

Return of The Mount Hua – Chapter 982. This is what makes the world interesting (2)

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“Thank you for your hard work, Ryeonju-nim.”

“Hum.”

Jang Ilso, who was on the boat, smiled bitterly. Ho Gamyeong, seeing that expression, asked with a slightly puzzled look.

“Was there a problem?”

“Problem.... well. I don't know, Gamyeong-ah. Should we call this a problem?”

“....”

“They decided to release Black Dragon King, and the war stopped, so we got everything we wanted.”

“Then why....”

“Hmm.”

Jang Ilso glanced back at Plum Blossom Island and shook his head.

"No."

Cutting off his own words, he then ordered with a disheartened face.

“Tell water fortress. Don't touch those leaving Plum Blossom Island, and send them off gracefully.”

“Yes, Ryeonju-nim.”

Ho Gamyeong, who gave instructions to the subordinates, quietly looked at Jang Ilso.

"What is it?"

“...I know I shouldn't dare to guess what Ryeonju-nim intends to do. But...”

“Tsk, tsk. Stop beating around the bush and ask what you want to know. Why so stiff all of a sudden?”

A slight suspicion appeared in Ho Gamyeong's eyes.

"It is true that Black Dragon King is important. Because without him, the water fortress would be out of control. It would be fortunate if we could easily absorb them, but neither Hao Sect nor Black Ghost Fortress will just stand by and watch."

"Right."

"However... Even then, wouldn't it be a shame to send them away like this? We could have at least inflicted some damage. They were surrounded and stranded on Plum Blossom Island, after all."

"Hmm, that's right. That's certainly right."

"So why..."

Jang Ilso opened his mouth indifferently.

"The reason is simple. First, it's more beneficial for me if those guys return safely to Gangbuk rather than dying here."

"....."

"Secondly...."

Jang Ilso chuckled and looked back at Ho Gamyeong. Then he suddenly said something unrelated.

"What do you think of Mount Hua Chivalrous Sword?"

As soon as the words 'Mount Hua Chivalrous Sword' came out of Jang Ilso's mouth, Ho Gamyeong's complexion hardened.

'What do I think?'

For anyone who had observed the entire situation on Plum Blossom Island, wouldn't the answer to such a question be obvious?

"...He's a monster."

"Right."

Jang Ilso quietly nodded.

"It makes me wonder whether he was born from a human's womb. I still clearly remember the martial art he showed before, but after only three years, he...."

Mount Hua Chivalrous Sword single-handedly defeated Black Dragon King.

That means that Mount Hua Chivalrous Sword must now be recognized as one of the leading martial masters in Kangho.

There were many martial artists in the long history of Kangho, but was there anyone else who reached this level at such a young age?

If they were to limit it to the aspect of martial arts, it should be said that Mount Hua Chivalrous Sword was an existence that far exceeded the knowledge and common sense of Ho Gamyeong.

"That's why he's dangerous. Extremely so."

"Yes, he's indeed dangerous."

Jang Ilso curled the corner of his mouth.

"But the reason Mount Hua Chivalrous Sword is dangerous is not because he's strong."

Ho Gamyeong did not immediately understand what the word meant.

"...What do Ryeonju-nim mean by that?"

Jang Ilso slightly turned his head and caught a glimpse of Mount Hua Chivalrous Sword Chung Myung's side.

"Strong individuals are just difficult to deal with, not impossible. If you can't win alone, then fight with two, and if two can't win, then three should target them."

This is the way of Evil Sects. Ho Gamyeong nodded his head in agreement. Jang Ilso slowly continued.

"It's not the one with brute strength who is strong. It's the one who knows how to survive that is truly strong. But the problem is..."

His eyes narrowed as he trailed off for a moment.

"The point is that Mount Hua Chivalrous Sword knows how to survive."

"...Yes?"

A faint air of malice emerges on such Jang Ilso's face.

"Gamyeong-ah."

"Yes, Ryeonju-nim."

"Do you really think that Mount Hua Chivalrous Sword jumped into Plum Blossom Island without any countermeasures?"

"....."

"No. no. That can't be possible. There is no way that a demon-like bastard with dozens of snakes in his stomach would just move impulsively without any countermeasures. Even if it started as an impulse, he would have finished calculating by the time he leaped here."

"That, that's..."

"There he comes."

Jang Ilso gestured toward the river. Ho Gamyeong turned his gaze in that direction and immediately opened his eyes wide in shock.

At a glance, there were more than dozens of ships revealing themselves.

"Tha- That...?"

"Must be reinforcement called by Mount Hua Chivalrous Sword. To escape Plum Blossom Island."

"B- But didn't we already order water fortress to seize all nearby ships?"

"Yes. But isn't there someone who has the resources to spare a ship like that even through all of our interference?"

"...Yes?"

Jang Ilso chuckled.

"The one who clings to Righteous Sects like a bat, but has yet to show his face once."

Ho Gamyeong bit his lip.

"...Im Sobyong."

"That's right. It must be him."

Jang Ilso laughed. But unlike him, blood drained from Ho Gamyeong's face for an instant.

Then that guy Mount Hua Chivalrous Sword arranged a ship through Nokrim King Im Sobyong while rushing here with all his might to save Namgung? To get out of Plum Blossom Island safely?

"But the naval battle...."

"There's no need for a naval battle. Just scattering ships is enough, as those guys can cross over on planks, let alone ships."

"...."

Cold sweat ran down Ho Gamyeong's back.

The people gathered at this Yangtze River are all martial artists who have made a name for themselves throughout the world. But among these many people, how many would have realized that there were so many plans hidden behind this battle?

"The- Then?"

Ho Gamyeong's face turned pale as if he realized something.

"Ryeonju-nim, even suspecting that Im Sobyong was bringing ships, did Ryeonju-nim still enter Plum Blossom Island alone?"

"Yes. Is there a reason I shouldn't have?"

"N- No...."

"It's the same either way. No matter how great that guy is, it's impossible to know exactly when the ships would arrive. You can't gamble with a ship that might or might not come."

Ho Gamyeong let out a long sigh as he watched the fleet approaching through the river.

The more he heard, the more terrifying the story became.

But what was even more bizarre was... somehow, Jang Ilso, who barely escaped a dangerous situation that could have cost him his head if only an inch had been out of line, seemed to be wearing a pleased expression as he laughed.

"Do you understand now? Why I let them go just like that?"

"Yes, Ryeonju-nim."

With the ships prepared, they could have escaped the island even if they suffered some damage. If that had happened, Black Dragon King would have inevitably lost his life.

'That would have been a clear loss for us.'

In that case, it would be better to retrieve Black Dragon King back rather than send him off.

"I don't know how long it's been since I felt this way."

"...Ryeonju-nim."

"Hmm."

Jang Ilso once again took in Plum Blossom Island with his eyes with a subtle expression.

"Gamyeong-ah."

"Yes."

"Send what we've prepared. Since things have turned out as I wanted, I guess I should give them a gift."

"I will."

Jang Ilso, who stirred his hands as if he were bothered, walked slowly. His eyes, which climbed the bow through the blowing river wind, sank calmly. At the end of his gaze was Plum Blossom Island.

"In this world, gaining something means losing something else."

His red lips quietly drew an arc.

"I wonder if you know what you've lost now?"

It doesn't matter whether he knows or not. Just because he knows it doesn't mean he can do anything about it.

* * *

"Come quickly, you useless human!"

Chung Myung, who was on the railing, gritted his teeth as he saw the approaching fleet. If that idiot had arrived sooner, he could have ripped off that damn Jang Ilso.

"Tsk."

Plum Blossom Island, now far away, came into view. The pirates who filled Plum Blossom Island just watched them get on the ship and escape.

Black Dragon King was held hostage by Mount Hua, and even Jang Ilso had given his order, so they probably had no choice.

At that time, a person approached Chung Myung.

"Dojang."

"Hm?"

As he turned his head, he saw Namgung Dowi walking unsteadily.

He walked precariously right in front of Chung Myung and took a long, deep breath. Then he bowed his head deeply. Not a martial salute but a bow, a gesture of respect not from Namgung Family's Gaju Namgung Dowi but from the individual Namgung Dowi.

This is a courtesy shown by Namgung Se, not by Namgung Dowi, the head of Soga, but by Namgung Dowi, a human being.

"Thank you... really, thank you so much."

"... .."

Chung Myung stared at Namgung Dowi with an expressionless face.

Then, slightly away from them, Five Swords started whispering among themselves.

"Why is he acting like that?"

"Let him be. How many times in his life has he heard someone thank him? He's probably used to hearing shit, but no thanks."

Those bastards?

Just as Chung Myung was about to glare at them, Namgung Dowi raised his head.

“Thanks to Dojang’s support, Namgung was able to carry on the name. How on earth should I repay this favor....”

"Gratitude can come later."

“...Yes?”

“The first thing you must not forget is resentment.”

Chung Myung slightly turned his gaze to the side. He saw Black Dragon King lying unconscious.

"What do you say, now’s good too? No need to keep promises made with that Evil Sects son of a beast, right?"

It means whether he wants to kill Black Dragon King.

However, Namgung Dowi shook his head without any hesitation.

"No."

“Hooh?”

Although he was still having a hard time, Namgung Dowi's eyes did not waver at all.

"Killing the Black Dragon King like this would not be Namgung's revenge. It would be mere venting. Someday, with my own strength, I will defeat Black Dragon King fairly and honor the souls of those who died.”

Chung Myung nodded as if satisfied. Then, Namgung Dowi added something he didn’t need to say.

"Because that’s what my father would have wished for."

As soon as the story about Namgung Hwang came out, the ship became quiet for an instant.

Chung Myung nodded slightly and lightly tapped Namgung Dowi on the shoulder.

"Right. It will be."

It was at that moment that Nangung Dowi slightly bit his lip.

“Chung Myung!”

"Huh?"

“A ship is approaching.”

"What?"

Chung Myung stormed off the deck and ran to the other side.

However, to their surprise, the boat coming toward them was a small boat with only one person on board. The very same boat Jang Ilso had been on.

"...What?"

Chung Myung frowned.

Fortunately, or unfortunately, it was not Jang Ilso who was on that ship. It was someone who had been seen a few times at Jang Ilso's side.

The moment the boat reached the nearest ship to Chung Myung, a loud voice was heard.

"Mount Hua Chivalrous Sword!"

Instead of answering, Chung Myung narrowed his eyes.

"It is a gift from Ryeonju-nim."

The person on the boat lifted a large object from the boat.

'A coffin?'

The moment Chung Myung's eyes widened slightly, the large coffin flew into the boat.

Tok!

Chung Myung received the coffin without saying a word.

Ho Gamyong, who was quietly glaring at him, seemed to have finished his errand and turned the boat around without any hesitation.

An awkward silence descended upon the ship.

After carefully putting down the coffin, Chung Myung looked at Namgung Dowi. Namgung Dowi also seemed to have guessed something and slowly opened the coffin lid with trembling hands.

And...

"Gaju-nim!"

"Uhuhuhuk! Gaju-nim!"

"Euaaaaah!"

The moment the coffin was opened, all the sword warriors of Namgung Family burst into tears.

Namgung Hwang.

Though in a pitiful state, the body inside the coffin was unmistakably his.

"Father! Father! Kuhuhuhu..."

Namgung Dowi, who was holding the corpse, sat down and sobbed.

They thought he would remain under the cold river waters, motionless. They were heartbroken at the thought of having to leave the Yangtze River without even being able to retrieve the corpse.

However, the body of Namgung Hwang was unexpectedly returned in a coffin.

Chung Myung, who was looking at the sobbing Namgung Dowi and Namgung's members with dark eyes, turned his gaze. Toward the ship in the distance.

'...Damn you.'

Hate surged within him.

The day will never come when he understands Jang Ilso. Because they will run on parallel lines forever.

But....

"Turns out he does something humane once in a while."

Chung Myung, who spoke as if spat out, turned his body around.

On the ship heading towards the land of Gangbuk, sad sobs continued for a long time.

[Note