

Return of The Mount Hua – Chapter 958. Where is Mount Hua (2)

Editor: Hoamzz

Co-Translator: Xoxo

A suffocating silence weighed down the riverside.

Some might have felt relieved. That Namgung Dowi did not reprimand and swear at them.

But those who understood the meaning of this situation could only clench their fists until their nails dug into their palms.

Shaolin was there. Kongtong was there, Beggar Union was there. The three sects of the Ten Great Sects who uphold justice and chivalrousness in Kangho, were right in front of Namgung Dowi's eyes, but he did not look at them.

Despite the fact that those he must save are still trapped on that island, waiting for salvation, Namgung Dowi was acting as if they didn't even exist.

Because there are no expectations whatsoever of them.

That fact tormented everyone present. The fact that they were being treated this way, yet could not utter a word of protest and instead had to bow their heads, dug into and tore at the conscience deep within their hearts.

Everyone remained silent as if by agreement. They couldn't answer because they really didn't know, and even if they did, they didn't have the shamelessness to speak first.

Namgung Dowi looked back at them all with cold eyes.

“...I asked you?”

“...Sogaju.”

Finally, Bop Jeong spoke up with a stifled groan.

“I am truly sorry to Sogaju.”

The Shaolin monks know. It was rare for Bop Jeong to show such an expression.

Now Bop Jeong genuinely felt remorse toward Namgung Daowi.

"Soon, Peng Family will arrive. Then, by whatever means necessary, we will rescue Namgung Family members remaining on Plum Blossom Island..."

“Mount Hua!”

At that moment, Namgung Dowi's voice broke out and silenced Bo Jeong.

Namgung Dowi's face twitched. His lips, quivering with spasms, struggled to open again.

"...Where is Mount Hua!"

Bop Jeong's head slowly drooped.

Namgung Dowi was not seeking them. He does not ask for salvation. Even though the people he needed to save are standing in plain sight, he does not want to wish or shout for help to those closest to him.

'What right do we have to speak?'

We are just sinners.

"Sogaju...."

Bop Jeong sighed deeply again.

"I understand how you feel, but this is not the way. You, as Sogaju, must save them in place of your late father... No, in place of Namgung Gaju."

Bop Jeong's eyes and Namgung Dowi's eyes met directly.

"....."

Bop Jeong was left speechless.

Has he ever faced such eyes?

Those were not the eyes of someone looking at a person. It was as if he was looking at a pebble strewn along the roadside. No expectations, no desires, no hope. As if even the slightest emotion was not worth feeling.

"Don't you know?"

"....."

As there was no answer, Namgung Dowi slowly nodded. And then he began to walk forward with a limp.

"So- Sogaju!"

Thud. Thud.

Namgung Dowi, who used his sword as a cane to support his body, silently took another difficult step.

Then the Shaolin monks moved out of the way one by one, left and right. While biting their lips and clenching their fists, they fiercely cleared the way for him, as if they should not dare block his path.

Thud. Thud.

It wouldn't be strange for Namgung Dowi, who walked laboriously along the opened path, to collapse at any given moment.

"Sogaju."

"....."

"Sogaju!"

"....."

"Sogaju! What are you going to do!"

Initially, Bop Jeong's voice was soothing, but it grew louder and eventually became a shout.

However, Namgung Dowi just walked unsteadily as if he could not hear anything.

Bop Jeong, biting his lips, shouted again.

"Don't act on emotion! No matter how angry you are, what can Mount Hua, located in Shaanxi, do? Don't you know what needs to be done to save Namgung?"

Namgung Dowi's steps did not stop.

Bop Jeong's words did not reach him at all.

His indifferent behavior engraved a deeper sense of guilt into everyone's hearts than any curse or cry could.

"This...."

The red faces of Bop Jeong trembled.

"Sogaju!"

"....Mount Hua."

At that moment, someone else spoke. It wasn't Namgung Dowi.

Ciwu Beggar, who had been observing the entire scene, opened his mouth instead of Namgung Dowi. No, to be precise, his words were spoken not to Bop Jeong, but to Namgung Dowi.

"It's not far from here."

"....."

Namgung Dowi finally halted his steps and slowly looked back at Ciwu Beggar.

"...Where are they?"

"It's hard to explain in words."

Ciwu Beggar spoke calmly as if he had made up his mind.

"Come with me. I'll guide you there."

"....."

Namgung Dowi stared at Ciwu Beggar in silence. Just as he was about to nod.

"Elder! What are you doing!"

Bop Jeong shouted, his voice full of anger. Ciwu Beggar met his gaze with a cold look.

"I'm just telling him because he asked. It's not some great secret."

"There is no way Mount Hua is here! How can you say such a thing!"

"They're here."

"...What?"

Ciwu Beggar looked directly at Bop Jeong and repeated clearly.

"They are not far from here. They've been here for quite some time already."

Bop Jeong's eyes widened.

"They... They clearly said they would not participate in the affairs of the Yangtze! How can this be..."

"I guess they mean they wouldn't help Ten Great Sects. They are now providing relief to the Yangtze River refugees."

Bop Jeong was momentarily speechless. It was his first time hearing that Mount Hua was here. Looking at him, who was perplexed and speechless, Ciwu Beggar shook his head.

"I can't lie when asked something I know, so I just told the truth."

Bop Jeong's lips trembled.

There is no mistake in what Ciwu Beggar said. There is nothing wrong with sharing what people ask. And Mount Hua's whereabouts is not such a big secret.

But what happens afterward is the problem.

What if the word spread that Namgung Family ignored Ten Great Sects that arrived at this river and sought help from Mount Hua?

Could there be anything more tragic than that?

"Ciwu Beggar!"

Bop Jeong glared at Ciwu Beggar with a ghost-like face.

"Is this the will of Beggar Union?"

"There's no way that that's the case."

Ciwu Beggar calmly shook his head.

"How can someone who is not the Bangju and is only an elder represent Beggar Union? It's just my own will."

"Do you think an elder of Beggar Union can have his own will?"

Bop Jeong responded with a cold voice. Ciwu Beggar closed his eyes for a moment as if pondering something, and then sighed deeply.

"... You are correct."

In reality, what Bop Jeong said was correct.

No matter how much Ciwu Beggar wants to guide Namgung Dowi based on his own will, as an elder of Beggar Union, every action he takes ultimately becomes the will of Beggar Union. For someone who leads numerous disciples of Beggar Union, personal feelings cannot exist.

"You're not a man who doesn't know how to act as an elder of Beggar Union."

"....."

"Step back."

Ciwu Beggar slowly raised his head and looked at the sky.

"Hurry!"

"....."

A heavy silence descended.

Ciwu Beggar, who had been staring at the night sky, paying no heed to Bop Jeong's urging, slowly lowered his head. Then he burst out laughing.

"Then there's nothing I can do about it."

"You thought we-...."

Udeuduk!

Before Bop Jeong could finish speaking, Ciwu Beggar roughly grabbed his robe and tore it off.

Bop Jeong's eyes widened.

“W- What...!”

Ciwu Beggar threw his torn, tattered robes on the ground. Between the badly tumbled pieces of cloth, a knot symbolizing the disciple of Beggar Union was clearly visible.

Eight knots (팔결 (八結)).

Only the elders of Beggar Union can have eight knots.

"What's this all about?"

“Ci- Ciwu Beggar!”

"If this status prevents me from doing what I need to do, I have no choice but to throw that status off.”

Ciwu Beggar grinned as if he was relieved. Bop Jeong looked at him with an expression of complete bewilderment.

“What I do now has nothing to do with Beggar Union. So don't order me around. You don't have the authority to do so.”

With those final words, Ciwu Beggar turned around and quickly supported Namgung Dowi.

“I will guide you, Sogaju.”

“.....”

Namgung Dowi, who was looking at him in silence, slowly nodded. Just as Ciwu Beggar was about to take a step, several beggars of Beggar Union, like Ciwu Beggar, tore off their robes and rushed to support Namgung Dowi.

"This.... What are you doing? You foolish lot!"

Ciwu Beggar's eyes widened, but the beggars of Beggar Union just grinned broadly.

"Elder.... No, old beggar, you're too old to carry someone a long way. Step aside. Don't make the injured person die by accident before he reaches his destination."

"*Ptoo*. Dammit. I never thought being a beggar of Beggar Union could become a shackle. This is why I couldn't live the way I wanted to."

Everyone had a carefree look on their faces.

The beggars of Beggar Union pushed Ciwu Beggar, who was dumbfounded and speechless.

"Step aside. Can't you see the man is injured?"

"Jang Pal, you carry him."

“Yes, Bunta.... No, Hyung-nim.”

Watching the beggar of Beggar Union support and carry Namgung Dowi, Ciwu Beggar eventually smirked.

“You stupid beggar brats.”

“Not as much as you, old beggar.”

Ciwu Beggar shook his head as if he had no answer and glanced back at Bop Jeong. As expected, both eyes were boiling with rage. Ciwu Beggar, who was looking at this with a grin, proudly shouted.

"Let's go."

"Yes!"

The beggars carrying Namgung Dowi dashed forward like the wind without the slightest hesitation.

“.....”

Those left behind watched them disappear into the distance with stunned faces. They couldn't even move until the moment the figures turned into a dot and disappeared.

Silence descended again. Nobody spoke, merely lowering their heads or casting their gazes into the distance.

They knew. They could no longer represent the Chivalrousness of Jungwon. They could no longer be the place sought by those in desperate need of help.

"Ha..."

Someone's self-deprecating laughter hurts everyone's ears. The mixture of resentment and guilt in that short sound was so vivid that the corners of their lips tingle.

“Hahahaha!”

At that moment, someone burst into loud laughter.

“Hye Bang!”

Bop Kye raised his voice as if to reprimand, but Hye Bang laughed louder as if he couldn't hear him.

"Hahahahaha! Isn't this a fine sight? Is this what Bangjang wanted?"

“Can’t you shut that mouth!”

"What difference would it make even if you silenced me!"

Hye Bang shouted without losing.

"Yes! I must be too foolish to grasp those great intentions! I wish that were the case instead! I wish I was so foolish and ignorant that I knew nothing! Please! Please!"

Bop Jeong, struck by that poignant voice that seemed to be dripping with blood, looked around with helpless eyes.

No one met his eyes. Absolutely no one.

"Haha."

A hollow laugh escaped Bop Jeong's mouth.

How did it come to this?

How did it...

"Ami... tabha."

As he closed his eyes in devastation, it felt as if his body had fallen a thousand miles off an abyss. Into the endless void.

[Note