

The Pathway Of Wisdom

#Chapter 51: Trample or Be Trampled. Part-1. - Read The Pathway Of Wisdom Chapter 51: Trample or Be Trampled. Part-1.

Chapter 51: Trample or Be Trampled. Part-1.

City of Ilma, Outskirts.

A middle-aged farmer was slowly making his way to his farmland early in the morning, just like usual.

Seeing him walking on the road, a fellow farmer who was working on the field right beside the road smiled and shouted,

"Oh! Old Paul! You are here early today!"

Hearing the shout of his friend, Paul stopped and replied in a calm voice as he wiped the sweat from his forehead.

"The weather's hot today, so I thought it would be better to finish up work early today..."

"Also I had no money to drink yesterday, so I couldn't even sleep properly... even cheap wine is so expensive these days that it's unbelievable!"

Hearing Paul's words, his friend sighed and shouted loudly while replying from far away,

"Oi oi! It's already been three months since the incident with Beila! How long are you going to mess around in the taverns?"

"There are plenty of fish in the sea; you should move on now from the past, you know!"

"Thinking about her all the time and being won't fill your stomach!"

At his friends' words, Paul gave a wry smile and replied with a sad look on his face,

"You won't understand it man... you haven't married anyone after all... she still comes in my dreams-"

Before Paul could finish his sentence, his friend laughed and replied,

"Poor people have no 'dreams'! We only have 'survival' and 'suffering' in our life!"

"But if you start enjoying the suffering, it won't be much of a problem anymore!"

"Take my advice into consideration and stop wasting your time in the taverns and start looking for other women! There are kinds of them out there, you know!"

Paul knew it was pointless to argue with that guy, and thus he shook his head and continued on his way.

With his empty stomach and no money in his pockets, Paul arrived at his small farm, which he had inherited from his father.

Legend has it that the lands of the Ilma County once used to be lush and very productive, but a powerful monster once ravaged the land and died rampaging in this land.

Its body destroyed the land and made most of Ilma County barren and unproductive.

Only a little bit of land around the city of Ilma is still barely able to produce some food, and many farmers inherit it from their parents with each passing generation.

Paul was the same, although his land was much less productive, and it barely produced enough yield to fill his stomach for a few months.

Old Paul had been working on this farm since his childhood, and he had spent decades of hard work to save enough money to buy a small home for himself and his family in a cheaper area inside the city walls.

The City of Ilma is very big, but it's not big enough to keep up with the changing times and the increase of population in the county.

The walls of the city of Ilma were made dozens of decades ago when monster attacks ravaged the land, often in this area.

Population was small back then, and everyone had enough space to live inside the city walls safely, but in his day and age, when monsters don't have much interest in attacking the city of Ilma, the population has exploded.

There is no more space left inside the city walls, and many poor and homeless people have settled outside the city walls over the past few decades.

Most of the poor farmers and laborers of the city live outside the city walls, and the area is commonly referred to as the slum area of the city of Ilma by many.

Paul wanted a better life for his children.

He had seen all the chaos and despair a poor person could see in his life, he had often starved for days, he had seen his parents die from a disease, and his life was filled with sorrow just like any other normal poor person's is.

That's why he worked hard his entire life, married his childhood sweetheart, and tried to give her a better life.

He was blessed with a son, and just a few months ago, his son had finally become five years old.

Although Paul's own life was filled with despair and suffering, he didn't want that kind of life for his son; he worked hard to buy a home in the city so that he could finally leave those dirty, lawless slums behind.

But fate seemed to have something else in mind.

Paul's greatest wish was thoroughly crushed and destroyed when, three months ago, his wife and his son fell sick after drinking water from a contaminated well.

He later found out that the well was constructed by the subordinates of the Ilma family, but they had used cheap material to build it.

Those subordinates were corrupt, and to take most of the money for themselves, they built the well with cheap material and forced the people from the slums to work for them without paying them at all.

One of the people forced to work was even suffering from a contagious disease and ended up dying while working from sickness; instead of disposing of his body, they pushed his body in the well and forced others to keep building.

Food and water shortage was a common occurrence in the barren land of Ilma, where nothing grew and it barely ever rained.

Despite knowing that the water was contaminated and despite removing the rotting corpse later, it still became a breeding ground for disease and death.

Paul's unfortunate wife and his young kid had no idea about the contamination of the water.

Most of the people in the slums were uneducated; they had no knowledge that even after removing the corpse there would still be health issues.

Hundreds of people from the slums were wiped out in just a few days of the well's creation, and unfortunately for Paul, his beloved wife and his little child were among those many victims.

Paul even sold his house, which he had spent so much effort on, just to find medicine for his wife and his child.

But there was nothing that could save his family; it was as if Fate had already decided that suffering was unavoidable in his life.

Chapter 52: Trample or Be Trampled. Part-2.

Paul cried, begged, and shouted, but there was no one who could help him; he even begged the same people, the same subordinates of the Ilma family, despite knowing that they were the culprits that caused his suffering.

In desperation, Paul did everything, but despite all the efforts, he was not able to save his wife and his child.

Paul did not even have the money to do a proper burial for them both, and thus he had to personally dig the grave for his family members and bury them outside in the barren land.

He couldn't even put a tombstone there, as he knew that the soldiers would come and destroy it all if they found out that he had illegally dug the place.

With no family and no hope for the future, Paul, a hardworking man who had spent his entire life providing for and protecting his family, became an alcohol addict and wasted away his life in taverns.

He would do some hard labor work a few days a week, work on his farm sometimes, and then use all the money he earned to splurge on wine.

Alcohol became his sole way of forgetting all the pain and suffering in his life.

There were barely any happy memories in his mind, and the pain of losing his loving family was killing him every single day from the inside out.

Every single moment when Paul was sober, he asked himself, 'Why didn't I also die that day!?'

He even tried to commit suicide but had no courage to take the final step.

In the end, after losing everything, Paul was just drifting from one place to another.

The sole thing holding him intact was the farm he had worked on his entire life.

He had worked on it for so long that the very soil of that land became closely connected to his very soul.

It was his final solace in this life of suffering.

And just like usual, Paul was going to go to his farm, his land of solace, even today.

But to Paul's misfortune, today was not an ordinary day.

When he finally reached his farm, he noticed that dozens of soldiers were present there and there were a lot of people mapping the area and measuring it.

Seeing that scene, anxiousness took hold of Paul's heart, and he felt an ominous feeling that something bad was going to happen soon.

After living his entire life in suffering and disasters, Paul had now developed a keen sense of disaster.

He could already sense that something was not right and a new trouble was now knocking on his door once again.

Seeing Paul arrive at the farm, one of the soldiers standing guard frowned and shouted at him.

"What are you doing here!! Leave! There's nothing here for you to see!!"

Paul was startled by that loud shout, and his wrinkled face became pale in fright as his fragile body shivered continuously.

But Paul couldn't just abandon that farm just like that; he had spent his entire life on that land. He couldn't leave. He summoned all of his courage in that moment and asked in a stuttering voice,

"Uh... Sir Soldier... t-this is my farmland... I just wanted to... k-know what you all are doing here... n-nothing else..."

Hearing Paul's words, the soldier frowned deeply, but just when he was about to speak, an officer who seemed to be of higher rank walked over after noticing the situation and spoke in an arrogant tone.

"Our great lord, the ruler of the county of Ilma, will soon return with his son from their great mission!"

"The benevolent firstborn son of our lord will be bestowed with the blessings of the church of the goddess of war and combat!"

"We need to build a grand statue and place it in a location that will make the statue visible from afar! This land is now the property of the Count of Ilma!"

The officer took out a few coins and threw them at Paul's face before saying arrogantly,

"Take this money and leave! If you dare to come back here, we will use you as the fertilizer for the flowers that will be planted in this place to decorate the statue's premises!"

Paul could not even say a single word, as the aura of that officer was too strong, and his entire body was frozen stiff the moment that officer looked at him.

He knew that if he didn't leave, he might really be killed off in that moment, and they would likely do exactly what they were saying!

Paul collected the coins from the ground with trembling hands, and before he could even collect them all, he was grabbed by the collar and thrown on the road by the soldier standing nearby!

"F*cking trash! Leave already! You are such an eyesore!"

Paul hurriedly got up from the ground, didn't even notice the scratches he got from being thrown on the ground, and ran away in disgrace.

As Paul ran, tears flowed out of his eyes and refused to stop no matter how many times he tried to wipe them away with the sleeves of his old and torn shirt.

After running for a while, Paul reached a street in the slums, but his feet slipped due to the mud on the street, and he fell headfirst on the ground!

Thankfully the street was not made of stones and was just dirt and mud everywhere, saving him from suffering another injury.

His entire body got covered in mud, but that final fall became the final straw that broke him and made him faint on the spot.

His mind could not process all that pent-up sadness and pain anymore, and he fell unconscious on the spot!

Soon some farmers who needed to cross the street noticed him.

As the street was used for transportation with wooden carts and Paul was blocking their way, they grabbed the unconscious Paul and threw him away in a corner of the street like garbage before continuing on their way!

In fact, they even stole the coins from his pockets that Paul got in return for his precious land before leaving.

No one cared that there was a man lying unconscious at the corner of the street, and no one even spared him a single glance.

As they say, in a dog-eat-dog world where everyone is selfish and self-centered, you either trample on others or get trampled by others.

Chapter 53: Trample or Be Trampled. Part-3.

Pittar-patter~Pittar-patter~**

Raindrops fell on the muddy street, all people hurried home, and the cold raindrops fell on Paul's face, jolting him awake.

A frown appeared on his face as he tried to stop the water from falling on his face with his hand unconsciously, but the cold raindrops woke him up as his body started to shiver from cold.

"Ugh!! Huff! Pant! Huff!! Wh-where! wh-what!"

Paul slowly stood up and looked around in confusion and only then remembered that he seemed to have fainted after tripping while running.

Thinking about the reason why he was running in the first place, a look of sadness flashed in Paul's eyes, but his face remained numb.

Just like how the peak of anger is 'Silence,' the peak of sadness is 'Numbness.'

At that moment, Paul felt nothing at all; he felt empty from the very bottom of his heart as if someone had ripped out his heart and made him an empty husk with nothing left inside.

His eyes were sunken, and the deep dark circles on his face represented how devastating his situation was.

There was nothing left in Paul's life that held any meaning; his wife and his kid died from disease, his home was lost, his farming job was lost, and his farming land was lost too.

With torn clothes, empty pockets, and mud covering his entire body, Paul was at the very bottom in that moment; he was now in a situation even worse than a beggar.

An empty living corpse, with no motive or reason to live for, it was a final stage of grief with no hope and no dream to think of.

The words of his friend, 'Poor people have no dreams!' seemed to have come true, and now he really had nothing left.

"Oi! Don't stand near my house! F*cking beggar! Go away!"

Paul looked back and noticed that he was standing quite close to a broken wooden hut, and the owner had just returned, and he was unhappy that Paul was standing nearby.

Hearing his shouts, Paul walked away.

Rain kept pouring; it was slow, but it got faster and faster until all of Paul's body was drenched in rain.

It barely ever rained in the city of Ilma, and even if it did, it would usually only rain lightly, but to Paul's absolute misfortune, rain had to appear on exactly the same day when he had no roof over his head to hide from it.

And not just any rain—it was a thunderstorm!

BOOOOM!

The loud noise of lightning rang out in the entire city of Ilma and its nearby areas, causing Paul's drenched body to shiver in fright unconsciously.

The cold raindrops made him feel weak and helpless, and the lightning made him fragile and frightened.

Paul walked barefoot, as he seemed to have lost his shoes somewhere while running earlier, and with each step, he seemed to lose a piece of his heart.

Like an undead, he moved with no purpose or goal in mind, just an empty, broken mind and no hope or dream to speak of.

He roamed the streets aimlessly; he wandered and wandered for hours with no particular destination in mind.

He was lost, not only physically, but also mentally.

"Are you lost, old man?"

Just when Paul was drifting from one place to another like a lost boat on an endless dark ocean, a ray of light fell on him, and a voice jolted him awake from his dazed state.

Paul looked around, and he noticed that a young man with a gentle smile on his face was sitting on a bench located under a house's canopy.

He had two cups of warm tea; one was in hand, and the other was placed on the bench beside him.

"If you are lost, how about take shelter from rain here... I also have tea; you can warm up your body by drinking it..."

Paul had no idea when he had entered the area inside the city walls in his daze; it was raining a lot, so there were no knights patrolling, and there was no one to stop him from entering inside despite looking like a beggar.

The rain had cleared all the mud from his body, but even then, he still looked like a beggar.

Despite looking like that, the unknown young man offered him a place to sit and offered him warm tea on this cold night.

This gesture of kindness seemed to have shone like an intense beam of light piercing right through all the darkness surrounding Paul's mind and showing him hope!

Paul unconsciously accepted the young man's offer; he walked over with the face of a broken, sad man, sat down on the bench, and took the tea.

The warmth of the teacup made Paul feel relaxed, and he could feel his tension slip away.

The smell of the tea was so good that Paul felt like it was all a dream and he was hallucinating all this.

But the pain that he was feeling from the wounds he got from falling was telling him that it was all real.

Paul hadn't eaten anything for two days, and thus he unconsciously took a sip of the tea.

It tasted so good that Paul's eyes widened in sheer shock, and he felt as if he had been embraced by the warm sunlight of a morning.

Just taking one sip of the tea brought tears to Paul's eyes, and he started sobbing and crying like a child on the spot.

"I-I have n-never tasted something this good..."

That tea made him remember the cooking of his loving wife, it reminded him of the mischief his little kid liked to play all the time, and it reminded him of the warmth he felt when he was sleeping peacefully in his house with his family.

And it brought tears to his tired eyes.

Despite him crying, the young man didn't say anything, as he was being considerate of Paul's feelings.

Paul cried for a long time as he slowly drank the tea one sip at a time.

Chapter 54: Trample or Be Trampled. Part-4.

Once the tea was finished, Paul finally stopped crying; the rain also slowed down quite a bit.

"It seems you have been under a lot of burden lately, Old Man... But I am glad you were able to let it all out..."

"Rain is good; under the heavy rain, others can't notice whether you are crying or not... especially if you are a man and not allowed to cry in front of others..."

The age-old saying that 'Men don't cry' also existed in this world too.

Most knights and soldiers follow this code, and those who cry are not qualified to become warriors according to the code of warriors of this world.

Luckily for Paul, he was not a warrior; he was just a peasant, an ordinary farmer, and there was no one watching him, so he could cry as much as he wanted.

Moreover, rain was excellent at hiding it all.

"I... I am sorry that I bothered you... I-I just..."

Paul could not find words to speak; he felt ashamed when looking into the eyes of the young man.

The young man had pure white skin, his silver hair was shining in the dark, and his golden pupils seemed to be capable of seeing right through a person's mind and soul!

The young man was short and looked weak, but Paul could feel that he was no ordinary person.

Not only was the unknown young man extremely handsome, but Paul could also feel that the young man's golden eyes were seeing right through him! Making him afraid to meet eyes with him.

"No need to apologize; I also got stuck in rain and couldn't return on time and thus found this place to sit..."

"The owner of this house is very kind; he even lent me his tea set to drink tea and pass time to wait for the rain..."

"You looked lost; you had the expression that you had nowhere to go, so I called out to you..."

The young man's voice was extremely gentle and very soothing to hear; it was almost as if the young man was surrounded by a holy light and seemed very bright in this dark night.

The young man seemed completely out of place; unlike the damp, dark area, he was shining with an extraordinary aura.

Just staying close to him, Paul felt as if all his tension and stress were disappearing with the wind.

"I am indeed lost..."

Paul took a deep breath and said those words out loud.

He was hesitant to tell the truth, but for some reason, when being looked at by those golden eyes, he felt that there was no need to hide anything.

He felt compelled to share everything with this unknown person for some reason.

"I have lost my everything... I lost my family, I lost my work, and I lost my land... I have nowhere to go, nowhere to stay and no destination in life..."

"I am indeed lost... I don't know what to do next... I just want to fade away in this darkness like I never existed before..."

Paul was broken, hopeless, and tired; he could not muster the energy to do anything anymore and thus felt lost.

He felt that darkness was taking hold of him with each passing second, but before it could truly consume him, the young man's voice jolted him out of that state of self-rejection and self-blame.

"Who do you think is responsible for all of this?"

That question made Paul feel startled.

As a poor farmer and a peasant, Paul had always spent his life working hard and never questioning his circumstances.

Thus, he never asked himself who was responsible for all the suffering in his life.

"Th-this..."

Thinking about that question, Paul could not find a concrete answer in his heart.

If he said that those corrupt officers were responsible, it would still be incorrect because partially, it was his mistake that he trusted those people and never inquired what water and food his family was drinking.

He never questioned if the food and water they had was dangerous or infected, and he never questioned his own social standing either.

He was so hardwired to stay at the bottom of the food chain that he never even thought about questioning anything around him at all.

"I see, so you realized... Yes, the 'Path' you chose in your life was responsible for it all..."

Paul chose to live a life of struggle; he chose the 'Path' that led him to an ordinary life filled with suffering and struggle.

Even when he tried to improve, he had already walked so far on his 'Path' of 'Eternal Struggles' that all of his life was eventually destroyed.

Usually, a poor person would dream of a happy, peaceful life with no more difficulties in their life.

But Paul did one major thing wrong, his greatest dream and ambition got replaced by the constant sadness and struggles that he had become accustomed to!

Paul had become so accustomed to his struggles and sadness-filled days that he started thinking that he was always going to live this way forever.

That was a big mistake.

In a world where a person's dream and ambition dictate their future and their 'Path' in life, Paul dreamed of living a constant life of struggles while trying to work hard for his family.

He messed up his 'Path' in life.

"I am actually surprised that you realized it so fast... you aren't a total airhead at the very least; that's a good start..."

The young man got up from his seat and opened an umbrella before looking at Paul with a smile and saying,

"A person is only 'Lost' when they end up losing sight of their original 'Path' in life..."

"And if you want to find your original 'Path' back... you can always do so if you look hard enough everywhere..."

"A warrior is not defeated until he himself acknowledges the defeat from the bottom of his heart..."

The young man placed the teacup in his hand down on the bench before saying,

"Everyone makes mistakes in life but you can always correct them..."

The young man stretched out his palm, and a half-broken avanti coin was resting on it.

"If you want to find your lost path... if you want to bring justice to put your loved one's spirit to rest... take it and aim for the giant clock tower in the morning before any knights catch you..."

"If you can't make it to the clock tower and the knights catch you, then you were never meant for anything more than what you are now..."

The young man handed the half-broken avanti coin to Paul and then walked away, but before walking away, he looked into Paul's eyes and said one last sentence.

"Remember the simple rule of the world... In this world, either you trample others, or you get trampled by others..."

The young man disappeared in the darkness of the night after leaving those words behind.

His words and his image burned themselves in Paul's heart, and he felt that he must not let this final ray of light abandon him.

The final ray of hope that was lighting his dark path was showing him a new possibility; if he let go of it, there would be nothing left in his life.

A newfound look of determination appeared on Paul's face as he clenched the broken avanti coin in his hand tightly.

'Trample or Be Trampled?... I hate this reality... but I have no other choice...'

Chapter 55: The Hidden Organization, Revenant. Part-1.

Time passed, and the rain finally slowed down.

It took Paul a lot of time to clear his head and muster up the strength to stand up and move forward toward his goal.

Sitting on that bench was comfortable; he was hidden from the rain and the scorn of the world, and he was safe.

But he knew he could not stay there forever, and he had to face the world as long as he kept living.

It's just that his weak body kept screaming for rest, kept asking to stay here for a bit more.

As they say, the first step is the most difficult towards a new journey.

But the words of that unknown young man gave Paul the strength to overcome his first challenge and take the first step.

He got up and started walking.

Paul had seen that giant clocktower once before; it was a massive pillar of stone and concrete located near the entrance to the nobleman area.

Anyone who dares to linger around that area for too long is immediately noticed by the guards patrolling the area and has to face strict interrogation.

As that area is very close to the entrance of the noble district, the security is often very tight near that area, and it's near impossible for someone like him who looks like a beggar to even loiter around there.

If he got found out, he might get beaten unconscious and then thrown into some random alley.

Paul had once visited that area back when he was a hard-working man with decent clothes and a loving family with a house and money in his pockets.

Now though, he was nothing but a beggar, maybe even worse than that.

Thankfully, it had been raining heavily for hours, and it's highly unlikely that any soldier or knight would be patrolling that area right now.

The noble district has hideouts everywhere for the soldiers and knights to stay, but outside there are no such places.

And as knights and soldiers have to patrol in heavy armor and they don't want their equipment to rust, they likely will stay inside the noble district in the hideouts and won't come out until the rain completely stops or it's morning.

There was still an hour or so before the darkness would start receding.

In this world, there are two suns; the night is short, and as there is no pollution to block the sunlight, it gets bright outside early in the morning because sunlight can enter the atmosphere unhindered.

While making sure to avoid wide roads with lots of people as much as possible, Paul slowly but steadily made his way towards the giant clocktower with the broken avanti coin hidden in his pockets.

Although he had no idea what that broken coin symbolized and what he was supposed to do once he reached the clocktower, he had no other choice left in life.

Looking at the cloudy sky, Paul noticed that the dark clouds were starting to clear up and the rain had completely stopped by now.

'You really hate me, don't you... it was raining when I didn't want it to... and when I want it to rain and help me keep the guards away, not it's stopped raining!'

'I really hate weather...'

Weather is the biggest friend and enemy of all farmers.

Sometimes when your crops are destined to die of drought, it suddenly rains and saves the crops.

At other times, when you already have enough water, it suddenly starts raining too much and kills the crops.

Weather is just bizarre like that, and it's always been the major cause of many farmers losing everything and committing suicide in despair.

Paul has faced the unpredictable weather his entire life, and it's nothing new that it's bringing misfortune to him even now.

By this point, Paul had become numb to anger and despair; he was at a stage where he didn't even care anymore and only had one goal in mind.

'I must reach the clocktower even if it kills me today!'

Although Paul's heart was burning with determination, he wasn't stupid enough to directly charge right into flames.

He knew that after the rain stopped, the knights and soldiers would definitely start patrolling again, and he might not be able to make it on time.

It won't matter if he manages to reach it before the morning at that point, as he won't be able to get close to the clocktower under the watchful eyes of the guards.

Just when Paul was feeling a bit desperate, he noticed a carriage parked near a large shop, and an idea appeared in his mind.

Without wasting a single second, Paul sneakily closed the distance between him and the carriage.

The carriage was standing on a street that led to only two places. One was the open area near the clock tower, and the other was the area where the barracks existed.

But there's no way a soldier living in the barracks would have a carriage, so Paul knew that this carriage was likely going to head towards the Noble District and will probably pass by the clocktower!

'I must do this!'

After checking that there was no one else on the street because it had only just stopped raining, Paul slipped under the carriage, grabbed the wooden frame of the carriage, and hung himself below it.

As even the driver of the carriage seemed to have entered the large shop to take shelter, there was no one to notice him sneaking around the carriage, and he easily hid himself.

Hanging onto the bottom of a carriage was very dangerous, and if his hand slipped, he could easily fall and get injured, but Paul had no other choice.

Just as Paul was done hiding himself, a fat-looking man rushed out of the shop with an anger-filled expression on his face.

"Hurry up! I am getting late! It's already stopped raining! We are running out of time!"

Under the constant urging of the master of the carriage, the driver hurriedly started driving the carriage and headed straight for the noble district!

Paul was thrilled after he noticed that he had won the gamble; his arms were going numb and his entire body was shivering from exhaustion, but Paul kept clinging with all his might!

The face of his dead wife and his dead kid flashed past his mind every time he thought of giving up and gave him the strength he needed to push forward!

Paul had conquered his nature of easily giving up!

In that moment, he was not just a poor broken farmer anymore; he had succeeded in forging his first shard of courage!

Chapter 56: The Hidden Organization, Revenant. Part-2.

Just like Paul had expected, the carriage slowly made its way towards the noble district, and in doing so, it passed through the open area near the giant clocktower.

By the time they reached the clocktower, Paul's hands had gone completely numb, and his nails were even starting to bleed!

But with sheer grit and determination, Paul managed to keep hanging below the carriage!

When the carriage reached the open area near the giant clocktower, it slowed down a bit to take a turn, and taking advantage of that slowed speed, Paul let go of his hands and let his body fall down!

****Thud!****

The moment he fell, his shoulder dislocated, and his body got various scratches as it rubbed against the cement road!

Immense pain assaulted Paul's entire body, but he bit his lips till they started bleeding to prevent himself from screaming.

He knew that if he screamed, he would be noticed and caught!

The moment he fell, he lay down flat on the ground to let the carriage pass above him, but due to not being able to control his entire body while falling at that speed, his ankle got in the way of the carriage's rear wheel!

****Crack!****

The rear wheel crushed and broke Paul's ankle, causing his eyes to go bloodshot from sheer pain, but still Paul did not let out a scream.

"Ugh..."

He controlled himself and only let out a barely audible groan.

Thankfully the driver of the carriage didn't have the time to notice that the rear wheel had gone through a bump, as he was in a hurry, and he led the carriage away without stopping.

Paul had no time to waste; he looked around and noticed that, for now, the entire plaza was empty, as it had only just recently stopped raining.

The ground was wet and a bit muddy because of the dirt that the wind and rain had brought.

Soon enough some cleaners will come, and if Paul doesn't move fast enough, he will be noticed by them.

"Ugh...."

As his left ankle was broken and his right shoulder was dislocated, Paul could not even stand up properly, but he had no time left.

While groaning from pain, he started crawling his way towards the clocktower!

'I will not fail after coming so far! I must not fail!'

With determination and grit Paul crawled forward at a snail's speed, but at least he was moving!

The more he forcefully moved his injured body, the more pain he felt, but he couldn't stop after coming so far, so he had no other choice but to keep moving.

And after several minutes of hard work, Paul barely managed to make it to the base of the giant clocktower.

****Clink!* *Clink!****

Just when Paul was about to reach his destination, he heard the sound of a coin falling, loud and clear.

Hearing that sound, his face went pale as he thought of something and felt an ominous foreboding.

With sweat all over his face, Paul slowly lowered his uninjured left arm to look for the coin in his pocket.

And to his horror, the broken avanti coin was missing.

Paul's fingers went right through his pockets, meaning that when he fell down from the carriage, his pocket got torn, and when he was crawling forward, the broken avanti coin fell out from the torn pocket.

If it had fallen somewhere else, it would still have been fine, but to Paul's horror, the avanti coin bounced on the ground and fell directly into the sewers!

The manhole cover of the sewer near the clocktower had big circular holes in it, and the broken avanti coin passed right through them and fell down the sewer!

"Th-this!?... this can't be..."

Paul was helpless and unable to stop that from happening; with his broken body, he could not even lift the manhole cover on the sewer and look inside to find the coin.

'Do you really have to do this to me!? Do you really want me to die a meaningless death!?'

'Are the gods in heavens hell-bent on making me suffer!? Why is it that only my luck and fate are so bad that I can't do anything in life!!! Why!!!'

Many questions ran through Paul's head.

He felt helpless, he felt broken, and he felt betrayed.

He was granted one final chance to achieve something; he was granted one final chance to change his life, but after coming so close to his destination, after coming so close to the final point, his hopes were crushed!

Having your hopes crushed right when you are about to reach your goal is crueler than never having hopes in the first place!

That blow was so devastating that Paul could not hold it anymore; tears appeared in his eyes as he looked at the manhole cover with resentment and hatred.

'I am pathetic... I couldn't even do one single thing right! I deserve this d*mned fate!!'

'Ah! Just kill me already! Just kill me!!'

While lamenting his luck and fate, Paul cried in sheer despair; he had nothing left to live for, and he just wanted to die in that moment.

Soon enough some cleaning workers will come and notice him, then they will call the soldiers and knights, and he will be beaten and thrown away like garbage!

With such a broken body, he might not even be able to survive more than a day, and he would bleed to death in some dark alley.

His corpse will rot away, eaten by dogs and pests, and then eventually it will be cleaned off and disposed of!

Every trace of him will disappear from this world; there will be no justice for his dead family, and there will be no one who will know that a person like him ever existed.

There will be no one who will care that 'Paul,' the farmer, once died helpless against fate!

"No! I will not die helpless!!"

"If I am going to die anyway! I will struggle until the last breath! I will not be known as Paul, who died helpless!"

"I would rather want to be remembered as Paul, who struggled against fate until his last breath!"

With determination flashing in his eyes, Paul crawled towards the manhole cover!

He wasn't going to accept defeat until the very end!

And as if the 'World' itself had become impressed by his unwavering struggle, it bestowed the reward that Paul had been wanting all this while!

****Click!****

The manhole cover rotated on its own and slid aside as a man wearing a dark black cape and a dark black mask climbed out of it.

In his hand he was holding the same broken Avanti coin that Paul had lost.

"Hoh? Another new revenant has made it here. Welcome, Untainted Soul. You are right on time~"

The unknown man's voice was hoarse and very uncomfortable to hear, but that uncomfortable voice seemed like the sweet, gentle singing of an angel of heaven to the ears of Paul.

"Y-you are?"

Paul was confused but also a bit hopeful.

"We can't stay here for long; let me bring you inside first..."

The unknown man grabbed Paul by one hand and jumped inside the sewer before placing the manhole cover back to its original place once again!

Chapter 57: The Hidden Organization, Revenant. Part-3.

It was quite shocking to Paul that he was so easily picked up by someone with just one hand!

It was as if the other party was a beast in human form, and Paul was as light as a piece of paper to him!

He jumped inside the wide sewer and stopped himself from falling too low by grabbing the iron stairs that were embedded in the walls of it.

The sewer was like an entrance to a secret underground bunker from the inside; it was wide and circular with 'U'-shaped metal stairs embedded in the walls to climb up and down the sewer.

The unknown man held Paul like a sandbag with one hand, and while using one leg to support both of their weight, he stuck his other leg in the second metal stair to balance himself.

Then using the free hand, he instantly closed the sewer with the manhole cover.

"Good, we are out of danger for now... it's good that you managed to arrive on time; if you were a few more minutes late, there would have no way to help you out..."

"I am surprised that you knew that our hidden area was inside the sewers, though... throwing your coin inside was a good idea..."

Perhaps it was fate, or perhaps it was Paul's luck finally blessing him; the broken avanti coin fell in the sewer and was noticed by the unknown man stationed near the entrance.

He was then able to rescue Paul on time before the soldiers or knights noticed him.

"But still, this method of making people appear near the tower is really risky; thankfully, we haven't failed until now..."

"But if someone got caught, the entire group will have to face the consequences..."

The unknown man muttered all that as if he was trying to point it out to Paul, but he was clearly very bad at giving explanations, so Paul could not make much of it.

"Oh! I forgot to give you my name! I am Ron, a retired soldier!"

While saying those words, Ron carried Paul down the sewer effortlessly!

He wasn't even slightly worn out after carrying an adult man in one arm while climbing down such steep stairs.

After climbing down for a minute, they finally reached the bottom.

The bottom of the sewer was a massive cylindrical tunnel with stinking water and garbage everywhere.

The dirty water was flowing at a very slow speed and only reached until Ron's knees, as it wasn't too deep.

"Welcome to the territory of the greatest organization in the world! This is the territory of our great organization, Revenant!"

"From today onward, you are also a part of our amazing organization! Isn't it quite fascinating?"

Ron was a weirdo; his brain seemed to work in a weird way. He seemed proud of the fact that he was a member of an organization whose territory was actually inside sewers!

Paul couldn't even properly breathe due to the terrible smell of the sewer.

'Ugh... don't tell me that we are inside the sewers that are directly connected to the toilets of people's house!?"

As if noticing the sour expression on Paul's face, Ron smiled and brought out a mask from his dark robe.

"Here, wear this mask; it will help reduce the smell... don't worry, after you spend some time here, you will get used to the smell..."

"I was just as repulsive to it before, but now I don't care about it that much..."

"Moreover, this sewer canal is not connected to the toilets and main sewage points of the city; it was built a long time ago and is just a part of a water drainage system..."

"It's mainly used for rainwater drainage..."

Hearing Ron's words, Paul heaved a sigh of relief and took the mask but couldn't wear it, as his right arm was not working.

"Oh, your arm seems to be dislocated... I know a trick; let me help you out..."

Before Paul could even react or understand what Ron was doing, Ron made him sit down on a wet, dirty rock covered in filth.

Then he grabbed his right arm and shoulder with his hands and gave it a sudden twist!

****Click!****

A sound of bones shifting rang out in the silent tunnel, and before Paul could react to what had happened, his dislocated arm was fixed on the spot!

"Ahhhh!!!! That hurts!!!!"

Only after his arm was fixed did Paul finally manage to react to the pain!

"ahhhhh!!!! It's broken; it's broken for sure! It hurts so much!!!!"

Ignoring Paul's screams, Ron grabbed him like a sandbag once again and then started walking forward as if he wasn't affected at all by those screams.

"Oi oi~ You are a man! Why are you screaming so loudly like that? I clearly fixed your arm, you know..."

"Even women have more grit than you... even they don't scream that loudly when giving birth, you know?"

"The pain of childbirth is more serious than a mere arm breaking apart; don't be a coward. You should learn from women how to handle pain..."

Hearing Ron's words, the face of his dead wife flashed in Paul's mind, and he went silent as he endured the pain.

"That's the way, hehe~ It turns out you still had a woman to remember if you went silent so suddenly..."

"Must be quite an important person that you went so silent and managed to ignore the pain after remembering her..."

At Ron's words, Paul gritted his teeth and spoke.

"My wife... she was a brave woman; she was my world..."

Ron nodded his head at those words, and a smile appeared on his face, hidden under the mask.

"Hahaha, spoken like a true man! Forgive me for doubting your character... if a brave woman chose you to be her husband, then you aren't just an ordinary man either..."

"The organization needs courageous and brave people just like you... after all, what we are fighting against is the very order of this world!"

"Tell me your name, brave comrade! I shall remember it forever!"

Hearing Ron's words, Paul gritted his teeth, fought the drowsiness, and spoke out loud.

"I am Paul, a Revenant! A restless spirit who refuses to die!"

Chapter 58: The Hidden Organization, Revenant. Part-4.

Ron was a soldier; he had been to many battlefields in his lifetime, and aside from having a strong body, he also had a massive amount of experience.

He knew that when transporting injured comrades, it was very careless to ignore their physical condition.

Ron immediately knew that Paul's body was weakening and he was losing his consciousness.

And if he loses consciousness, perhaps his body will make him go into a coma, and his mind might not wake up again due to the trauma he has suffered.

To prevent Paul from suffering that fate, he was continuously chattering with Paul like a chatterbox.

Even if it was just random nonsense and small talk, Ron was doing his best to keep Paul sane and conscious.

Making Paul remember his loved ones was also a method to give him a reason to keep living and pushing forward.

As they say, a warrior doesn't lose until he himself accepts the loss in his mind and body.

After helping Paul recover his dislocated shoulder, Ron helped him put on the mask and took him deeper into the sewer system.

The two of them chattered and talked about random stuff all the way; Ron even asked Paul about his hardships and how he made it there.

"BAHAHAHAHAH!!!! YOU ACTUALLY CLUNG TO A CARRIAGE TO MAKE IT HERE!!!!"

"BAHAHAHAHAH!!!! You are really something, man!!! I haven't met anyone as daring as you before!!!!"

"That was quite a brave action! Even I would not dare to do that!... No! In fact, I hadn't even thought that such a thing was possible before you told me about it!!!"

Paul felt quite embarrassed after hearing Ron laugh loudly at his hilarious story, and unconsciously a faint smile appeared on his face for the first time in months!

After Paul told his entire story to Ron, he felt as if the burden on his shoulders had lessened after sharing that pain and stress with someone.

It brought him immense comfort, and the piled-up stress and tension were slowly reduced.

"By the way... I wanted to ask it but didn't get the chance... do you know what that kind young man is?"

"He's more handsome than even those nobles I once saw from far away... and just by being around him... I felt as if all my pain was disappearing..."

Hearing Paul's words, Ron smirked and replied in a proud voice,

"I also don't know the real identity of that person but he's a great benefactor of us all..."

"It was him who guided me on the right path... two weeks ago, I was just an aimless fly wandering around with no destination in mind..."

"But he brought me a reason to live... I can't thank him enough for showing me the right direction and telling me to seek out the hidden organization, Revenant!"

Ron seemed quite happy while talking about that person, and even Paul could feel his joy in the voice, despite not being able to see his face hidden under the mask.

"I have asked around about him among our peers and it seems that nearly all of us were guided and saved by him..."

"He's our guiding light in the darkness, and we all consider him our benefactor... what was your impression of him, Comrade Paul?"

Hearing the question, Paul remembered the benevolence and kindness of that person, and a smile appeared on his tired face.

"He was very kind and benevolent... almost as if he was a messenger of god who had descended from the sky to help a lost sinner like me to walk on the right path..."

"He was almost like a saviour of the people... a 'Hero' if I must specify..."

Paul's voice carried immense sincerity and awe; hearing his words, Ron nodded his head.

"Haha! Exactly! You got it all right! That's the exact same feeling I got! I really want to meet him again and thank him from the very bottom of my heart!"

Ron and Paul chattered continuously as they walked, and after walking for nearly an hour and taking many turns and crossing the maze-like tunnels, the two of them finally reached a much wider tunnel.

This tunnel was completely different compared to the other ones.

It was clean, and there was no dirty water and trash in it, unlike the other ones. Even the stone and cement, which it was made of, were more intact and less damaged compared to the previous ones.

"Here we are!"

A tone of cheerfulness appeared in Ron's voice as if he was happy after finally reaching the destination!

"I am actually surprised you are able to remember the way through this complex maze... I don't even remember it..."

At Paul's surprised voice, Ron giggled a bit and replied,

"I have always been good with maps and stuff... also I have a very good memory..."

"By the way, it took me an entire week to completely get used to the map and remember the way through the maze fully... don't worry, you will also get used to it with time..."

"Moreover, I have this... it's not too powerful but can show the way nonetheless..."

Ron pointed his finger toward the small lantern hanging around his waist.

It was a small, portable lantern that could be hung around the waist and used to see in dark environments.

The sewer was quite deep below the ground, so it was very dark and damp inside; using that lantern was crucial to navigate through the underground tunnels.

Paul's eyes were so unfocused, and he was so exhausted that he hadn't even noticed that small lantern shining all this time and showing the way until Ron pointed it out himself.

Ignoring Paul's surprised expression, Ron carried him to the end of the empty tunnel till the dead end.

He raised his hand and then knocked on the brick wall in a particular rhythm.

****Click!****

As if an ancient mechanism was activated, the dead end turned out to be just a massive hidden door.

It was a massive circular door that slid to one side when someone from the inside activated the mechanism after listening to the rhythmic knock of Ron.

It had a brick pattern engraved on its outer side to make it seem like it was a dead end made of bricks and stones.

With a surprised expression on his face, Paul was carried inside the secret headquarters of the hidden organization that called itself The Revenant!.

Chapter 59: The God of Wisdom is with us! Part-1.

"Oh! You are back, Ron! You are just on time! We were just about to begin the ceremony for the new recruits!"

Once Ron carried Paul inside, the circular door was slid back to its original position and closed.

Inside was a massive hidden corridor, and there were lamps illuminating the entire corridor.

Paul could see old mysterious engravings carved on the walls of the corridor, and the person who opened the door for them was standing just beside a giant lever, which was likely used for opening that massive stone door.

That person was also wearing a dark black robe; his entire body was hidden under that robe, and his face also had a similar strange-looking mask that Ron and Paul were wearing.

"Oh! Jamal! It's you on duty right now? I thought it was Antonio's turn?"

Jamal shook his head at Ron's question and said,

"No, Antonio has been given a mission; he will not be here for the time being..."

Hearing that answer, Ron felt amused.

"Hoh? A mission, you say... I am always surprised when those missions are assigned; they are always so difficult to understand..."

"Even after completing a few of them, I still don't understand what I accomplished with those missions..."

Hearing Ron's words, Jamal nodded his head.

"Haha, I know what you are talking about... hmm? Is this a new recruit? take him to the main area; the ceremony is about to begin..."

"We have got three other new recruits recently; things are getting better and better each time..."

Ron nodded his head and said,

"Well, this guy's got his head crushed... you know any of the guys who can fix it?"

"If I take him to the ceremony directly, he might not even be able to stand properly..."

Jamal thought for a while before replying,

"A doctor... hmm, well I did hear Old Man James say that he knew a bit about medicine... ask him to see his leg if he's free..."

Paul was barely keeping himself conscious, as he was not only exhausted but also the pain in his crushed ankle was so much that he was about to faint from it.

But he was staying conscious just by sheer grit and determination.

After Ron talked with Jamal about a few other things, he hurried towards the main area while carrying Paul.

The corridor was silent, and only the faint sound of the lamps swaying in the faint breeze could be heard.

This underground area seemed to be built specially for secret forces to hide, as there were all kinds of facilities available.

There were even deep vents in this underground bunker-like facility, and it was all hidden very well.

As long as no traitors emerge in the organization, it's near impossible for anyone in the city to notice that a hidden organization was conspiring right under the nose of the guards and soldiers.

After crossing the long corridor, Ron and Paul reached a massive hall-like open area.

It was like Paul had arrived inside some hidden underground ruin; there were hundreds of doors on each side of the hall, and each door seemed to lead to a different room.

A few doors were open, and Paul could see stone beds and furniture inside those rooms.

Then there was the second floor; two staircases located at the corners were leading to the balcony above, and through those balconies, you could enter the rooms located on the second floor!

Just like it was below, there were a series of rooms on the second floor too, and then there was a third floor.

There were in total three floors to this underground ruin!

There were at least fifty rooms in total, and the main plaza below was wide enough to hold more than two hundred people!

"Wha-wha!? How come there something so big located below the city!?"

Paul was so shocked by this scene that his eyes widened in shock!

"Haha, shocked to see it, all right? I was shocked too when I first saw it all; this is really a massive place..."

"And there are actually quite a few secret entrances leading to this place... just like the one we used to enter..."

"I have heard that there are multiple entrances through the sewers that lead to this area, and some of the corridors connected to it even lead outside the city!"

"In cases of emergency, they can even be used to escape outside the city!"

Paul was shocked to the core after hearing those words.

"Such a massive structure... don't tell me that it's a secret route those nobles created as an escape method in case of emergencies?"

Hearing Paul's question, Ron smiled under the mask and nodded his head.

"Haha, you are quite smart for a farmer, aren't you, Paul? Yes, this place was likely built by those arrogant noble lords; there's no way others could have built it..."

"But the structure of this place seems more like an underground prison rather than an escape route..."

"We even found some old rusted torture equipment scattered in some rooms so most of us think that this place was likely used by some nobles to do horrible things at some point in time..."

There are all kinds of people in every world; some rich people do good things, open schools, create hospitals, and help the world as a whole.

But there are also nobles and rich people that take pleasure in playing with the lives of fellow human beings and do extremely horrible things just for the sake of their entertainment.

It was better not to think too much about what this place was created for, as it would only ruin the mood and make one question the very existence of humans in this world.

Paul didn't have any interest in asking about the place in detail, as he was more focused on his own pain rather than thinking about others' pain.

Ron also didn't want to emphasize the matter too much, so he just carried Paul to the central area of the giant plaza, where a stage was made out of wooden beams stacked upon each other.

Several people were gathered in front of the stage, and just a simple estimate told Paul that there were at least forty-something people in there.

Chapter 60: The God of Wisdom is with Us! Part-2.

Aside from that, there were also four people on the stage.

But aside from the three people who clearly seemed like new recruits, the fourth person seemed like a high-ranking member of the organization, as he was wearing leather armor and there was a sword hanging around his waist.

Ron took Paul to the stage from the side and made him sit down on it, as Paul was unable to stand up like the rest.

After placing Paul down, Ron placed one hand on his chest and gave a slight nod of respect to the person standing on the stage and introduced Paul to him.

"Sir Jake, I have brought a new recruit..."

The person wearing leather armor and standing on the stage with a sword hanging around his waist was none other than Jake Schild!

He nodded his head at Ron and spoke in his usual stern tone.

"Good, everyone else has already gathered; getting four new recruits in just two days is already quite good..."

"Hmm? He seems injured? Did you get involved in a fight, or were you noticed by the guards while making your way here?"

Ron immediately shook his head at that question.

"Sir Jake, we were not discovered by anyone... This injury was caused due to an accident Paul faced when trying to approach the organization..."

"This man has amazing grit and determination! Sir Jake, he hung below a carriage for dozens of minutes to make his way to the clocktower to not get discovered!"

"Unfortunately, the carriage's wheel injured his foot when he fell down after reaching the clocktower..."

Ron told Paul's story to everyone with a loud voice, causing everyone to look at Paul with surprise and shock.

Many even started whispering about his bravery and felt shocked after hearing what kind of feat Paul had accomplished.

"Hung below a carriage? You really are brave..."

Even Jake, who was a trainee knight and strong enough to slice boulders in two with a single strike, felt astonished after hearing that an ordinary farmer with no formal training actually managed to accomplish something like that!

After hearing his story, Jake looked at the old man James sitting on a wooden chair near the front of the crowd and asked,

"Grandpa James... can you take a look at his foot? He seems to be in a lot of pain; getting your leg crushed by a wheel of a carriage is no laughing matter..."

"The weight of a carriage is enough to completely destroy the leg of a person..."

The old man James slowly walked over to Paul's side and examined his ankle.

His old face was covered in wrinkles, but his eyes seemed to be shining with a lot of wisdom in them.

After observing Paul's leg for a few seconds, the old man James shook his head in dismay.

"Sir Jake... his leg bones have been crushed and they have broken into several small pieces... I am afraid we will have to amputate his leg..."

Medical skills of this world were still in their infancy; although they knew that using plaster, broken bones could be fixed, there was no cure for such severe damage.

Paul's fingers were bent in wrong directions, and his entire ankle was horribly destroyed.

Old Man James looked at Paul and spoke.

"I am actually more surprised by the fact that he's not even groaning from this level of injury..."

"If it was someone else, they would have been screaming and crying endlessly... this fellow, he's got guts of steel..."

Paul was happy that someone praised him so highly, but no smile appeared on his face; only his anxiety increased further.

Losing a leg would cause major mobility problems, and he might not be able to work on his farms ever again in his life now.

He might not even be able to walk properly and might become a liability to the organization he had just newly joined.

'Will they abandon me after knowing that I am nothing but a useless disabled peasant?'

Just when Paul was getting anxious, a sudden clapping noise jolted him back to senses.

CLAP!* *CLAP!* *CLAP!

"Magnificent! You really made it here, lost lamb!"

"And you even made it here while conquering your fears and worries! I must say, I am impressed!"

The same young man that had guided Paul yesterday was now approaching him again.

That silver-haired young man was being escorted by a paladin wearing heavy armor, and he was wearing an elegant robe!

Just like yesterday, he looked extremely handsome, and in those elegant white robes, he almost seemed like a messenger of God in person!

The person called Jake immediately bowed to him, and everyone else also bowed towards him slightly to show their respects the moment they noticed him approaching.

Paul also followed suit, albeit a bit late, as he didn't know what to do because he was new to it all.

"Your holiness, you are here!"

A smile appeared on Jake's stern face after seeing the silver-haired young man arrive, and the young man nodded to Jake and everyone else as if acknowledging his and everyone else's greeting.

The silver-haired young man walked on the wooden stage and the paladin escorting him immediately announced in a loud voice,

"His Holiness, The Saint of the God of Wisdom, Saint Alexander, has arrived!"

"May the God of Wisdom grant us all, Enlightenment!"

The moment the paladin announced that, all of the members of the organization shouted back in unison.

"May the God of Wisdom grant us all, Enlightenment!"

After nodding his head to the members of the organization, Alex made his way towards Paul and brought out a flask from the inner pocket of his robe.

That flask seemed to contain some kind of golden liquid, and just by looking at it, one could feel the immense power contained in that golden liquid.

"You have done a great job this time, Paul; after struggling this much, you deserve a reward..."

"When I last saw you, you were lost; there was no light in your eyes..."

"But look at you, you have found your own 'Path' in this world! There is a burning flame in those eyes now!"

"I am impressed!"

Seeing that smile on Alex's face, Paul felt that all the struggle and everything he went through to make it here was worth it.