Return of The Mount Hua – Chapter 745. Who touched what? (5)

Editor: Hoamzz

Co-Translator: Xoxo

Early in the morning.

"Hngg."

Gwak Hee, carrying a large bucket, trudged along.

"Even taking care of dog food has become my job."

The dogs that Namman Yasugung left behind during Heavenly Comrade Alliance's founding ceremony remain in Mount Hua and occupy the place like lords.

There were many opinions to send them down the mountain immediately, but nobody dared to speak of evicting the dogs after Hyun Jong, the Sect Leader, voiced his opinion, ‘Even if they are animals that can't speak, how can we chase them away when they came here due to some connection?’

Thanks to that, feeding the dogs became one of the main duties of the third-class disciples.

"Ugh, they're cuter than expected so I guess it's alright..."

In fact, Mount Hua is a barren place.

The environment? No, the people.

It wasn't like this before, but now there are demon-like beings who grind their teeth against each other in training. So, wasn't Mount Hua the hell that came down in this world?

For those living in Mount Hua, the presence of the dogs that wag their tails when approached brought great comfort. By looking at them wagging their tails and panting peacefully, even the demon-like disciples could momentarily forget their hardships.

The problem is that comfort and inconvenience are clearly separate issues...

‘What can I do? If it's unfair, I should be in a higher generation.’

"It seems about time to take in the Myeong line disciples... Only then will I be free from these chores."

Gwak Hee, who sighed to himself, turned the corner and opened his mouth.

"Guys, time to eat..."

‘Huh?’

But at the sight before him, Gwak Hee blinked and forgot what he was about to say.

’What am I looking at?’

The dogs were lined up in a row.

Well, that's understandable. If dogs come up to Mount Hua, they have to follow the rules of Mount Hua. If they behave as if they're still living on the streets, they're bound to get chased by something more vicious than a dog.

The problem is that the dogs lined up are all lying on their backs with their legs pointed straight up at the sky.

‘Are they dead?’

No, no. It doesn't seem like that...

Looking at their trembling legs, they seemed to be alive. They couldn't have all eaten something they shouldn't have... Why are they in such a weird posture...

Haaaak!

Gwak Hee turned his head, and flinched at the sharp sound.

Baek-ah was lying in a crooked position in front of the dogs lying in a row.

“…….”

The posture viewed from the back was exactly like... A certain drunken mad dog from Mount Hua lying down with a liquor bottle.

Gwak Hee shuddered with goosebumps all over his body.

‘No way, even this...’

Doesn't this look like the damned marten is giving the dogs a scold?

The dogs varied greatly in size since they were all picked up from the streets, with the largest

ones almost as big as a person. But they couldn't even twitch in front of a marten with the size of a rat...

Gwak Hee's nose was tingling.

That is exactly like...

Haaaaak!

When Baek-ah let out a loud sound again, the dogs that had been lying down flipped over like lightning and stood up.

And they formed a perfectly straight line without a single flinch.

Baek-ah lazily got up from its spot. His glossy black eyes were wide open, and the lined dogs all curled their tails and trembled.

Haak!

When Baek-ah shouted briefly, the dogs started running towards the gate at full speed.

Kiiik!

Baek-ah, who snorted at the sight, turned his head slightly.

"……."

"……."

At that moment, Gwak Hee, still holding the dog food, and Baek-ah's eyes met. An awkward silence followed.

Kyat.

Baek-ah widened his eyes as if he knew nothing and tilted his adorable head to the side.
Gwak Hee was left speechless.

'That, that abominable...'

Just like his master!

There's nothing normal in this Mount Hua, whether it be human or animal, nothing is normal!

* * *

"Hng."

Hyun Young's face was distorted when he heard about the situation late. His voice was full of irritation.

"Are we some local militia or something? Fighting bandits, pirates, Myriad Man Manor... Doesn't it seem like we're getting poked at by the local Evil Faction once in a while?"

"There's nothing we can do about it."

Un Am shook his head.

The scale of Mount Hua's current business is at the level of famous Jungwon merchant guilds and Ten Great Sect's scale. Those kinds of people usually have established a strong foothold through their long-standing businesses.

Hwang Jongwi sighed and spoke.

"No matter how much Mount Hua has become the leader of the Heavenly Comrade Alliance and is known to the world for its reputation…… Compared to the powerful Ten Great Sect, we are still lacking."

"Hmm."

"From their perspective, it's a good place to poke at."

"Hngg, a good place to poke at, huh."

At that moment, they heard a sarcastic voice as if the speaker's stomach was twisted.

"These punks, they think we're easy, don't they?"

"Hold on, Chung Myung!"

"Good boy! Whoa, whoa."

"Now, now! Here's a candy, a candy! Whoa, whoa, look here."

Jo-Gol, Yoon Jong, and Baek Cheon grabbed and hold Chung Myung, who was about having a seizure, from all sides and shoved candy into his mouth.

"*Eupp*, let go! Aren't you letting go? Now even these pirates bastards are butting their heads

in. Aigoo, what a world! Bastards that can’t do anything but play with the water, how dare they?"

‘Chung Myung-ah……. If you say the pirates are kids who play with water, then the bandits are just kids who play with dirt while we are people who climb some random mountains.

Mount Hua had developed in many ways, but the most significant development was their unshakeable mental strength. Meaning, even if Chung Myung was making a fuss on the side, they could calmly continue their meeting.

"What do you think we should do?"

"What should we do? Chung Myung is absolutely right!"

Hyun Young bluntly stated, as if there was nothing to think about.

"If we just stand still after being hit, we'll be taken as pushovers and become fools. Haven't we experienced this bitterly enough?"

"Exactly."

"Moreover, it's a problem with the Yuryong Sect and Eunha Merchant Guild. If we don't step forward at a time like this, who will!"

Hyun Jong quietly nodded his head. It was a gesture that seemed to agree with Hyun Young's words.

But Hyun Sang seemed to have different thoughts.

"This is not a matter to be considered lightly, Sect Leader."

"Hm?"

Unexpectedly, Hyun Jong looked at Hyun Sang as if to say more.

"The opponent isn’t good."

"Not good?"

"Yes."

Hyun Sang nodded with a solemn face.

"Encountering bandits in the mountains is scary, but it is nothing compared to meeting pirates

on the water. No matter how high and steep the mountain is, in the end, we have our feet on the ground. But to face pirates, we inevitably have to board a ship and go out to the river."

"...Indeed."

"Dealing with pirates on a ship is several times harder than dealing with them on land. Moreover, our kids have almost no experience of being on a ship."

"That's true."

"We don't know what variables there are. So it's not something to think about easily."

"Hmm."

Hyun Jong's face looked worried.

"I share the same thoughts, Sect Leader."

Even Un Am supported Hyun Sang.

"The opponent is one of the Eighteen Fortress of Yangtze River, and of Five Great Evil Sect. Of course, Mount Hua is different from the past, but turning one of the Five Great Evil Sect to be an enemy is a matter of careful decision."

The name Five Great Evil Sect heavily weighed on Hyun Jong.

They already had an uncomfortable relationship with one of the Five Great Evil Sect, the Myriad Man Manor, right? Under these circumstances, it was certainly not easy to decide whether to add another enemy from the Five Great Evil Sect.

"Then, what do you suggest we do?"

"Confronting with force isn't the only way."

Un Am glanced around and said,

"The reason why the pirates' band is suddenly targeting Eunha Courier Service is obvious. Because they heard rumors that Eunha Courier Service is making a lot of money. They may be targeting the wealthy, but they must also know that this can't continue. Eventually……."

"Eventually?"

Un Am said as he hesitated a little bit.

"Like others do, they may demand a toll in exchange for a pass to the Yangtze River."

"……A toll, you said?"

"Yes, Sect Leader."

Hyun Jong's face subtly distorted.

"Do you mean to say we should beg the pirates to let us cross the river in exchange for a toll?"

"Sect Leader. Please listen. You don't necessarily have to think that way. As far as I know, the other sects also pay a toll to the pirates when crossing the river."

"……."

"It's cheaper than unnecessarily making a big deal."

Hyun Jong looked back at Hwang Jongwi as if to confirm the authenticity. Then Hwang Jongwi nodded his head.

"That is true, Sect Leader."

"Hoo……."

Hwang Jongwi added, taking a quick glance at Hyun Jong's eyes.

"In fact, whether you meet a mountain bandit or a pirate, paying a reasonable toll and avoiding turmoil is the basic thing. However, we haven't paid tolls in the mountains because of our good relationship with Nokrim."

"So you mean we have to pay the pirates?"

"…Sect Leader, we have been preparing individual tolls."

Hyun Jong's eyebrows twitched.

What the hell is he talking about?

When Hyun Jong stared at him, Hwang Jongwi looked down a little as if he was a bit sorry.

"If...if they ask for a toll, it's not an individual toll, they want a certain amount from the courier service, and further, from the merchant guild to be paid on a regular basis."

"Hohoho."

Hyun Jong let out a hollow laugh as if he was dumbfounded.

"Does that make sense?"

"Of course, it's not an easy thing to do....."

In fact, it was a difficult subject for Hwang Jongwi to answer. Because he was in no position to dare to ask Mount Hua for such a thing. So Un Am answered instead.

"It's better to resolve matters with money if they can be resolved with money, Sect Leader. Isn't it better than unnecessarily putting the disciples in danger?"

Un Am's voice was firm. Hyun Jong gently pressed his temple as if he had a headache.

"Un Am. But in that case....."

"Sect Leader. Don't forget. Nothing is more important than the disciples. Even if the comparison is about Mount Hua's pride."

Hyun Jong slowly closed his eyes. But the worry wasn't that long. He quickly opened his eyes and nodded resolutely.

"You're right. If we can avoid danger, we should do so."

"That's a wise decision."

"However……."

"Ah, wait a minute!"

At that moment, Chung Myung, who was held by Baek Cheon's group, suddenly sprang up.

"Now, now. Chung Myung, calm down...…"

"Ah, move out of the way!"

Chung Myung slams Jo-Go, who was trying to hold him down.

Kung!

Jo-Gol stuck on the wall and slid down slowly. Chung Myung didn't even glance at him and continued speaking.

"Great Sasuk is right. If we can solve it without a fight, of course we should."

"What do you want to say?"

"Solve it without fighting....."

"Right, what about it?"

“…….”

Chung Myung slowly shut his mouth and looked around. Everyone was making a face as if to say, 'Did I hear it wrong? There's no way those words came out of his mouth.'

“No, really, you guys all are too much. Do I look like a bloodthirsty demon to you?"

"......That is an understatement."

“A demon can get along just fine.”

“…….”

Chung Myung's cheeks trembled.

‘These guys, really?’

"So what did you think?"

Just before Chung Myung was about to explode, Hyun Jong tactfully cut off the flow. Chung Myung, whose temper was half-boiled, let out a small sigh and opened his mouth.

"But this situation isn't like that. If those guys really wanted a toll, they wouldn't have tried to kill the couriers. They would have taken the goods and held them hostage."

"......Hmm."

Everyone nodded, as if his words made sense.

"What's certain is that the situation is more complicated than we thought. And... from now on, such things will happen frequently. It's too much to assess the situation from here, miles away, and make a conclusion each time."

"So what do you think we should do?"

"We have to go and see."

Chung Myung shrugged.

"Whether it's porridge or rice, we need to go and assess the situation. If we can really solve the problem with words, we do it that way, if not....."

"If not?"

"If not, well. Hehe."

Chung Myung smiled brightly and scratched the back of his head.

"Do I have to say it out loud?"

"……No, nevermind."

They feel like knowing it already.

Hyun Jong quietly nodded. Both sides were correct. But the clear thing was that it was not easy to judge with the current information. In the end, the decision he had to make was only one.

"Listen."

"Yes, Sect Leader."

"We'll postpone the decision. For now, we'll send an investigation team as soon as possible to find out the truth and locate the missing persons."

"Yes, Sect Leader!"

It was a decision that couldn't be disagreed with.

"And…."

Hyun Jong's eyes are fixed on Chung Myung.

"Chung Myung is to be excluded from the investigation team this time. Remember that."

"Yes?"

Chung Myung's eyes grew as big as a fist at the unexpected words that came out of the blue.

"Me?"

"Yes."

"I am?"

"Yes!"

"…I'm excluded? Why?"

"Why? Are you asking me why now?"

Hyun Jong chuckled as if he found it amusing.

"Didn't I say, it is an investigation."

"Yes, so?"

"In this world, if there is anyone who is more unfit for the word 'investigation' than you, show me. Then I'll let you go!"

"Jo-Gol Sahyung."

Hyun Jong was startled by the remark that came out without any hesitation. A more plausible answer came out than he thought. Everyone else's eyes, including Hyun Jong, turned to Jo-Gol.

An expression of injustice flashed across Jo-Gol's face.

"Why am I……."

Indeed, it was subtle. No matter how much you thought about it, it was hard to definitively say no.

"O- Of course, Jo-Gol is a little unreliable...…"

"Se- Sect Leader!"

"*Hngg*, but he is still better than Chung Myung you!"

"Goodness..... How can you say something so harsh....."

"What's harsh! This punk!"

Jo-Gol was about to charge at Chung Myung with gritted teeth, but before he could even lunge, someone grabbed the back of his collar and yanked him back.

"There's Sect Leader, you rascal! Didn't I tell you not to cause a scene!"

Slap! *Slap*! *Slap*!

"Argh! Sahyung! My mouth! It hurts, *eup*!"

"Let me just, whack your mouth!"

Yoon Jong, who intervened at the speed of light, dragged Jo-Gol to the corner. Hyun Jong, who was blankly watching the sudden spectacle, shook his head vigorously.

"Anyway! This time, it's absolutely not possible! This is the order of Sect Leader!"

"Whoa……."

Chung Myung's mouth fell open in great shock.

|Note