Return of The Mount Hua – Chapter 673. Who does this concern? (3)

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“Thank you for going through all the trouble to come to the summit of this rough Mt. Hua. Seeing all the trouble you have to go through, we should have held the ceremony at the mountain feet. It seems I was too short-sighted.”

Laughter erupted from somewhere.

Usually, if someone were to laugh in this kind of situation, sharp gazes would be directed at them, but no one blamed the laughter in this place.

Because it was not intimidating.

The person who sets the atmosphere in the hall is Hyun Jong. If he had been creating an intimidating atmosphere, those gathered here would have had to be careful even with their breathing.

But Hyun Jong just looked at everyone gently.

‘Compassion.’

Tang Gun-ak smiled faintly at such him.

This kind of atmosphere would never have been created in Sichuan Tang Family. Even if he tried to create a soft atmosphere, those in front of him would naturally tense up.

Because the position of being the Sect Leader of Mount Hua was still inferior to that of being the Head of the noble Sichuan Tang Family?

That can't be true.

Even if that were the case, the symbolism that comes with being the leader of the Heavenly Comrade Alliance surpasses that of being the Gaju of the Sichuan Tang Family. Nevertheless, there must be something beyond intimidation that Hyun Jong possesses that can create this kind of atmosphere.

Heavenly Comrade Alliance began with Chung Myung and Tang Gun-ak. However, without Hyun Jong, it would not have been possible to complete the alliance.

Tang Gun-ak occasionally realized that strength wasn't everything when he looked at Hyun Jong.

"It's refreshing to see so many of you gathered here. Just a few years ago, I never thought that there would come a day when so many people would come to this Mount Hua."

The crowd wrinkled their eyebrows uncomfortably at his words.

‘He's not wrong, but.....’

‘Doesn't he know what kind of occasion this is?’

Of course, most of the people who came here came to see Mount Hua with their own eyes. Not the entire Mount Hua, but just the disciples.

However, regardless of the circumstances, this is not just an event for Mount Hua's guests, but a place to declare the founding of the Heavenly Comrade Alliance. Then, that statement was not so appropriate to start that declaration.

Questions began to spring into people's minds about Hyun Jong's ability to lead. But Hyun Jong continued calmly.

"As you know, Mount Hua was not a very important sect. To be honest, it was a sect that had nothing special and was on the brink of having to put down its signboard."

The faces of the crowd hardened more and more.

Because they couldn't understand why Hyun Jong said that at all.

The inauguration ceremony was a solemn occasion and also a display of power. So why was this old man, who had only a few days left to live, talking about his regrets and past mistakes in such a grand event?

'Is Mount Hua's Sect Leader just a good man?’

‘I don't think he's a good fit to be the leader of the Heavenly Comrade Alliance.’

A leader should have more than just warmth and gentleness; they must also possess firmness and solemnity. But Hyun Jong did not seem like a leader who could lead this massive coalition.

"Maybe it's not befitting for a Sect Leader to think like this, but as I survived through those harsh times, I thought.."

But it was also true that Hyun Jong's story stimulated people's curiosity. Everyone listened to him as if they were being sucked in.

"...how great would it have been if someone, just one person, just a single sect, were to reach out to Mount Hua, give us a hand and watch our backs for us."

Hyun Jong, who said that, smiled quietly.

It was not just a smile for show. His smile came from the heart, and everyone unknowingly nodded in agreement.

They had no choice. Even those who lived in the wilderness and faced the gusts of wind sometimes sought shelter from the rain, and they too sometimes wanted to lean on something to block the wind.

If someone had never thought such a thing while surviving in Kangho, they still didn't know the true viciousness of Kangho.

Hyun Jong did not rush and slowly made eye contact with the crowd.

"The Heavenly Comrade Alliance is not some great coalition. It is not an alliance created with the purpose of inducing a ripple in Kangho, nor is it an alliance created with the hope of seizing great power."

At the words, the eyebrows of those sitting in the high seat wriggled.

They looked at Hyun Jong on the platform with a complex and subtle look. It was as if their inner fears had been revealed.

"I’m just... finally fulfilling the wishes of my past self and the past Mount Hua ."

Hyun Jong looked at the other Sect Leaders standing next to him one by one. Then he looked forward again and said,

"There's an eccentric disciple in Mount Hua who said this. You might call someone a friend or whatever, but in the end, it's all just gibberish. When things are good, they pretend to be your close friend and fake a smile, but when crisis comes, they take away their mask and push you further into the water you’re drowning in. That's the nature of Kangho and the real relationship between the sects."

It was a razor-sharp evaluation.

However, no one gathered here could deny what was said. They knew deep down that it was

true.

"Heavenly Comrade Alliance……."

Hyun Jong nodded slowly.

"It exists to prove that statement wrong."

Chung Myung gazed at him silently.

It was a rather obvious statement. Anyone could say such a thing in a gathering like this.

But strangely, he felt tingles somewhere in his heart as he listened.

As soon as he saw Tang Gun-ak, Maeng So, and the slightly red faced Seol So-baek, he couldn't help but smile.

Would things have been different if it was like this back then?

Would Mount Hua's present have been different if they hadn't been so stiff and isolated themself? if they had people to share their journey?

There's no way to know.

After all, speculation is nothing more than a meaningless regret.

All they can do is try harder, not to repeat the same mistakes, and never make the same mistake twice.

"The four sects of the Heavenly Comrade Alliance will reach out to one another and support each other. We will rush to help without hesitation when one of us is in crisis, and we will laugh and celebrate together in happy times."

Hyun Jong's face, which was as soft as it was, had a resolute and firm expression on it.

"Perhaps it may seem like a dream. However, if there is the will to achieve it, it's not impossible. Mount Hua will become the shield that blocks the wind for the sects gathered under the name of the Heavenly Comrade Alliance, and become the brother who holds on to their hands."

Kung!

Tang Gun-ak stomped his foot forcefully and stepped forward, standing beside Hyun Jong. He then clenched his fists and shouted towards the front.

"The Sichuan Tang Family will also be the shield for the Heavenly Comrade Alliance."

Maeng So stepped forward without falling behind.

"The Namman Yasugung Clan will be brothers with the sects who belong to the Heavenly Comrade Alliance. A brother’s enemies will be Yasugung Clan's enemies! And a brother’s friends will also be the Yasugung Clan's friends!"

Seol So-baek also stepped forward with light steps, standing beside the other leaders.

"The Ice Clan will be the sword that protects the Heavenly Comrade Alliance. Those who show hostility to a sect of the Heavenly Comrade Alliance will have to face the Ice Clan first!"

Witnessing the authority of Tang Gun-ak and Maeng So, as well as the confident yet youthful Seol So-baek, the people felt it once again.

There were countless sects in the world, but who would dare to make enemies with those four sects at once?

If what Hyun Jong and the other leaders said were actually to come true, it was clear that the Heavenly Comrade Alliance would become a place that no force in the world could dare to approach.

"Hyun Sang."

"Yes!"

Hyun Young and Hyun Sang, who were waiting below, carefully stepped onto the platform. In Hyun Sang's hand, a luxurious silver plate with a bottle and a cup were held, and on Hyun Young's hand, there was a small knife wrapped in a piece of white cloth.

The two of them stood in front of the leaders and politely presented what they were holding.

The leaders stared at the items without a word for a moment.

Those watching from below might not know, but these items had meaning in themselves.

The liquor from the Yasugung Clan, the jade cup brought by the Tang Family, the knife from the North Sea Ice Clan and the people of Mount Hua.

First, Tang Gun-ak reached out and carefully picked up the bottle of liquor. Seol So-baek then picked up and drew the small knife.

"Maeng-ju."

"Yes."

Hyun Jong cut his palm with the small knife offered by Seol So-baek, and let his blood drip into the liquor bottle.

Ttook.

When Hyun Jong withdrew his hand, Tang Gun-ak cut his hand and let his blood flow into the bottle, followed by Maeng So and Seol So-baek.

Once the whole process was over, Tang Gun-ak solemnly filled everyone's cups with the slightly reddened liquor.

Tak.

With the liquor bottle placed back on the silver plate again, the Elders descended from the platform as if they had completed their tasks.

The remaining four people gazed at the cups in their hands. Those below are also staring at the scene in mesmerize.

A moment of silence passed.

Just as the stillness reached its peak, Hyun Jong suddenly raised his cup.

"Right here, today! Mount Hua Sect, Sichuan Tang Family, Namman Yasugung Clan, North Sea Ice Clan! I declare that these four sects have become brothers under the name of the Heavenly Comrade Alliance! May the Heavenly Lord bear witness!"

Tang Gun-ak, Maeng So, and Seol So-baek followed Hyun Jong to lift the cup. It wasn't long before the four men emptied their cups at the same time.

"Wa……."

"Uwaaaaaa!"

A slightly hesitant cheer was followed by an enormous roar. The cheers, which had been building up as if they were about to explode, filled Mount Hua with deafening noise.

"Heavenly Comrade Alliance!"

"Mount Hua!"

"Sichuan Tang Family!"

The cheers grew even louder as the four heads who emptied the glass held hands together and lifted their hands up.

Even Kangho's prestigious figures, who sat in the honor seats, stood up and applauded. Regardless of the circumstances, there was no reason not to congratulate this spectacle.

In a way, it is a simple declaration.

It wasn't imposing or grand, and there was no dazzling sight to captivate the eyes of those gathered.

However, that made it even more sincere. An alliance formed to show off the power would prove its strength, but for those becoming brothers, it's simply a matter of sharing a drink.

Not only the onlookers who gathered for the spectacle but also the disciples of the four sects that had filled the training hall were shouting at the top of their lungs.

In the middle of that whirlpool of cheers and joy, Chung Myung’s the only one who smiled lightly.

'It wasn't in vain.'

There had been countless events since he returned to Mount Hua.

Confidence in himself?

There was no way he could have had such a thing.

He was a man who had already failed once. A man who couldn't protect anything. He had only clenched his teeth and reassured himself that there was no other way, but there was no certainty that the path he was walking was right.

But…….

Seeing this scene made him think, albeit weakly, that the path he had walked so far was not wrong.

'Everything is here.’

The path he walked, and the ones who walked it with him.

Yes, right here.

"Hehe."

Baek-ah poked his head out of Cheongmyeong's clothes as he gently rubbed his nose.

"Yeah, you're here too."

Chung Myung, who tapped Baek-ah's forehead with his fingers, looked around quietly. The atmosphere was filled with cheers and joy.

Chung Myung's smile grew a little more vivid. He looked up at the sky and spoke inwardly.

'What do you say, Cheong Mun Sahyung. We've come this far.'

Well, he wasn't exactly expecting praise, he knew that it’s only natural for him to do this much... Still, that was...

- You've gone through a lot, Chung Myung.

At the voice he longed for that spread for a moment, Chung Myung stared at the sky before slowly closing his eyes.

"It’s only the starting point."

It will spread. The plum blossoms that bloomed in Mount Hua, and the fragrance that flowed from them, will fill the world, far and wide.

Just as it had been in the past.

"Why does your face look like that?"

"Huh?"

Chung Myung opened his eyes and looked ahead at the sudden voice.

Baek Cheon, Yoo Iseol, Yoon Jong, Jo-Gol, and Tang Soso were looking back at him.

"Are you feeling sick somewhere?"

“…….”

Chung Myung, who had been staring blankly at them for a moment, twitched the corners of

his mouth and soon smiled.

"No, I'm at my best right now."

"Boring."

Five Swords and Soso shook their heads and looked forward again. Chung Myung glanced at the sky again. His expression was different from before.

‘The same Mount Hua as the past?’

No way, absolutely not.

'Just wait and see, Cheong Mun Sahyung.'

‘I'll create the greatest Mount Hua that surpasses our time.’

Together with these guys.

Chung Myung gently tapped Baek-ah's head a few more times and took a deep breath. Then, with both hands in his mouth, he yelled toward the front.

"Waaaaaaahhh! Sect Leader so handsooooooome!"

"Stop it, you bastard!"

"Shut up, I'm begging you!"

"Please consider the place, you bastard! Please!"

Chung Myung giggled as he saw the Five Swords screaming in unison in surprise.

His laughter mixed with the cheers and soared high into the sky.

A warm breeze blew through the summit of Mt. Hua that’s full of joy. It was a day when the incomparably clear blue sky looked down at Mount Hua quietly*.

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|note

*The author used the word ‘Chung Myung’ here when he said ‘clear blue sky’, as ‘Chung Myung’ could also translates to ‘clear blue’