Return of The Mount Hua – Chapter 716. Let's go back together (5)

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"…...There’s no answer, really!"

Jo-Gol sat down at the spot, frowning. Then Yoon Jong, who was following behind, also let out a long sigh.

"How many days has it been!"

"......Three days? Or maybe four?"

"Ugh."

Jo-Gol looked around the mountain with a groan.

They had searched the area thoroughly for more than three days, but they couldn't find any trace. They were full of enthusiasm at first, but now they couldn't help but feel drained.

"No, Sahyung. I'm not saying this because I'm tired and bothered.…”

"It seems like it though."

“…….”

An expression of injustice appeared on Jo-Gol's face. Yoon Jong who was about to rebuke him once more saw his face and coughed awkwardly, avoiding his gaze.

"Ahem. Then what?"

"......Honestly, is wandering around the mountain really that difficult? We’ve even done the trainings that that cursed guy made us do for a month straight."

"That's true."

How treacherous could this mountain be compared to Mount Hua? For them, who train all day climbing the steep Mount Hua, this mountain is no different than a backyard hill for children to play on.

"It's just... I feel like all this effort will be in vain."

"In vain?"

When Baek Cheon, who was poking the ground at his own pace, frowned, Jo-Gol glanced at him and opened his mouth honestly.

"It's been a hundred years. Honestly, it doesn't seem like anything would be left."

Baek Cheon looked at him with a slightly displeased face and said,

"Weren't the secret techniques found?"

"Just because there are secret techniques doesn't guarantee there's any other trace."

"This guy!"

Yoon Jong was about to shout something, but Baek Cheon raised his hand to stop it.

"It's not something to be blamed for. It's not that wrong either."

"But still..."

Baek Cheon shook his head with a bitter look.

"Yeah, if there's no trace left in the first place as you said, let alone three days, we won’t find anything even if we searched for ten days."

"That's what I'm saying."

"But isn't that something we don't know unless we try?"

Baek Cheon looked at Jo-Gol with a solemn face.

"We are now looking for traces of an ancestor. We are looking for the remains of those who fought for the future at the risk of their lives. Is it right to say it's in vain just after searching for three days?"

Under his gaze, Jo-Gol flinched and lowered his head.

"They threw their only life as if it was some wild grass in a battle where victory wasn’t even guaranteed. I understand how you feel, but that's not something to say as someone who has received their grace."

"…I'm sorry."

"And normally, you're not the type of person to say such things rashly."

Baek Cheon looked at Jo-Gol and asked.

"Tell me, why are you doing this?"

"That's……."

Jo-Gol, who seemed to be reading the atmosphere, scratched his head in frustration.

"It would be nice if we found it. It's all good if we can find it, no matter how long it takes. But what if we waste time and don't find it in the end?"

"……."

"I'm afraid it will rot the heart, the heart....."

He wasn't talking about his own heart. Perhaps he's saying this out of concern for Chung Myung.

Baek Cheon turned his head slightly and looked at the mountain, which had become somewhat familiar. A weight gradually built up in the corner of his heart.

'Was it impossible?'

No matter how thoroughly they searched, this place was still in the middle of the mountain. Even if they dug up the entire mountain and removed it, there was no guarantee that they could find traces from a hundred years ago.

"But where did Chung Myung go?"

"……He said he'd try searching alone."

"Alone……."

Jo-Gol mumbled for a moment, sighed deeply, and abruptly stood up from his seat.

"Euracha!"

And he started to poke the ground again with the sword in his hand.

"Ugh, that's right. We just have to find it. Damn it, I'll just find it somehow!"

Baek Cheon said calmly as he watched him move forward, screaming for no reason.

"Let's try a little harder. It's not just because of Chung Myung. If we're Mount Hua's disciples, we should at least search enough to say that we've done our best."

"Yes, Sasuk."

"Yes, Sasuk. I'll do my best!"

The voices of Yoon Jong and Tang Soso's voices were filled with energy again.

Baek Cheon glanced in the direction where Chung Myung had gone and began to move again.

Splash.

Clear stream water flowed endlessly through the valley.

Chung Myung was sitting on a large rock, staring blankly at the flowing water.

'Am I being too greedy?'

The water keeps flowing without looking back.

Even if this place was also a valley a hundred years ago, the flowing water cannot be the same as it was a hundred years ago. It might be impossible to find traces of events that have passed such a long time ago.

'Cheong Jin-ah…….'

Chung Myung's gaze turned to the sky.

The sky was heartbreakingly clean, and nothing could be seen.

Although they had met in a dream not long ago, he couldn't remember Cheong Jin's face well. He could remember it if he tried, but he couldn't stop it from getting blurry little by little.

Chung Myung. who was just blankly watching the flowing stream, murmured quietly.

"Lingering feelings....."

Perhaps what he's doing now is no different from trying to catch the flowing water with both hands.

What would Cheong Jin say if he was watching him from that far away place?

Wouldn't he have told Chung Myung to go back to Mount Hua and raise the disciples instead of doing something useless like this?

Or would he have nagged him to find the traces no matter what before returning to Mount Hua?

Chung Myung shook his head after contemplating.

'I don't know.'

There is no way to find the answer.

Even if he made out an answer himself, it would not be what the real Cheong Jin said. The dead have no power, and they can't give answers.

You can't see it with your eyes, hear it with your ears, or touch it with your hands. No matter how desperately you reach out, all you can grasp is empty air.

No matter how vividly they live within you, you can never meet them again.

Looking at the flowing water, Chung Myung thought.

Perhaps he’s also a person who should have flowed away like that water a long time ago. Just.....

Step.

At that time, Chung Myung slowly turned his head at the sound of someone's presence behind him.

The person who made eye contact stared at Chung Myung without saying a word. Seeing the unexpected visitor, Chung Myung unknowingly let out a chuckle.

"What?"

"Nothing."

As Chung Myung hesitated for a moment to answer, Yoo Iseol approached the rock where he sat and sat down next to him.

And she stared at the flowing stream for a long time without saying a word. It was only after

a brief silence that she opened her mouth.

"…Back then."

"Huh?"

Yoo Iseol said without turning her head.

"We all went together. To the place where my father was buried."

Chung Myung nods his head.

"I'm glad I didn't go alone. I wouldn't know what face to make if I did. At least father would be a little relieved to see people around me."

Chung Myung looked at her with newfound eyes.

It's not common for Yoo Iseol to open up her inner thoughts. And it was quite unfamiliar to hear her speak so much and so coherently.

But more unfamiliar was the fact that she was now trying to console Chung Myung.

"…my father."

Yoo Iseol closed her eyes slightly. The tips of her long eyelashes trembled.

"He tried to not return. Not before he completed the martial art. He would have tried not to return until the moment he died. But he contacted Mount Hua in the end."

"He must have been worried about Sago. Because he's a father."

"…I thought so, too."

But Yoo Iseol soon shook her head quietly.

"But I think I know now. He must've wanted to return to Mount Hua more than he wanted to send me to Mount Hua. Because he missed it all his life."

"……."

Yoo Iseol's face looked as emotionless as usual. But Chung Myung found the look of indifference a little different than usual.

"I even thought about moving his grave. Because he longed to return to Mount Hua. It was

something I couldn't even imagine when I was young, but now I can do it."

“…….”

"But I decided not to."

"…Why?"

Yoo Iseol shook her head slowly.

"Because it's meaningless."

“…….”

A new low voice leaked out of her lips, which had always been stubbornly closed.

"My father has already returned to Mount Hua. If I'm in Mount Hua, my father is in Mount Hua, too. And if I complete the sword my father tried to complete, his lifelong wish will be fulfilled too."

Chung Myung's lips closed tightly.

"That what it meant… to pass along.”

At her words, Chung Myung looked up at the distant sky.

'To pass along.....'

That must have been what she wanted to say.

That even if he can't find it, if Chung Myung continues his will, it's as if he has already returned to Mount Hua.

'The words I should say.....'

Chung Myung gently closed his eyes.

How many thoughts did Yoo Iseol, who is not good with words, have to go through to say this to Chung Myung?

".....To pass along."

It's not wrong. Because Cheong Jin was someone who thought about Mount Hua's future generation more than anyone else.

Yes, so if Chung Myung can continue to pass along that intention, then that's enough.

Chung Myung finally brushed off his seat and got up.

It's not that he doesn't feel regret. He can't say there's no lingering attachment. But he can't spend time here forever. Because he still has a lot to do.

"Let's go back, Sago."

Yoo Iseol and Chung Myung's eyes met. Chung Myung gave her a slight smile and looked at the distant sky.

'I'll come back someday.'

After finishing everything he has to do, he can come back and look for him then.

Chung Myung, who forcibly shook off the lingering attachment that kept holding onto his back, forced himself to take a step.

'Then... Yeah. Let's go back together then.'

However, Chung Myung, who took a few steps, stopped again.

Not moving as if he were a stone statue, he muttered very quietly.

"……Mount Hua?"

- He must've wanted to return to Mount Hua more.

His cold fingertips trembled.

'This crazy.....'

What was he thinking? What on earth was he looking for?

Did he think about where and what Cheong Jin would have been doing?

"…Jin-ah."

- The disciples will learn martial arts with the secret technique manuals I created, and they will make Mount Hua better.

- This is my way of repaying Mount Hua's grace.

Yoo Iseol's father tried to somehow complete the martial arts with half of the secret technique manual. Because he thought it was the path of atonement for running away from Mount Hua.

Then what about Cheong Jin?

What would he have done when he realized that he could never return to Mount Hua again?

- That's why I carry the most important things with me like this.

"Ah…."

Return them.

Even if his body couldn't return to Mount Hua, he would have tried to somehow send back the secret technique manual he had.

But how? In the midst of this huge hundred thousand mountain, which was virtually the Magyo's base, what could he do.....

Chung Myung's gaze moved busily from one place to another.

‘What if I were Cheong Jin?’

His body is wounded.

He managed to shake off the pursuers to some extent, but there was no way to survive. However, if he dies here, the secret martial art manuals he possessed will all fall into the hands of Magyo’s disciples.

Then…….

'Hide.'

In a place where Magyo couldn't find.

And..... in a place where his Sahyungje, who will come to find him someday, can find.

In a place where his Sahyungje who won't spare their lives and search for him can discover, even if they have to break through the Magyo's blockade.

- I have Sahyung here, why would I die?

Chung Myung's hands are now starting to tremble like an aspen leaf.

A man who will never die. A man who must never die.

Someone who will never lose to the hands of those horrible Magyo and who will come looking for him one day.

"It was me……."

Chung Myung's expression crumbled horribly.

"......It was... me. It was me."

His eyes turned sideways as if possessed.

Under the blue sky, a gently connected mountain ridge. Amidst the ridges that were so different from Mount Hua, an unusually jagged peak stood out.

Unlike the surrounding peaks, it was a rugged mountain made of rocks and cliffs.

‘Yes..... Yes, just like.....’

"……Cheong Jin-ah."

Chung Myung moved his steps as if he was possessed.

There. So there you are.

My Saje.

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