Return of The Mount Hua – Chapter 890. We'll see each other again soon (5)

Editor: Hoamzz

Co-Translator: Xoxo

It felt as if he couldn't breathe. No, to be precise, from the moment he stepped into this huge Great Hall, it became difficult to exhale and inhale.

Hwang Se-ak (황세악(**黃世鄂**)) was never a man of small courage. Had he been faint-hearted, he never could have established a significant sect like the Red Pilar Association (단주회(丹柱會)) in Gangbuk, where the Ten Great Sects and the Five Great Family kept a fierce vigilance.

However, his ironstone-like gut became infinitely fragile from the moment he stepped into the Great Hall.

After swallowing his dry saliva, he kept his head still, only moving his eyes to survey the surroundings.

The term 'opulence' must have been coined to describe such a place.

The ceiling and walls were adorned with red and white silk, capturing one's gaze, and expensive artifacts and elegant ceramics were placed all around. Even the pillars that rose in the middle of the Great Hall were engraved with gold in beautiful patterns.

He wasn't sure if even the imperial palace where the emperor resided could match this splendor.

However, what truly intimidated Hwang Se-ak wasn't the grandeur of the hall.

Step by step, Hwang Se-ak, who moved forward carefully, fell on one knee the moment he reached the end of the red silk on the floor

Then he swallowed dry saliva and slowly raised his head. His eyes wandered up the high stairs in front of him. His eyes ascended the stairs before him, finally reaching the feet of the man seated on the throne above.

Struggling to steady his trembling voice, he spoke.

"Hwang Se-ak, the leader of Red Pillar Association, greets Ryeonju-nim."

As he raised his bowed head, the man sitting on the throne came into his view.

The man was clad in an ornate robe with golden embroidery, adorned with various colorful jewels, his skin was pale to the point of being ghostly, and the strange lethargy felt in his posture and expression.

Anyone who didn't recognize him on sight had no right to have their feet attached in the current Kangho.

Ryeonju of the Evil Tyrant Alliance.

The King of All Under Heaven.

‘Paegun Jang Ilso.’

Hwang Se-ak's heart began to pound wildly.

When was the first time he heard Jang Ilso’s name? Fifteen years ago? Or twenty years ago? He doesn’t remember correctly, but it must have been roughly around that point.

At first, he was just a martial artist who became infamous in Guangxi. However, he soon gained fame throughout Gangnam, and soon established Myriad Man Manor and became the Bangju himself.

It wasn't that long ago that the excessive praise "Five Great Evil Sect" was added in front of the name of Myriad Man Manor...

‘Ryeonju of the Evil Tyrant Alliance.’

He can say without a doubt that Jang Ilso is the only person in the world who has raised his status in such a short period of time.

"Hmm."

As Jang Ilso let out a soft nasal hum, Hwang Se-ak flinched and curled up as much as possible. He didn't even dare to face Jang Ilso.

Three years ago, even as the Bangju of Myriad Man Manor, Jang Ilso was an existence beyond Hwang Se-ak's reach. But now, he had become something incomparable to his past self.

Only three years.

‘In those three years, Jang Ilso subdued all the Evil Sects in Gangnam under him. Kill all who resist, stab a sword in the back of those who run away.’

Evil Sects Unification that can never be possible, he achieved this ridiculous feat.

Three years ago Jang Ilso was just one of the heads of Five Great Evil Sects, but now even the heads of Five Great Evil Sects are considered subordinates. He is the ruler of Evil (사(邪)) that no one can deny.

"Hwang Se-ak…….”

The moment his name came out of Jang Ilso’s mouth, Hwang Se-ak bowed his head even deeper. And I tried to look at Jang Ilso by raising his gaze slightly. But the high stairs did not allow him to look at his complexion with a sideways glance.

Flap.

Hwang Se-ak heard the sound of Jang Ilso's robe fluttering loudly.

Tok. *Tok*. *Tok*. *Tok*.

Then, the sound of Jang Ilso slowly coming down the stairs rang clearly. A thick cold sweat began to trickle down Hwang Se-ak's back.

‘I should have come sooner.’

If he had truly believed that Evil Tyrant Alliance would completely take over Gangnam, he would have rushed to kneel and swear allegiance much earlier. However, Hwang Se-ak did not fully believe in Evil Tyrant Alliance and hesitated to make a decision.

The price is the current situation.

He had to wait, having offered everything he had, entirely at the mercy of Jang Ilso's decision. Even if Jang Ilso decided to cut off his head for his late pledge of loyalty, Hwang Se-ak couldn't dare to resist. Everything he had was at the mercy of Jang Il-so.

Step. *Step*.

Having descended the stairs, Jang Ilso approached Hwang Se-ak with a leisurely stride. The sound of the dangling jewels, the large robe brushing against the floor, and the silk shoes stepping on the ground seemed like music seeping out of hell.

"Stand up and lift your head."

“…….”

The voice that came from right above his head sent goosebumps all over Hwang Se-ak's

body.

It felt like a venomous snake was slithering up his back. No, it may be more like a sharply honed razor scraping thinly across his neck.

"Come on."

Slowly straightening his legs and rising, Hwang Se-ak lifted his head. His trembling eyes met Jang Ilso's, who was standing right in front of him.

He swallowed the dry lump in his throat.

Jang Ilso's eyes were light in color but yet so distantly deep that it was impossible to tell what he was thinking. Hwang Se-ak came to a realization.

That this person is not a being that he can dare to read.

What emotions he harbored, what thoughts he had, whether his intentions were friendly or hostile... Hwang Se-ak couldn't even begin to guess any of it.

There is only one thing that a person who is faced with a being of a clearly different rank can do.

"I, I have come a little bit late, Ryeonju-nim. Ple- Please punish me for being foolish!"

All he could do was surrender everything and beg for mercy.

At that moment.

The tip of Jang Ilso's red lips rolled up gently.

"…a little bit?"

In that chilling voice that did not show the slightest emotion, Hwang Se-ak felt the blood in his veins turn ice-cold.

"You're quite late for just 'a little'. Don't you think so?"

Hwang Se-ak's fingertips started to tremble.

All the notoriety he had ever heard of Jang Ilso flooded his mind. How cruel he could be. How merciless. How… devil-like.

"Ryeo- Ryeonju-nim…."

Jang Ilso smiled faintly and said,

"It is okay. It is fine. People are like that. Blindly entrusting themselves without thinking is foolish. It's only natural for a person to take their time to assess and then decide. That's what being human is about."

"Thank, thank you…."

"But you see."

At that time, Jang Ilso's eyes narrowed like a snake's.

Soon after, he reached out and gently grasped Hwang Se-ak's face.

"What I want isn't 'people.'"

There was no particular force in the gesture. His outstretched fingers just covered the face. At that moment, however, Hwang Se-ak suffered from fear as if his face was being bitten by a huge beast.

"Hu…."

Jang Ilso's eyes were seen through the fingers covering his face.

Those eyes, which had been calm just a moment ago, were now boiling with an indescribable intensity.

“With that shallow mind of yours, you must have been constantly wondering whether it would be beneficial to follow me, right? I don't like people like you. People like you are the first to stab me in the back the moment I'm slightly cornered."

Hwang Se-ak's face turned deathly pale.

He had expected a cold reception but never imagined such blatant hostility. As he felt the blatant malice from Jang Ilso, his body froze and his legs turned numb.

“What do you think? Should I accept someone who contemplates stabbing me in the back? Or should I kill you right here and now, eliminating a future threat? Which choice is better? What do you think?"

Hwang Se-ak's whole body began to tremble like an aspen tree. Jang Ilso's face, smiling with the corners of his mouth twisting, was a horror itself. It seemed as if he could explode his head or snap his neck at any moment.

"Lo- Loyalty! I will be loyal! Ryeonju-nim! If you ask me to be a dog, I'll be one! If you want me to lick your feet, I will!"

Once again, Hwang Se-ak was neither a coward nor a servile person. Had he been facing anyone other than Jang Ilso, even under threat of death, he would not have uttered such words.

But now his head has long been fed up with indescribable fear.

"Opportunity! If you just give me the opportunity to be loyal to Ryeonju-nim, I will definitely prove my loyalty."

"Hmm."

As Hwang Se-ak desperately cried out, still gripped by the face, Jang Ilso slowly lowered his hand. This time, he lightly grasped the area around Hwang Se-ak's Adam's apple.

"You're wrong."

“…….”

Color drained from Hwang Se-ak's face.

Jang Ilso's hand, which was holding his throat, slightly tightened its grip. It was as if he was barely restraining himself from snapping Hwang Se-ak's neck right there and then.

No words could deliver a clearer warning than this. Hwang Se-ak's clothes became damp with sweat.

Then Jang Ilso opened his mouth with a meaningful expression.

“I don’t want people, but I don’t want dogs either. Dogs are loyal, but they are stupid.”

"The- Then…..”

"I'll ask you, Hwang Se-ak."

“…….”

"Can you protect my back?"

Hwang Se-ak frantically nodded his head.

"I, I can! I will guard you with my life!"

"No matter what?"

"Absolutely! I will be the shield that protects you, Ryeonju-nim."

Jang Ilso stares silently at Hwang Se-ak. To Hwang Se-ak, it felt like an eternity before Jang Ilso's red lips curved into a smile.

"Good."

“…….”

"Remember this, Hwang Se-ak."

"Yes! Yes, Ryeonju-nim!"

“No matter what you did before joining Evil Tyrant Alliance, it has no meaning from this moment on.”

“…….”

"There's only one thing you need to remember. You die for me. Only for me. Do you understand?"

"I will, I will keep it in mind."

"You answered wrong."

Jang Ilso's elongated fingernails lightly tapped Hwang Se-ak's cheek.

"Can you do that?"

Hwang Se-ak's eyes shook. But a moment later, there was firm determination in his eyes.

"I will do so."

"…Then.”

A faint smile appeared on Jang Ilso's lips.

"I, too, will die for you."

With a face gone deathly pale, Hwang Se-ak slowly nodded his head.

As if he liked the expression, Jang Ilso let go of his hand holding Hwang Se-ak's neck and shouted.

"Bring the alcohol!"

"Yes, Ryeonju-nim!"

The attendants waiting in the wings hurriedly brought a tray with wine and cups.

"Hmm."

Jang Ilso, still smiling, picked up the bottle and filled two cups to the brim.

Glug, glug.

After filling both cups with an overflow of alcohol, Jang Ilso once again brought his hand to Hwang Se-ak's throat. His long nails slowly scratched at the throat.

The sensation of the nails digging into his throat was chilling, but Hwang Se-ak dared not flinch. He stood frozen, waiting for Jang Ilso's decision.

Drip.

Blood trailed down his throat. Jang Ilso brought his blood-stained finger over the cups.

Ttook!

A drop of blood fell into each cup, followed by another.

Chwarak!

After shaking off Hwang Se-ak's blood, Jang Ilso then cut his own finger with his nail. Now, drops of Jang Ilso's blood fell into the cups.

Ttook.

Having mixed blood into both cups, Jang Ilso, with a smile, extended one cup to Hwang Se-ak.

"Drink."

"I, I couldn't possibly…"

"This."

Jang Ilso paused for a moment.

As if to ensure that the next words would be remembered.

"Represents the blood you will shed for me and the blood I will shed for you."

“…….”

"What will you do?"

Biting his lip slightly, Hwang Se-ak accepted the cup that Jang Ilso offered. And without a moment's hesitation, he gulped it down.

"Good."

Jang Ilso also drank the remaining alcohol in his cup with a satisfied expression.

"As of this time, there is no Red Pillar Association. Only Hwang Se-ak of Evil Tyrant Alliance."

Hwang Se-ak knelt down and prostrated himself on the spot. Then he bowed his head deeply as if to bury his head into the ground.

"I offer my life to you, Ryeonju-nim."

"A truly fine gift."

Jang Ilso, patting Hwang Se-ak's shoulder, showed a genuinely friendly smile. As if the previous tension was all an illusion.

"Let's go. One drink is not enough. Let's drink throughout the night."

"Yes!"

"Good, I feel very good. Hahahahaha."

Jang Ilso's loud laughter spread throughout the Great Hall.

Evil Sects of Gangbuk Red Pillar Association to Evil Tyrant Alliance…. No, it was the moment when Red Pillar Association swore complete obedience to Jang Ilso.

|Note