s Early Appearance (3)

Phew!

The driving force of Iron horse Negwig was truly tremendous.

Just the sudden acceleration alone made both Yeongwoo and Jongsu unable to control their bodies properly.

Especially Yeongwoo, who was a person with superhuman physical abilities.

‘How fast is he running right now?’

As Yeongwoo, who barely stood his upper body upright, turned around, he saw a dimly lit road extending beyond Jongsu’s shoulder, who was screaming with closed eyes.

And, at the edge of that road, something small was shining.

It was none other than a patrol car approaching with its headlights on.

All this distance was covered in such a short time.

Moreover, the distance between the patrol car and them was continuously increasing.

‘Can he possibly increase the speed more than this?’

Yeongwoo, wanting to test Kangho’s abilities a bit more, stopped as he heard Jongsu’s screams continuing.

“Hyung-nim, can’t you slow down a bit?”

“Let me look for it. Just hold on a moment.”

Upon Jongsu’s request, Yeongwoo groped Kangho’s neck and head to find what seemed like a brake mechanism.

Then.

-Squeak!

A part of the iron plate that wrapped around Kangho’s muzzle extended downward, instantly creating reins.

‘Quite innovative.’

The reins, like Kangho’s outer shell, were made of black metal, but the texture and flexibility were like leather.

'Is this used to control when pulled?'

Thinking so, when Yeongwoo slightly pulled the reins, Kangho's head lifted, and along with it, the guardrail, which looked like an afterimage, began to follow his movement.

He had really reduced the speed.

"Phew."

Jongsu breathed heavily as if finally relieved.

And as a little more time passed, the sound of sirens was heard from a distance.

"...?"

"Uh?"

When they turned around, a patrol car with its siren on and lights flashing was approaching at high speed.

As Yeongwoo disappeared from view, the siren sounded, indicating to stop.

"Mr. Yeongwoo!"

Finally, from the patrol car that approached right behind Kangho, Byungcheol's startled voice echoed.

"Even if it's like this, shouldn't we be able to confirm each other's location?"

Byungcheol looked around the dark surroundings with vigilant eyes.

In contrast, Yeongwoo calmly spoke after confirming that everything was fine with the fearful cat he took out.

"It was much faster than expected. But now that I know how to control it, there should be no problem."

Swoosh!

As Yeongwoo showed the reins, Byungcheol's expression became complicated again.

It was because he felt awkward knowing that reins were attached to that strange iron horse.

A rather uncomfortable valley.

'How can he ride around on such a thing so casually? Are only those kinds of weirdos able to adapt to this world?'

Byungcheol was in bitter admiration when he saw Yeongwoo preparing to leave, loosening the reins again.

* * *

9:26 PM.

The surrounding scenery was still only fields and makeshift buildings, but according to the regional status window, it was now Yongin.

Pop!

[The current area you are in is 'Yongin.'

[There is no Strongest Sword in this area.

"As expected."

"Is this also the work of people from Seoul, Hyung-nim?"

"Probably."

Yeongwoo looked west, which was likely the direction of Yongin City.

To know more, he needed to narrow down the distance, but there were no visible pillars of light so far.

In other words, there are no mutants or monsters, and yet the Strongest Sword has disappeared.

It seems someone cleaned up and passed through.

Most likely, someone from Seoul.

The second possibility is that it could be the local Strongest Sword that started patrolling early.

If the conflicts between mutants are fierce enough for someone to come all the way from Seoul to here... wouldn't it be better to settle down here for a while?

Yeongwoo thought this while taking out the fearful cat.

The cat continued to close its eyes.

At least there was no threatening presence in this area.

As they went further in, traces of a rather intense battle appeared.

Torn plastic greenhouses, completely collapsed warehouse buildings.

The surroundings indicated that it was not a result of a fight between superhumans but rather the aftermath of monsters wreaking havoc.

It meant that monsters had survived in this area for a long time, causing extensive damage to the city in all directions.

‘The Yongin Strongest Sword might not have been that strong.’

Was it a situation similar to what happened in Gimcheon, where the succession of a strong Strongest Sword was happening in real-time due to the lack of suitable candidates?

As Yeongwoo, gazing at the devastated outskirts of Yongin, Jongsu in the back seat asked him.

“Hyung-nim.”

“Yes?”

“Buildings that are once damaged like that can’t be restored, right?”

Jongsu pointed to a building in the distance.

It was a four-story small building, but two floors were completely crushed, rendering the building practically useless.

“Probably not, right? Such places probably can’t even be rented out.”

“Ugh... Then, isn’t it more important to prioritize protecting buildings over other things?”

Jongsu pointed out a fairly important aspect.

With the continuous influx of mutants and monsters in the future unknown, ‘residential areas,’ essential to spending the night safely, were gradually disappearing.

“That’s right. No matter how strong the Strongest Sword is, they can’t simultaneously block multiple places.”

Therefore, continuous damage to residential areas due to monsters is inevitable.

In the end...

'In areas with strong Strongest Swords, buildings might be the only things left.'

Of course, that area was likely to be Seoul with a high probability.

'Even now, many cities in the provinces have lost their Strongest Swords. They'll probably turn into ruins by tomorrow.'

In other words, for everyone to survive, they have no choice but to find a city where the Strongest Sword is active.

As they continued with the sound of Negwig's hooves, more buildings appeared in the inner part of Yongin than in the outskirts, and the number of damaged buildings also increased.

And finally, people could be seen.

"Huh?"

"M-Monster...!"

People started running and screaming as soon as they saw Yeongwoo.

"Save us!" "Aaaah!" It was a natural reaction for them.

Yeongwoo's appearance on iron horse in the darkness was unmistakably that of a mutant or even a monster.

"W-What... to run away like that."

Jongsu, who was startled by the strong reaction, opened his mouth wide.

Since Yeongwoo was already causing trouble for the second time today, he quickly stopped Negwig and surveyed the area.

"It will cause a commotion if we go further inside. If possible, we should find a good place nearby."

While Yeongwoo was saying this, a police patrol car from Icheon approached from behind.

[Translator – Night]

[Proofreader – Gun]

Byungcheol, who stretched his head outside the passenger seat with a puzzled expression, asked.

“What’s going on?”

Now that they were entering the city, why did they stop?

“It seems there are still many people in Yongin. It would be better for us to find a room around here without causing unnecessary trouble.”

“Ah.”

Byungcheol, hearing Yeongwoo’s words, understood the situation without any further explanation.

After all, he was probably the first person to be terrorized by Yeongwoo.

“How many rooms do we need? We should sleep separately, right?”

Byungcheol’s ‘we’ referred to himself and the patrol officer Kwon Taeyoung.

Yeongwoo glanced at Jongsu in the back seat before looking back at Byungcheol.

“For now, I can sleep alone. So, it’s probably best to get three rooms. If that’s difficult...”

Jongsu and the Icheon Police Station officer might have to share a room.

“...”

“Umm.”

Since it was the opinion of Yeongwoo, the strongest in the group, the remaining three couldn’t express their discomfort but couldn’t object either.

“Well, regardless of the number of rooms, it’s good for us to be close to each other. We should check out villas or apartments.”

Byungcheol attempted to change the mood, and soon Jongsu found a building that met the criteria.

“How about there?”

Swoosh!

Jongsu pointed to a motel in a corner across the road.

‘...Another motel.’

Yeongwoo’s expression wrinkled.

It wasn’t a pleasant place for him.

However, he couldn’t completely rule out motels in the future.

“Yes. Let’s go check there.”

So, in the end, Yeongwoo agreed to go to the motel.

* * *

「Luso」

The name of the motel was Luso.

Except for the scattered vehicles in the parking lot next to the entrance, there seemed to be no issues with the appearance.

“Two, three... five... it’s about six floors. There should be vacant rooms if we’re lucky.”

While Jongsu was counting the number of windows on the building, a patrol car approached from behind and stopped.

“Motel... How much is the usual accommodation fee?”

Byungcheol asked as if Yeongwoo would naturally know.

Coincidentally, Yeongwoo had the experience of staying in motels after the reset.

“If it’s a small room, it should be around 3,000 karma.”

“3,000...? Much cheaper than an apartment.”

“Is an apartment more expensive?”

“Yes, for an 18-square-meter apartment, they charge around 8,000 karma.”

“...!”

New information.

“Paying 8,000 for one night might not be budget-friendly.”

“Of course. So usually, trustworthy people pool their money and share a room.”

“I see.”

Yeongwoo nodded.

Conversely, for those living alone without trustworthy people, it means they have to find motels or boarding houses for financial reasons.

‘But that’s only possible if motels continue to exist for a long time. If residential areas keep disappearing like Jongsu said, later on, we might have to stay together forcibly every night.’

Do they all know this fact?

“ ... ”

Yeongwoo quickly scanned the seemingly sophisticated motel exterior and then dismounted from Negwig with a clatter.

Click!

Seeing both of them land, Negwig, who observed them, suddenly squatted in place.

It hid its head, arms, legs, and tail inside its body, transforming into a giant oval shape.

Chlorp!

As if it were an egg.

“Oh!”

“Hmm?”

It was unexpected, so even Yeongwoo looked at Negwig with surprised eyes.

“What is this...?”

“I-Is it some kind of parking mode?”

Jongsu made a plausible inference.

Since they were in front of a building that served as their residence, Negwig might have automatically switched to parking or waiting mode.

“If that’s really the case, does it mean it won’t be affected even in abnormal weather?”

This was still Byungcheol's question, who was riding in the patrol car.

Since they might spend the night here today, he was curious about what would happen to the patrol car.

Of course, Yeongwoo didn't know the extent of the application of abnormal weather.

"Well, who knows? We'll have to check it out tomorrow after parking and coming out."

Today's abnormal weather is scorching heat...

People outside would naturally be scorched to death, but what about the items that were purchased with karma?

"Let's first check if there are vacant rooms here. We'll have to move again if there are no rooms anyway."

As Yeongwoo spoke, he attempted to open the motel entrance.

At that moment, a shadow appeared behind the opaque glass door.

"...!"

For Yeongwoo, it was an unsettling sight.

'...As expected, I don't get to see anything good in motels.'

Sure enough, as he quickly stepped back, the glass door split wide open, and a blood-stained man jumped out.

[Translator – Night]

[Proofreader – Gun]

The source of this content is free(w)ebnovel

Chapter 67

[Translator – Night]

[Proofreader – Gun]

Chapter 67: Strong Tiger's Early Appearance (4)

Crash!

The man who came out of the motel with a loud noise was a middle-aged man who appeared to be in his 50s.

“Sigh...”

His body was covered in bruises, as if something harsh had happened inside the motel.

Nevertheless, despite falling to the ground, he quickly tried to get up and flee.

And then.

Thud!

He collided headfirst with a patrol car that had stopped right in front of him.

“Oops.”

His condition, indicating a lack of awareness.

“Are you okay?”

As Byungcheol hastily got out of the car, the man opened his eyes wide.

“...!”

He saw the police uniform worn by Byungcheol.

But strangely, the emotion in the man’s eyes was not relief but fear.

‘What’s going on?’

Yeongwoo, who saw the man’s eyes, tilted his head in confusion.

Encountering the police on the way out of the motel after a rough incident seemed to make him more frightened...?

Although it could be due to encountering corrupt police officers frequently, there seemed to be a different reason.

“Stop right there!”

Soon, armed women poured out from the motel.

“Huh?”

“Oh, everyone calm down!”

While the two panicked officers were unable to even take out their guns and were waving their hands around, the man covered in blood attempted to run away again.

Thump!

The women angrily shouted.

“Oh! He’s running away...!”

“Catch that guy!”

Yeongwoo, who had been observing so far, sensed something strange.

The emotions of the women were too intense, and the movement of the man, whom he thought was the victim, was surprisingly fast for a civilian.

Bang!

Total stats 1,600.

Having lower stats was just a comparison with other Strongest Swords, but as soon as he moved, everyone in the room was surprised.

It took less than a second to catch up to the middle-aged man trying to escape.

“Ugh!”

Caught by the back of his collar in an instant, the middle-aged man, without confirming who his captor was, struggled to free his arms.

“Let go of this! Those girls will kill me!”

Yeongwoo couldn’t help but ask.

“Why are they trying to kill you?”

“What? W-Well...”

The middle-aged man, who could only widen his eyes, couldn’t answer Yeongwoo’s question.

“...”

At that moment, Yeongwoo looked at Im Bonghee in the shaking opponent’s eyes.

It was his roommate who had suffered and disappeared due to a rape charge when the reset began.

‘There’s something fishy.’

The gaze he had seen when he clung to save him at that time was now glimpsed in the eyes of the middle-aged man in front of him.

“Quietly follow me.”

As Yeongwoo dragged the middle-aged man along, the enraged women quickly regained their composure.

“What’s going on with these people...?”

“...They seem to be real police officers.”

And only then did they realize that the identities of the people surrounding the motel were not ordinary.

One of the officers was the Strongest Sword, and the one bringing the middle-aged man now had an abundance of equipment.

Thump!

Pheuk!

Eventually, Yeongwoo approached the middle-aged man near the patrol car and inquired of the women.

“Who are you? And what’s going on with this man?”

Yeongwoo’s gaze shifted between the women and the motel.

Seven women had rushed out from inside the motel, apparently occupying the Luso Motel.

And indeed.

“We are the Women’s Alliance.”

“Women’s Alliance...?”

According to their claims, the group Yeongwoo and his companions were facing was the Women’s Alliance organization in Cheoin-gu, Yongin City.

In response to the absurdly increased difficulty of survival after the reset, women decided to join forces.

They hunted monsters, even if it meant sacrificing three for five, and those who survived for two days were now standing here.

“Oh my goodness.”

Yeongwoo naturally wondered why they went to such lengths to gather only women, but soon he understood the reason.

Sliip, sliirup.

Another group of women dragged out three men’s corpses from inside the motel.

“Ah.”

Observing this, Yeongwoo got a sense of what had happened at the motel.

The middle-aged man must have been involved in the incident.

As the checkout time approached, they must have seen the women as they rushed into the motel...

‘They thought they could somehow subdue them with their ability even if the numbers were against them.’

However, what they actually encountered is not a group of powerless women, but a combat organization made for a single gender.

Of course, since the fighting power of the middle-aged man he had seen earlier was formidable, there were probably quite a few corpses of the female allies inside the motel.

“That guy is the last one. Hand him over and go your way.”

A woman who had identified themselves as the Women’s Alliance pointed at the middle-aged man as if stabbing him, indicating they would proceed with the execution.

Upon hearing this conversation, Byungcheol, who had been quietly listening, made a surprised sound.

“What are you t-talking about now? This is strictly...”

Illegal, private sanctions.

However, Byungcheol couldn't finish his sentence.

To properly intervene in this situation as a police officer, they needed to punish the middle-aged men for the murders and attempted robbery/rape before dealing with the Women's Alliance.

But what evidence did they have?

'Ah...'

Byungcheol recalled the fact that the judicial system of South Korea had also disappeared along with the reset.

If the police immediately punished a crime they witnessed, it was practically the same as private sanctions.

It meant imposing punishment without official legal grounds or judgement.

In other words, in this crazy world, Byungcheol functioning as a police officer was an impossible scenario from the beginning.

"..."

As Byungcheol's face contorted beyond description, Yeongwoo, who had been staring at him, casually lifted the middle-aged man with one hand and handed him over to the Women's Alliance.

"Handle it as you wish. It looks like self-defense to me."

Yeongwoo dared to exercise judicial authority in front of the police.

Nevertheless, Byungcheol and Taeyoung could only silently watch as one criminal was handed over to another.

"I guess we won't find a place to stay here. Let's try looking elsewhere for now."

As Yeongwoo spoke to calm down the bewildered two officers, the woman who had been discussing the matter until now interjected.

[Translator – Night]

[Proofreader – Gun]

"If you don't plan to go to the city center, you won't find a room in time. Most of the buildings around here are used by our people."

“Is the Women’s Alliance that big?”

“Originally, the world was half women, right?”

“...”

It was an argument that couldn’t be easily refuted.

Seeing Yeongwoo neither affirming nor denying, the woman looked around and made a bold suggestion.

“I can give you two empty rooms. Sleep here for now. It’s repayment for helping us.”

Twelve Women’s Alliance members were already outside the motel.

Most people, in such a situation, would have left to find another place. However, Yeongwoo didn’t hesitate.

He sensed that the other party had offered hospitality for a reason.

“You really value your comrades.”

The question was whether they were doing it because they thought that if they left here and started raiding other buildings, there would be casualties to their colleagues there.

The woman who heard Yeongwoo’s words was initially taken aback but quickly regained her composure.

“You’re quite perceptive. Is that why you’re still alive?”

* * *

Entering the Geumnam District, the Luso Motel.

As they followed the woman, passing the counter strewn with glass shards and blood, a lively noise came from the direction of the stairs leading to the second floor.

It seemed that the twelve people Yeongwoo saw outside earlier were not the only ones staying at this motel.

“How many people are there in here?”

When Yeongwoo asked this, the woman smiled.

“I don’t know when or how we will meet again in the future, so wouldn’t it be right to keep our information a secret?”

She then gestured to the women blocking the way to the second floor.

In response, the women, who had been watching Yeongwoo's group with wary eyes, gradually stepped back, lowering their weapons.

"Are you the leader here?"

"You've been asking a lot of questions since earlier. Who are you, anyway?"

"I am..."

Earth's human, the strongest in Gyeongsangbuk Province, Jeong Yeongwoo 07.

Yeongwoo reflexively thought of a cosmic introduction but erased it.

He felt there was no need to reveal everything when they might meet again under different circumstances.

"I am... Jeong Yeongwoo."

"Bland."

The woman who had been pushing through the crowd heard Yeongwoo's response, smirked, and turned around for a moment.

"I'm Seong Yerin."

Then she added.

"Next time, I might become the Strongest Sword, so remember me well."

"Strongest Sword? You probably won't be able to become one in Yongin now."

"That's why you need to leave here quickly."

Yerin spoke with a rather fierce tone.

Securing the Strongest Sword was essential for the Women's Alliance to defend against external threats.

However, the problem was that by now, all the Strongest Sword titles in other regions probably had owners.

In other words, they had to fight and take it away.

'It won't be easy to kill them with a simple barrage like against the monsters.'

Yeongwoo now saw Yerin as a potential future corpse.

“You can use two, here and there.”

Yerin, who was guiding Yeongwoo’s group, stopped her steps when they reached the fourth floor.

The rooms she pointed to, 403 and 404, were shining in a similar bluish hue to the riverside motel they visited yesterday.

“Which room is larger? We’ll have three people in one of them...”

Jongsu said, looking at Yeongwoo for a cue, and Yerin pointed to 404 with her hand.

“404 is larger.”

“Oh, yes. Thank you.”

Jongsu nodded appreciatively at Yerin’s guidance, and Yeongwoo stood in front of room 403.

Tap.

As he did, the doorframe of the room started to glow a shade bluer, and an interface for the rental service appeared in the middle of the door.

「Do you wish to use the rental service?」

[Luso Motel Room 403]

| Space: Small

| Facilities: Bathroom

| Rental Fee: 3,000 Karma

| Duration: Until 10 AM the next day

Fortunately, the price was the same as the riverside motel in Gumi.

‘It seems the cost of living isn’t higher just because it’s in Gyeonggi Province.’

「How many people are planning to stay? Please enter the number of guests.」

It was Yeongwoo’s chance for a solo stay since the reset.

He briefly glanced at room 404, which seemed busy with dividing the rental fee, and then reached out his hand to the holographic keypad.

Beep.

「1」

[Translator – Night]

[Proofreader – Gun]

The source of this content is free(w)ebnov(e)l

Chapter 68

[Translator – Night]

[Proofreader – Gun]

Chapter 68: Strong Tiger's Early Appearance (5)

Room 403 was surprisingly spacious.

In the room, which seemed to be about 8 square meters, there was a queen-size bed, a makeshift dining table, and a built-in vanity.

Underneath, as always, the mini refrigerator emitted its distinctive mechanical sound.

Another notable feature was the mirrors installed on three sides of the walls around the bed.

“Hah.”

Yeongwoo, surveying around the bed, chuckled when he saw his reflection in the mirror.

Due to the various equipment haphazardly placed, his attire looked quite peculiar.

It seemed as if children had imitated knight attire in a playful sword fight.

Swoosh.

Taking off the helmet that tightly encased his head, he finally felt a sense of relaxation spreading throughout his body.

“Oh, man.”

Next, he removed the cloak, belt, and shoes one by one, placing all the gear on the table.

The golden goblin looked at him with a face expressing incomprehension.

– Keet?

The creature still didn't understand that this place was a safe zone.

“You should take a break too. You've been running around all day.”

Yeongwoo said this to the goblin and tossed his training clothes in front of the bathroom.

He then opened the opaque glass door of the bathroom.

“...!”

Surprisingly, there was a bathtub.

* * *

Although it was a narrow bathtub that required folding both legs, it was a satisfying half-body bath.

After finishing all the preparations, Yeongwoo lay on the bed with only a gown on.

Thump!

Then, while Yeongwoo was bathing, the goblin lying on the bed suddenly sat up.

– Kit!

He couldn't loosen up too much in front of his owner.

Of course, that was clearly part of the “show.”

Ironically, when Yeongwoo was in trouble against the Chungju Strongest Sword, this goblin had fled without a word.

Still, Yeongwoo gestured for him to relax.

Then, lying on the bed, he looked at the ceiling.

“Oh.”

There was a mirror on the ceiling too.

‘Why are there so many mirrors here?’

The Gyeongbuk Strongest Sword in his gown was clearly reflected.

The goblin on the next bed had entered relaxation mode with both hands clasped, and the pocket of the empty space he always held was placed next to his head.

– Keet....

A sluggish sound, unfamiliar from him, flowed out.

‘Has he fallen asleep in the meantime?’

With an unbelieving look, Yeongwoo checked the desk clock on the bedside table.

The current time was 9:57 PM.

“Huh?”

Surprised, Yeongwoo got up from his seat, and the goblin, who had been asleep, also sat up abruptly.

– Kit?

“It’s almost time for tax collection.”

Upon checking the wristwatch for cross-verification, the minute hand, which was 57 just a moment ago, moved to 58.

「21:58」

It was indeed approaching 10 PM, which meant...

‘Anyone who hasn’t paid their taxes yet will die....’

As Yeongwoo swallowed dryly, a system-wide announcement appeared.

– Tax collection is scheduled to begin shortly after 10 PM.

– The basic tax amount is 1,000 Karma, and whoever doesn’t pay taxes will be immediately extinguished at the time of collection.

Shortly afterward, there was a commotion outside the door.

“What’s going on?”

When Yeongwoo opened the door, he saw Women alliance members lining up in the motel corridor.

However, unlike the last time he saw them, each one now held a crimson coin instead of weapons.

‘Are they conducting a headcount? Trying to prevent people from dying because they can’t pay taxes...?’

If that were true, it would be a surprisingly systematic approach.

Even though it was only the second day after the reset, and although they were all people gathered in the Cheoin-gu area, they were still strangers to each other.

Moreover, in a world like this, being a stranger practically meant being a potential...

“What are you doing there?”

Before Yeongwoo could finish his thought, Seong Yerin’s head popped up from one side.

“Oops!”

Startled, Yeongwoo took a step back, and Yerin lightly tapped the barrier blocking the door.

“Why are you so surprised? Now that I see it, you’re a person too. You looked like a real monster earlier.”

“Ah.”

Hearing Yerin’s words, Yeongwoo suddenly realized that he was still in a gown.

On the other hand, Yerin, who hadn’t drawn her weapon, was in full combat gear.

Her work was not yet finished.

“Is that... a headcount?”

As Yeongwoo pointed down the corridor while adjusting his gown, Yerin nodded, showing a crimson coin.

“Yes. In case someone doesn’t have karma right now, the leader might lend it to them.”

“Lend it...?”

“Yes. They can repay it by participating in monster hunting the next day.”

Yerin explained that those who didn't participate in monster hunting despite being physically able wouldn't be accepted as alliance members in the first place.

“Well... they might die before repaying the karma, but even that is worth the value of the karma.”

It was a surprisingly tough statement.

Yeongwoo couldn't help but be surprised again.

How many alliance members were staying in this motel?

Just looking at the number of people in the corridor on the 4th floor, there were at least ten.

With a total of six floors in the building, a simple calculation suggested that close to sixty combatants were living according to their own rules.

‘But they said they occupy half of the nearby buildings...’

At least several hundred.

In this fragmented era, being able to mobilize several hundred personnel was truly an incredible strength.

Beep beep.

Finally, the alarm on Yeongwoo's wristwatch rang, announcing 10 PM. Simultaneously,

– Tax collection is now in effect.

As the system announcement appeared, a strange phenomenon occurred.

Pop, pop!

The crimson coins held by the Women alliance members began to disappear one by one.

“Huh.”

Yerin's coin, which was standing outside Room 403, soon vanished without a trace, followed by others.

Ssht.

Something came to Yeongwoo as well.

“...!”

It felt as if the wind was passing through his entire body.

Then a series of texts appeared in his vision.

| Basic Tax: 1,000

| Deduction item: Single household

| Determined Tax: 500

‘This is...’

It was a tax notice.

[Translator – Night]

[Proofreader – Gun]

The discomfort he just felt was the moment when the determined tax was deducted.

“Is everyone okay? Please check the headcount again from the back.”

Meanwhile, in the corridor, they were busy verifying whether there were any changes in the number of people before and after tax collection.

Yeongwoo, watching people in the corridor complete the check and disperse, asked Yerin,

“What is the purpose of this alliance? There must be a reason for such organization and order.”

Upon hearing this, Yerin stared at Yeongwoo.

“If you’re asking out of genuine curiosity, I hope you’ll listen without prejudice.”

“Yes. I’ll do my best.”

“If you imagine encountering a robber on the street and losing in a fight. In the worst case, the probability of you, Mr. Yeongwoo, dying is high, but generally, that’s not the case for us.”

The muscles around Yerin's jaw flexed.

"...Right."

Yeongwoo could easily understand the other party's words.

She was talking about the potential sexual violence that could follow the duel.

"Yes. Of course, Mr. Yeongwoo, you probably know what I'm talking about. But that's as far as it goes."

"So... you're saying I can understand and imagine up to a certain extent."

"That's right. If, by any chance, Mr. Yeongwoo has experienced rape or a similar situation, the story would be different... But generally, that's not the case. It's not a bad thing. It's simply unavoidable."

"Yes. It's unavoidable."

"So, that's why we don't actively recruit men. We can make you understand our situation, but we can't make them empathize with us to the point of asking them to risk their life and fight with us."

At this point, Yeongwoo had nothing more to say.

While he couldn't fully empathize with the two layers of fear they felt, he could understand perfectly why this alliance had to be composed of a single gender.

"Our goal is to avoid death or anything worse. To achieve that, we need a very strong force, and we've organized ourselves for that purpose."

By the time Yerin finished speaking, the corridor was eerily empty, as if it had always been.

"Is that a sufficient answer?"

Yerin scanned the empty corridor with her eyes.

Come to think of it, she hadn't directly participated in the headcount on the 4th floor.

'The only thing she did here was talk to me until the headcount was over.'

Yeongwoo finally realized that the reason Yerin came here was to monitor his group.

They were the only male group in this building.

'Is she much stronger than she looks? She covered for the Strongest Sword of her city alone?'

Yeongwoo tried to scrutinize Yerin's equipment status, who seemed quite ordinary, but she gave him a cold look.

"Is there anything else you're curious about?"

"No, it's nothing. I just..."

As Yeongwoo spoke, Yerin disappeared from his sight the moment.

She, too, had finished her tasks for the day.

'I don't know what all this is about, but it's incredible.'

Yeongwoo glanced at the now truly empty corridor and closed the door.

Returning to the bed, he lay down, looking at the mirrored ceiling.

'So, are these people going to stay here and gather Karma continuously?'

Thinking about Yerin's words that hinted at becoming the Strongest Sword in the future, he wondered if they were waiting here for the mutation to happen tomorrow.

If they monopolized 3 million by killing the guy, it would be a significant advantage in the eventual duel with the Strongest Sword.

'Hundreds of female warriors gathered under the red light pillar...'

Just two days ago, it would have been an unrealizable fantasy, but not anymore.

'...But the Strongest Swords are getting stronger every day.'

Yeongwoo felt his eyelids getting heavy, recalling the recent battles with the mutants.

It felt like it had been months since those events, even though it was just a few days, or even hours ago.

All those events had brought intense fatigue, both mentally and physically.

"Pfhu...."

Halfway into a doze, Yeongwoo let out a long exhale, as if a whale briefly surfaced above the water.

And again, he tried to exhale with a “Pfhu,” but...

Suddenly, his body shot up.

Or at least, that’s how Yeongwoo felt.

‘...Huh?’

As he opened his eyes wide, he saw it.

Shaaaaat!

“Heck!”

Reflected in the ceiling mirror, there was a red eye-shaped icon above his left eye.

This was probably the Mutant Rank Cornea effect, the ‘One Eyed Sentinel,’ but before Yeongwoo could recall it, Jongsu burst in.

“Hyung-niiiiim!”

He screamed as if hitting his ears.

“Hyung-nim! Something big has happened!”

“...?”

Yeongwoo felt discomfort as he watched Jongsu nonchalantly pass through the door.

Swiftly checking the table clock,

「10:07」

‘10 o’clock...? No way.’

This time, Yeongwoo’s head turned in the opposite direction.

Suddenly, a bright light seeped through the window frame.

It wasn’t night; it was morning at 10 o’clock.

Yeongwoo had slept for a whopping 12 hours without even hearing the Morning Call from the rental system.

Because of this, with the ownership rights to the room having expired, Jongsu could freely enter without any restrictions.

‘Oh my goodness.’

Sensing that something was seriously wrong, Yeongwoo hastily put on the equipment on the table.

Chyuk!

While doing so, he realized that the ‘Fearful Cat’ was wide awake.

「Fearful Cat」 – Epic Compass

【Indicates a threatening target.】

【–Empty slot–】

This signifies that there is a considerably powerful and threatening presence nearby.

And then,

Ta-aaang!

Gunshots resonated from outside the motel.

[Translator – Night]

[Proofreader – Gun]

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Chapter 69

[Translator – Night]

[Proofreader – Gun]

Chapter 69: Life and Death in Front of the Motel (1)

‘Crazy.’

Upon hearing the gunshot, Yeongwoo felt chills running through his entire body.

The bullet that just fired was not an ordinary one; it was worth a whopping 200,000 karma per shot.

Moreover,

‘They only had two shots combined.’

Current time, 10:07 PM.

Why did the authorities start firing just 7 minutes after the release of the private room service?

“What’s going on downstairs?”

Yeongwoo asked while putting on the last piece of equipment, the artifact helmet called ‘Vanguard.’

Then, Jongsu replied with a gasping tone,

“I, I don’t exactly know. Someone madly came looking for Gyeongbuk’s Strongest Sword...”

“...What?”

Unexpectedly, Yeongwoo was momentarily speechless at the unexpected culprit.

He suspected an attack from the Women Alliance to secure Gyeongbuk’s Strongest Sword for their territorial expansion.

It wouldn’t be strange for them to attack right after it entered their area.

‘But seeking Gyeongbuk’s Strongest Sword so pinpoint?’

Yeongwoo, fully armed, rushed out of the room, suddenly recalling something.

‘Oh, no way.’

He realized that there must be someone who could find Gyeongbuk’s Strongest Sword without any difficulty.

* * *

‘Fuck... I haven’t even set foot in Seoul yet.’

Icheon’s Strongest Sword, Kim Byungcheol 139, clenched his teeth.

These guys were fast.

Just 5 minutes ago, he was sunbathing in front of the motel, waiting for Jeong Yeongwoo to wake up.

Thanks to that, he was the first to encounter the man who walked out from the other buildings.

“Captain, someone is coming this way.”

“What?”

Until then, he hadn't even thought that the man might have come here at 10 AM, the time for the end of the private room service.

There were no titles above his head, and his footsteps seemed very leisurely.

Yet, the reason the two guards remained vigilant was...

“What's that...?”

“A sword... maybe?”

It was because the object in the man's right hand looked suspicious.

A weapon reminiscent of a giant thorn.

It was difficult to see it as a typical 'sword' because the boundary between the blade and the handle was ambiguous.

It was more like a form close to a spear.

Anyway, it wasn't standard-issue equipment, so the probability of the person being strong was quite high.

And in this world, strong individuals were the majority.

‘...Dangerous.’

When Byungcheol's face hardened, Taeyoung, who was standing next to him, asked cautiously,

“Should we stop him? That person...”

“No. There's no need to cause a disturbance.”

Soon, Byungcheol's head turned sideways.

It wasn't because he didn't want to provoke first while wearing a police uniform just because the opponent looked dangerous. It was an unpredictable situation.

Moreover,

“Our side is much stronger. If he attacks, he’ll be the one making a mistake.”

Byungcheol reminded himself that Gyeongbuk’s Strongest Sword and about 60 Women Alliance combatants were in the 6-story motel right behind him.

In other words, the person entering the danger zone was the man in front of them.

“Oh, there are police officers here.”

Finally approaching within about 10 meters, the man, who had come, seemed surprised when he saw Byungcheol and Taeyoung’s attire.

Then.

“...”

“...”

The man stared intently at the title ‘Icheon’s Strongest Sword’ above Byungcheol’s head.

“Oh my.”

Byungcheol’s expression sank as he met the gaze, recognizing the ruthless look of a relentless plunderer—the same look he had seen when playing the role of Icheon’s guardian.

And even before this, Byungcheol finally realized.

‘Could this guy be a Strongest Sword too?’

Some Strongest Swords could conceal their titles.

Didn’t Gyeongbuk’s Strongest Sword, Jeong Yeongwoo, possess such an ability?

‘Probably in his mid to late twenties... Ordinary build, featureless face. Can’t tell if he’s a Strongest Sword, though.’

While thinking this, Byungcheol unconsciously moved his right hand closer to his gun.

“What’s happening here?”

When Byungcheol asked with a stern look, the man, after briefly glancing at Taeyoung this time, let out a strange laugh.

"I'm looking for someone. Doesn't seem like you guys are the ones I'm looking for, though."

The man's gaze shifted back to the motel Luso.

Then, he pointed at the motel entrance with his finger, abruptly asking Byungcheol.

"Excuse me, how many people are in there? I thought they would have all come out by now... The lodging service is over, right?"

"...Yes?"

Caught off guard by the irrelevant question, Byungcheol reflexively turned toward the motel, and at that moment, the man lunged at him.

Thunk!

It was a too-obvious ambush, but it seemed sufficient for the man to exploit that momentary gap.

"Ah...!"

"Icheon Swordsmanship!"

Before Byungcheol, warned by Taeyoung, could return his head to its original position, the enormous thorn pierced his throat.

Shwit!

A short whimper escaped through Byungcheol's clenched teeth.

"Captain!"

While a shocked Taeyoung quickly pulled out his gun, the man's voice stopped him from firing.

"If you shoot, the captain dies too. Do you want to risk your life unnecessarily?"

In other words, not shooting meant he wouldn't harm them either.

"..."

Breathing heavily with extreme tension, Taeyoung looked at the man with a complicated expression.

In essence, he indirectly negotiated with this murderer.

“You’re wise. Good.”

Soon, the man pulled the long thorn from Icheon’s Strongest Sword’s throat.

Pfft!

As a result, Byungcheol, with blood oozing out, fell to the ground as if kneeling.

“...Kkurip.”

Until now, he had been holding his breath.

“Captain...!”

However, before Taeyoung could support him, he breathed his last.

Pahat!

The title ‘Icheon’s Strongest Sword’ that had been floating above his head disappeared.

It was evidence that the basic succession mechanism of the Strongest Sword title, ‘murder,’ had been activated.

However, even though Byungcheol had taken his last breath, no title appeared above the man’s head.

“What the...? Seriously.”

A fact that the young officer realized belatedly, just as his superior had long ago—this man was also a Strongest Sword who concealed his title.

“...!”

[Translator – Night]

[Proofreader – Gun]

At that moment, as Taeyoung was about to call another Strongest Sword in the vicinity, Jeong Yeongwoo,

Kwajak!

A group of people walked out of the motel Luso entrance, stepping on glass shards.

“What’s going on...?”

“Captain?”

They were none other than Jongsu and around ten members of the Women Alliance.

With the lodging service fully expired, everyone had started coming out.

“This bastard...!”

Jongsu was the first to draw his sword, having discovered Byungcheol’s corpse.

Then, one after another.

Swish, swish!

The female combatants, making loud noises, unsheathed their weapons.

Even before the guest’s death, the fact that someone with murderous intent had entered their territory was a significant problem.

“Wow.”

Looking at the people with weapons as sharp as the ones in their hands, the man expressed admiration.

“Almost all women. How is the world turning?”

Then, he added a meaningful remark.

“Could Gyeongbuk’s Strongest Sword be a woman too?”

“...!”

At this comment, Jongsu felt the hairs on his body stand up, while the Women Alliance members, who still didn’t know Yeongwoo’s true identity, growled and surrounded the man.

“What the hell is this lunatic saying?”

“He found the wrong place on his own.”

Despite the tense atmosphere, the reason for not immediately engaging in a fight was clear:

Icheon’s Strongest Sword was lying dead on the other side.

In other words, this unwelcome guest was powerful enough to single-handedly kill Icheon's Strongest Sword.

"...Where's the leader?"

One of the women surrounding the man whispered to her nearby colleague, asking about the leader of this area, Seong Yerin.

Through this, Jongsu sensed that the gathered individuals' combat power wasn't very high.

'We're in trouble. Hyung needs to come.'

Even though it was well past 10 o'clock...

Could he still be lying on the bed?

"..."

As Jongsu, with a face indicating internal turmoil, glanced at the motel, the man, noticing it, menacingly held a needle and said,

"There are more."

The seemingly relaxed expression of the man turned icy cold.

The reason was simple – he wanted to clean up the situation before more enemies arrived.

Sensing the danger, Jongsu jumped into the motel first, shouting.

"He's here!"

"Oh-ho."

As if understanding the situation, the man turned his body toward the motel entrance.

Then, just as he had done to Icheon's Strongest Sword, the Women Alliance members surrounded him with their weapons raised.

Motel lobby, Icheon district police officer Kwon Taeyoung finally fired his gun.

Ta-ang!

And with this signal, all the combatants in the audience rushed at the man.

* * *

Thud!

When Yeongwoo arrived on the first floor of the motel, the lobby was already chaotic.

Inside the motel, Women Alliance members who heard gunshots were trying to rush outside.

On the other hand, those who were initially fighting outside were attempting to flee into the motel.

“Hey, make way!”

“Just go outside if you’re not going to fight! What are you doing here?”

The ones outside wanted to enter the motel because there were more allies here.

It was better to run into the motel, filled with dozens of comrades, than risk being stabbed in the back in the open.

“What’s happening right now?”

Soon, Seong Yerin came down to the lobby and furrowed her brows upon seeing the crowd at the narrow entrance.

But was that the only problem?

Beyond the crowded lobby entrance, a man’s voice came through.

“Move!”

With terrifying sounds piercing flesh, people attempting to escape into the motel began falling rapidly.

The man began clearing the way himself.

“Agh!”

“Ugh!”

In an instant, several people fell forward with holes all over their bodies.

Seeing this, Yeongwoo, who threw the early bird to stop him, pulled out his sword to intervene.

Swish!

Although it was at a remarkably fast speed, he threw it expecting the opponent to block it.

If he was truly the Strongest Sword, he wouldn't fall for such an obvious surprise.

But, inevitably.

Phew!

The man casually deflected the early bird and looked at Yeongwoo.

Then, with an excited expression,

"Who are you looking for?"

As Yeongwoo took a few steps forward and asked, the man wiped the blood on the needle onto the ground.

Shwick!

"Gyeongbuk's Strongest Sword."

"...!"

It was not Yeongwoo but the Women Alliance and Seong Yerin who were surprised at his words.

They had only thought of Icheon's Strongest Sword as a guest so far; they didn't know there was another Strongest Sword among the group.

Moreover,

'Wait. If it's Gyeongbuk's Strongest Sword....'

As Yerin tried to grasp the meaning of the word 'Gyeongbuk,' Yeongwoo took another step towards the man.

Now the distance between them was about six meters.

If he wanted, he could start a full-fledged fight.

So Yeongwoo checked the quest message attached to his left field of view in advance.

[Dogo] "Strong Tiger's Early Appearance"

Engage in 0/2 duels with targets with a total ability score of 3,000 or higher.

5 million karma

You must disclose the fact of Dogo's support in this duel.

Engage in two duels with targets with a combined power level of over 3,000.

This time, he might be able to complete one of those two duels.

So Yeongwoo, drawing the Black Sword from his waist, cautiously opened his mouth.

"This... the battle will be conducted with the universal weapon brand, Dogo's support."

"...What?"

"I am a human from Earth, the strongest in Gyeongbuk, Jeong Yeongwoo 07."

"What... What the fuck is he saying? Is this guy crazy?"

[Translator – Night]

[Proofreader – Gun]

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Chapter 70

[Translator – Night]

[Proofreader – Gun]

Chapter 70: Life and Death in Front of the Motel (2)

The sudden introduction of Yeongwoo's sponsor surprised not only the men but also everyone in the motel lobby and on the stairs.

"What did he just say?"

"The universe...?"

The crowd in the motel lobby and on the stairs buzzed with confusion.

Yeongwoo's previous lines had been so extravagant that it seemed like a mistake.

Of course, it was true that extraordinary events were happening in the world due to some massive force resetting the Earth, events that would not happen in the original reality.

But still...

“Did he just say he’s getting support from aliens...?”

Yeongwoo’s claim, as Yerin’s words suggested, was absurd.

In fact, some in the audience thought Yeongwoo was insane.

“A universal what? What nonsense is this? Have you read too many fantasy novels?”

The man in question ridiculed Yeongwoo.

Then, tapping his left chest, he spoke with a triumphant tone.

“You claim to be the strongest in Gyeongbuk, but soon, I’ll be the one taking your place.”

Thud!

A radiant light began to gather above the man’s head.

And then, he immediately displayed a title.

『Gyeongbuk’s Strongest Sword (Advanced)』

“Ah.”

Yeongwoo widened his eyes upon seeing the title.

Although he had anticipated it to some extent, seeing the (Advanced) title for the first time was surprising.

‘Someone is actually tracking me.’

The special title, Gyeongbuk’s Strongest Sword (Advanced), could be obtained by collecting three or more positions of the Strongest Sword in the Gyeongbuk region.

The unique feature was the ability to know the real-time location of the Gyeongbuk’s Strongest Sword.

“I heard he’s Gyeongbuk’s Strongest Sword, and honestly, I was a bit scared, but I didn’t think he’d be a crazy old man.”

The man mocked, adopting a stabbing posture.

In response, Yeongwoo shifted his gaze to the pile of corpses behind the man.

“It’s not something a lunatic who kills people like that should say.”

“This bastard.”

The man, angered by Yeongwoo’s words, sneered and spoke in a spirited voice, tapping his left chest.

“Soon, I’ll be the one taking your place.”

Thud!

A brilliant light gathered above the man’s head.

And then, a kind of settlement message appeared in Yeongwoo’s field of vision.

「Strength has permanently increased by 100 due to the effect of the Furious Goblin.」

「The use of the pumpkin-colored whistle has been recharged.」

With the passage of a day, the goblin ring and talisman had resumed functioning.

‘Now I can call Yeongtae again.’

As Yeongwoo unconsciously smiled at this thought, the Gyeongbuk’s Strongest Sword (Advanced) looked puzzled, unaware of the situation.

“What the fuck is going on again, you bastard.”

Then.

Swoosh!

He immediately attempted a sharp stab.

He didn’t know what it was, but it felt unpleasant, so he wanted to kill him quickly.

At that moment, a golden flash activated, absorbing the man’s senses.

However.

「The sensation value has temporarily increased from the original 100 to 1,240.」

‘What...?’

The sensation value Yeongwoo absorbed through the golden flash was a whopping 1,140.

In other words, the opponent’s sense value was in the 2000s.

‘Crazy, that’s why he’s so confident.’

Yeongwoo felt a chill down his spine as he narrowly avoided the opponent’s stab.

‘My total stats are barely 1,700.’

In contrast, the opponent’s sense value alone exceeds 2,000.

Then how high were the other stats like strength, stamina, and durability?

Swoosh!

Another stab came at him.

At the same time, the holographic guide of the Gyeongbuk Swordsmanship instructed him to twist his body instead of extending the sword.

It implied that the opponent was not someone to be dealt with by strength alone.

‘This is bad.’

A sense of defeat crept in.

It might be a premature judgement, but fights at the level of the Strongest Sword could be a matter of life and death within a tenth of a second.

In the end, while narrowly avoiding the opponent’s sword, Yeongwoo shouted into the air.

“Everyone, run!”

...!

Those who had been watching with fascination, sensing the superiority of the current Strongest Sword Yeongwoo, were startled when they heard the command to run coming from Yeongwoo himself.

‘... He’s losing.’

‘The challenger is stronger.’

‘If Jeong Yeongwoo dies, who’s next...?’

Everyone quickly grasped the situation and began to react, and it took less than a second.

In the meantime, the two Strongest Swords were already in their eighth clash, and everyone except Jongsu started running outside the lobby.

Tadaat!

Most of the people here already had skills surpassing ordinary levels.

As skilled as they were, their movements were quite fast, but it was still ridiculously inadequate to avoid the Strongest Sword’s attacks.

“Where are you going!”

The eyes of the man who was close to Yeongwoo glared at him, and soon a golden wave emanated from his body.

Whoosh!

It was one of the privileges of the Strongest Sword, ‘Aura of the Strongest Sword.’

“Whoa!”

“Ugh...!”

The wave swept through the battlefield terrifyingly, causing those who were fleeing to freeze in their tracks.

None of them possessed the momentum or mental strength to confront the Strongest Sword.

Only Seong Yerin, the leader in this area, managed to move with effort and spat out curses.

“Fuck, what... what is this again?”

Encountering the battle stance of the Strongest Sword for the first time, she felt utterly helpless.

Just by displaying it, he could hold everyone in place?

What kind of ridiculous power was this...?

“Wait right there. I’ll kill this guy first, and then I’ll make holes in all of you.”

With a malicious remark, the man tried to attack Yeongwoo with even more intense force.

Yeongwoo continued to evade the attacks as he had done so far, but his limits were approaching.

The opponent’s attack speed was faster than his actual dodging ability, probably because the opponent’s strength was much higher.

Without the support of Gyeongbuk Swordsmanship, he would have been defeated much earlier.

‘My concentration is gradually breaking down. At this rate...’

Swoosh!

As Yeongwoo felt the attack barely brushing against his ear, he checked for elements that could create variables.

Firstly, ‘Yeongtae.’

「Pumpkin-Colored Whistle」 – Legendary Necklace

【Summon a friend.】

|Yeongtae.

A whistle that could summon a mutant friend with whom Yeongwoo successfully shook hands.

[Translator – Night]

[Proofreader – Gun]

He could summon the friend up to two times a day, and the summoning count was fully charged at the moment.

The second and last element was the ‘Blue Blood,’ a mutant potion.

【Strength increased by 30% for 10 minutes.】

【Usage count: 4】

A kind of doping potion, the 'Blue Blood.'

Although his pure stats were not high, the practical effect was considerable, especially since his strength was the highest among all stats at 700.

'Are these the only two...?'

If he had to mention one more, there was the 'Golden Punishment,' which inflicted pain on the opponent if his attacks landed.

'But it's difficult even to avoid, let alone land an attack.'

Yeongwoo twisted his body once again with a feeling of despair.

Swoosh!

However, his body had already started to feel sluggish, and blood oozed from the waist where the opponent's blade had grazed.

'Good grief, not even three years, but three days.'

Yeongwoo made a self-deprecating joke.

Originally, according to fate, he would have died at the hands of a guest in three years, but thanks to the reset, he had died much faster than that.

"Ah, damn it!"

Finally, Yeongwoo also emitted a golden wave from his entire body while filling his pupils.

Whoosh!

"Oh."

At that moment, the man flinched momentarily, and Yeongwoo took advantage of this to leap backward.

Thud!

"What, he just escaped after making a big fuss?"

The man who easily shrugged off Yeongwoo's aura of superiority followed with open mockery, and in the meantime, Yeongwoo...

Swish!

Swiftly pulled out the 'Blue Blood' from his pocket and stuffed it into his mouth.

By the way.

Crunch!

"Cough!"

The elongated glass bottle shattered in his mouth, tearing apart his tongue and flesh, but Yeongwoo had no time to even open the lid.

"Kwaaah!"

Intense pain struck to the point where his face crumpled, but the wounds inside and outside his mouth soon healed.

Thanks to the 'Slime's Core' attached to his body.

「Slime's Core」 – Mutant Bracelet

【Rapid increase in regeneration ability.】

Of course, those who didn't know about these circumstances, including Gyeongbuk's Strongest Sword (Advanced) and the Women alliance, considered it a mysterious event.

"This guy, what is he doing?"

"Wh-what was that just now...?"

"Gasp?"

However, the miracle wasn't just Yeongwoo's insane regeneration.

Following that...

Swoosh.

Yeongwoo pressed the whistle against his mouth.

"...!"

Because of what they had seen earlier, everyone in the room, including the man, was overcome with an ominous feeling.

Piiiiiiiiing!

When the sound of the whistle actually echoed, everyone screamed in unison.

「Friend, Yeongtae answers your call and is summoned..」

An alert for summoning appeared for Yeongwoo, causing the ambient light to temporarily decrease, and then...

「Yaaaah!」

The voice of mutant Hong Yeongtae resonated faintly from somewhere beyond the ceiling.

‘Ah, could it be.’

Yeongwoo reflexively raised his head to look at the tightly sealed ceiling.

Then.

Crackle, crackle!

Irregular cracking sounds gradually approached, getting closer and closer.

It was probably breaking through the ceiling and floor of each floor in sequence.

And finally.

Crack!

Hong Yeongtae, a mutant friend with the body of a giant and the soul of a human, appeared by breaking through the lobby ceiling of the first floor.

「Uwaaah!」

Yeongtae smashed the lobby floor with his fur-covered buttocks, and then, with his large hand adorned with sharp claws, he felt around his waist.

And then.

「Uwah!」

As if realizing belatedly that he had been summoned, he opened his long snout and looked surprised.

Why?

「No?」

He realized that he had landed in a motel lobby full of women.

The next moment, Yeongtae, the mutant friend, discovered his summoner Yeongwoo.

「Oh, Yeongwoo.」

The tone seemed to ask why he was in such a place.

In response, Yeongwoo pointed his sword at the man on the other side.

“Get yourself together. That guy over there is the enemy. He’s extremely strong, so help me out a bit.”

「What?」

Yeongtae was so surprised that Yeongwoo, who had defeated him, would call someone strong.

Yeongtae, still taken aback, turned his snout to look at the man.

In the meantime, the man also looked puzzled, as he were staring at a fallen beast from the sky.

“What is this?”

Even the man’s dialogue conveyed a sense of fear.

It’s understandable.

[Yeongwoo’s Friend – Hong Yeongtae]

Above Yeongtae’s head was a tag that nobody except those involved could understand.

Being able to summon a mutant was mind-blowing enough, but ‘friend’?

Where and what on earth was happening?

“What... the fuck is this?”

As the man alternated his gaze between Yeongwoo and Yeongtae with widened pupils, the air of authority he had been emanating momentarily faded away.

Seemingly shocked, he couldn’t maintain his authority.

Then.

Swish!

Dozens of Women alliance members in the room were released from their restraints, and almost simultaneously, Seong Yerin let out a scream filled with malice.

“Attack everyone...!”

[Translator – Night]

[Proofreader – Gun]