Return of The Mount Hua – Chapter 781. Life is originally painful (1)

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"…That's how it is!"

"……."

After listening to the whole explanation, Hyun Jong stared at Chung Myung with an expression that was hard to explain.

"So you say……."

His gaze swept over the ones seated before him.

Chung Myung, Baek Cheon, Baek Sang, Yoo Iseol, Yoon Jong, Jo-Gol, Tang Soso, and even Hye Yeon, Im Sobyong.

"You're going to seize this island."

"Yes!"

"Pirate... You're going to become one?"

"Aigoo, Sect Leader! I explained it like that, but you still don't understand!"

Chung Myung thumped his chest as if frustrated.

"We're not being pirates, we're collecting a legitimate toll."

"……Collecting a toll on the river?"

"Yes!"

"Isn't that what pirates do?"

"……."

"……."

Chung Myung and Hyun Jong's eyes tangled in the air.

Of course, it was Chung Myung who first looked away from the complex intersection of their gazes.

“No, well…. If you say so, it depends on how you think….”

Seureureung.

"Hiiiik!"

"W- Why did Sect Leader unsheathe his sword!"

"Aigoo! Please calm down first!"

"Let go! Won't you let go?!"

Hyun Jong got rid of the disciples clinging to him. His eyes were bloodshot.

“Now I'm even hearing that a disciple of Mount Hua is going to try his hand at piracy! I should have cut that guy off before seeing this mess!"

"Do you have the skills to do that?"

"Hyun Young, whose side are you on, you punk!"

"Why do you ask? Of course, I'm on Chung Myung's side."

Foam bubbled up in Hyun Jong's mouth.

He chose the wrong person to ask. Right, Hyun Young. Of course he's on Chung Myung's side.

Then Hyun Young spoke in a slightly calmer voice.

"Depending on how you look at it, it's not a bad idea."

"We're collecting a toll!"

"Simply because we collect a toll, doesn't mean we're pirates. If so, are the boatmen who charge for ferrying people all pirates?"

“…….”

"If you look at it that way, everyone who owns a boat on the Yangtze River is a pirate, then is

the Yangtze River a lawless area?"

"……You have a point."

Hyun Jong sat back down. What he heard wasn't entirely wrong.

"…No, I said the same thing….”

"Chung Myung-ah."

"Yes?"

"The weight and effectiveness of words often depend on who says them."

“…….”

Chung Myung also thought so and knew it wasn't wrong, but he felt strangely bad.

Hyun Young, who glanced at his sulking face, grinned and said to Hyun Jong again.

"It's not a bad idea if you look at it. If you're uncomfortable with the word toll, we could just charge a ferry fee for transporting people to and from the island. Let them use the island for free."

"Hmm……."

"Isn't it true that there's no guarantee that something like this won't happen again in the future? We can't be chasing after these issues all the way here every time. Besides, Mount Hua must also provide a safe passage for Eunha Courier Service. The loss now is not insignificant."

"Hngg, that's true.…”

Hyun Jong, who had been agonizing for a while, nodded for now.

If it were in the past, he might have protested, but now he has a decent understanding of how to run a business. Thanks to that, he also understands how important this issue is.

"But isn't it impossible for us to occupy this place? What about training? What about the main sect?"

"Ah, that's okay."

"Yes?"

"Nokrim will take care of it here. I've finished talking with the Nokrim King."

Hyun Jong blinked and turned his gaze to Im Sobong who smiled and nodded.

"That's correct."

"…Nokrim you say?"

"Yes."

"To this Yangtze River?"

"They didn't become mountain bandits because they liked the mountains, but because they had to make a living. What does it matter whether it's a mountain or a river as long as it makes money?"

Well… that makes sense. After all, whether it's a mountain bandit or a pirate (water bandit), it's still a bandit.

"I understand your concerns, Sect Leader. But now, Nokrim is also increasing its legitimate business by not harming the commoners in accordance with the will of Mount Hua Divine Dragon and Heavenly Comrade Alliance, and only collecting a reasonable toll."

"… Isn't the problem that they're collecting tolls in the first place?"

"But in return, they provide escort services. They provide perfect escort until you cross the mountain. Those who used to be robbed or harmed by other small-time bandits welcome them with open arms."

They welcome with open arms?

Mountain bandits?

"That... The bandit... No, do the people of Nokrim like that?"

"Some might feel stifled and get frustrated, but what can we do? If you don't like the temple, the monk should leave."

"…I didn't leave because I don’t like it."

Everyone looked back at Hye Yeon at the sudden voice. Hye Yeon's face, who had said a word because he was stabbed for no reason, turned red in an instant.

"He didn't like it."

"He seems didn't like it a lot."

"That's why he never returned to Shaolin, no matter what."

"A- Amitabha! Amitabha!"

"Just chant ‘Muryangsubul’."

Chung Myung, who clicked his tongue, opened his mouth again.

"Anyway, there's nothing wrong with it. We're not stuck here, and Nokrim takes care of the management. Instead, we can safely make way for the Eunha Courier Service, and we can take half the toll from merchants who come and go.”

Ah. Half?

That's a fair distribution of profits. Half.

In fact, Mount Hua doesn't do anything……. Yes, half …...

At that time, Hyun Sang, who had been quietly watching the situation, opened his mouth.

"Chung Myung-ah."

"Yes."

"I understand what you're thinking about doing this. But I'm worried. This place is the Yangtze River. You've already ruined two water fortresses, and if you occupy here and settle down, do you think other water fortresses will just sit and watch?"

"Oh, that?”

"On the way, I saw you setting up cannons around the island and the new bridge. However, the water fortresses of the Yangtze River are not a place that can be blocked by a few cannons. Don't tell me you're underestimating the water fortresses just because you ruin one or two?"

"Ei. How can that be?"

Chung Myung shakes his hands.

If the Black Dragon King leads all his water fortresses, this island will fall in less than half a

day. To prevent that, all major forces, whether Nokrim or Mount Hua, must reside here.

But that's impossible.

"Elder don't have to worry about that.”

"Huh?"

"The Black Dragon King cannot attack this place."

"…How come?"

"Soon, this will not be a problem."

"Huh?"

Chung Myung twisted the corners of his mouth.

"If it were before, he would have attacked right away, but Black Dragon King can't move now.”

"Why? What happened to the Black Dragon King?"

"No. Not that something happened, but that something is about to happen."

"…I don't understand what you're saying."

"Elder will find out soon enough.”

Chung Myung rolled up the corners of his mouth.

"If I'm right, things will start happening right now. So just wait a little bit for now."

Hyun Jong looked at Chung Myung with a face that said he didn't understand.

"Did you do something?"

"It's true that I’ve played my hands. But it’ll happen even if I don't use my hands. There are other people besides me who will take care of it."

"Who?"

"I don't know that for sure. But……."

Chung Myung hesitated for a moment, then grinned.

"How can I refuse when they're obviously setting up the stage for me? Let's have a good time."

Unlike his smiling mouth, his eyes were dim.

On the surface, there doesn't seem to be any conspiracy. However, Chung Myung's intuition did not miss the strange unnaturality flowing between these events.

Normally on the battlefield, when you get this feeling, there's usually a well-laid trap ahead.

In that case, there are only three ways out of such a trap.

One is not to go.

Another is to break through with skill.

And lastly...

'Blow the situation up so much that the opponent can't handle it with the trap.'

If they've made the waterway, he just needs to ride the waterway.

But he will definitely take advantage of it. Not just money, but a real advantage.

Chung Myung's gaze went beyond Hyun Jong and toward somewhere far away. All they could guess was that he was looking at something far away, but no one knew exactly what he was looking at.

Hyun Jong sighed softly.

'I don't know.'

It was a known fact that this boy's thinking was beyond him, so he had no choice but to trust him. However, Hyun Jong was worried that this incident might put another burden on Chung Myung.

"I see, I understand what you're thinking for now. Then we can leave this place to Nokrim and go back to Mount Hua?"

"Ah, yes. That's true, but.....”

"Yes?"

"I've been waiting for Sect Leader to come. Sect Leader brought a lot of disciples, right?”

"That's...right?"

Chung Myung, who clapped loudly, laughed like a child.

"Then let's get started. They just need to do one simple thing.”

"One simple thing?"

Hyun Jong somehow felt extremely uneasy about the word.

* * *

A large ship came into the dock.

Soon, a large rope was thrown from the ship and the ship was firmly connected to the land. A large wooden bridge stretched between the ship and the land, and people began to disembark one by one.

However, the faces of those disembarking from the ship all looked as if they were on their deathbed.

"This damn thing!"

One of the merchants who disembarked from the ship, overwhelmed with anger, threw the load he was carrying on the ground.

Usually, he would have to take good care of his luggage, which was filled with valuable items, like a new bride. But the man threw it on the ground without any hesitation and began to scream with frustration.

"Darn it, again! This damn thing!"

Then other merchants waiting to board the ship approached and asked with sympathetic faces.

"...Have you been robbed again?"

"For God's sake, he's taken everything except my inner wears! This... Damn it, what are we supposed to do for a living if this keeps happening!"

“Which water fortress?”

"I don't know! These bastards don't even disclose who they are now! They just approach in a small boat and take everything worth money!"

"Ugh."

"This is crazy."

The faces of the merchants were deeply worried.

It wasn’t anything new that pirates were running rampant in the Yangtze River, but the appearance of their rampage recently was unusual.

In the past, they didn't rob you of all your money or belongings if you paid a toll, but now pirates who don't even declare their allegiance are completely emptying people down to the last coin.

As such things happened repeatedly, merchants were also afraid to board ships that went to and from the Yangtze River.

"How many times is this? This!"

"What on earth are the officials doing! Why are they leaving those guys alone?"

"When have the officials ever done their job properly? I bet they're taking bribes from those pirates!"

"Shh! Keep your voice down, man!"

"Did I say something wrong!"

People started speaking without holding back, whether it was appropriate or not.

"Damn it, I go a long way just to earn a bit to live on, and if they keep robbing me like this, how can I feed my wife and children! It would be better to die with a knife! The officials or the Ten Great Sect, no one's interested!"

"Oho. Not everyone is uninterested."

"What?"

"Did you not hear? Mount Hua!"

"Mount Hua?”

"I heard that Mount Hua Sect of Heavenly Comrade Alliance smashed the Great Whale Water Fortress. And along the way, they also subdued a newly formed water fortress."

"Mo- Mount Hua? What about Mount Hua?"

“What is the reason for the Righteous act of Mount Hua? Isn’t it also Mount Hua where they stormed into Daebyeolchae the other day when bandits were running wild, destroyed their stronghold, and stole their warehouse to help the people?"

"......That's right."

"This time, too, they were furious after hearing that the pirates had taken the commoners, so they came running all the way here!"

"Hoo... My goodness... Is that true?"

"Ei! You're a merchant and your news is this late! Do you know Mr. Chon?"

"Yes, I do."

"The man was taken away by the pirate and rescued by Mount Hua. That yangban talks about that story ten times a day. It’s as if the story had been nailed to my ear."

"Mr. Chon is not the kind of person who would make up nonsense."

"That's what I'm saying! The Ten Great Sect are watching with their hands off, but the Heavenly Comrade Alliance are not."

"My goodness, there's still such a benevolent group....."

"Also, it seems that the Sect Leader of Mount Hua has made a decision this time."

"A decision?"

"They say they take over a place in the Yangtze River and send ships so that merchants and those who want to cross the river can do so without any problems."

"Is, Is that true?"

"I told you. Besides, it's not that far from here. So, even if we can't go by river, crossing won't be a problem, right?"

"Just doing that would make it easier to breathe! But wouldn't the pirates just stand by?"

"What can they do if they don't? Heavenly Comrade Alliance is a group where the Sichuan Tang Family and two of the Five Great Outer Clans joined together with Mount Hua! It's not a place where they can do anything about it."

"…Now that you mention it."

The people who had been conversing felt the power of Heavenly Comrade Alliance once again.

From their point of view, the most frightening and grim reaper-like thing is the water fortress. It was a place where even the prestigious Ten Great Sect dared not to touch recklessly, so it was even more terrifying because there was no way to break through.

However, said water fortress was unable to do anything even though Mount Hua invaded and occupied their territory.

"Was the power of Heavenly Comrade Alliance so great?"

"I'm going to take this opportunity to change my trading partner this time."

"Change your trading partner?"

"Think about it. It's natural for merchants to suffer if the Yangtze River is blocked like this. But if Mount Hua steps up and opens the way, the merchant with connections to Heavenly Comrade Alliance will pass without a problem."

"…That's right."

"Then who will do better in the future? This is too obvious."

"Ei... But the Ten Great Sect are still....."

"Tsk, tsk, tsk. A merchant! If you wait like that and Heavenly Comrade Alliance surpasses Ten Great Sect, not a single grain of bean flour will fall to you! You have to move ahead of time to make big money."

"……."

"Anyway, that's what I'm going to do, so you'd better check it out quickly. Apparently, within ten days, Mount Hua will complete the way and start transit within ten days."

The merchants blinked their eyes, each with their own thoughts.

'Is it true?'

'If it's true....'

Someone was simply amazed, someone was simply admiring.

However, some quick-witted people realized that the world was changing.

Mount Hua from Shaanxi, no, the Heavenly Comrade Alliance to which Mount Hua belongs, has now begun to extend its influence on the Yangtze River. It may be a small change now, but it was hard to guess how big a result this would bring in the future.

"I hope it works out well for Mount Hua."

"Why?"

"Whether we came here for profit or in pursuit of Righteousness, wasn't Mount Hua the only one who stood up when we were struggling? Those damned Ten Great Sect are all about Righteousness and all that, but there's nothing they actually do!"

"That's what I'm saying!"

"Exactly, damn them!"

"They should all be ruined!"

Among those who have thrown their lives into the Yangtze River, praises for Heavenly Comrade Alliance and Mount Hua, as well as disappointment with Ten Great Sect, gradually spread and grew.

And the rumors about this situation also spread rapidly, soon reaching even Shaolin and Wudang.

The scale of the incident, which began as a small subjugation, swelled at an enormous speed.

It was like... A spark falls into a bone-dry forest and sets it ablaze.

|Note