



RS MANAGEMENT



담화공 장편소설

# 철혈의 오버로드

# **THE OVERLORD OF BLOOD AND IRON**

**- 철혈의 오버로드 -**

**- VOLUME 1 -**

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## **- STORY -**

The Grand Sovereign, Kang Chul-In. The man who was so strong that he had to be defeated. Having lost, he must now go back in time to take up the challenge of becoming supreme in the Continent of Pangaea. Will Kang Chul-In be able to overcome the 9 other Grand Sovereigns in order to grasp the Continent of Pangaea within his hands?

# Chapter 1

## The Crisis of The Absolute

2030 A.D.

The great continent of Pangea was never peaceful due to Ragnarok, the war for supremacy over the continent. Ragnarok that started three years after the Great Summoning stretched to over seven years. Rather, it intensified as time passed. It was the result of the similarities in strength between the Grand Sovereigns.

Ragnarok had resulted in the creation of three large powers.

Kang Chul-In, one of the Grand Sovereigns and two other Grand Sovereigns participated in the creation of the Ishtar Coalition, which was centered around the use of armed forces.

The second was the Gullveig Union, which based its foundation in strong economic power and productivity.

The final was the Baldur Alliance, which was evaluated to be the weakest of the three alliances despite the presence of five Grand Sovereigns.

These three power groups, depending on the situation, aligned or were at feud with one another, competing and checking each other like the ancient China's Three Kingdoms.

"Sigh, at this rate, we will not accomplish anything."

Mumbled a man, sitting on a throne made of pure gold inside the skull of a golden dragon, as he looked down at the current state of Ragnarok and the chessboard with marked borderlines.

This man was Kang Chul-In, the strongest in force amongst the ten Grand Sovereigns, and the owner of the great and vast land of Valhalla.

"I want to crush them all at once... but we are disadvantaged in a war of attrition. How

nice would it be if I can destroy them at their foundation?”

Kang Chul-In's gaze lingered at the Gullveig Union that was marked with a white p.a.w.n on the chessboard.

Yes. In Kang Chul-In's quest to take over the entire Pangea continent, the Gullveig union was the largest setback.

Gullveig compensated its weaker military force with great economic power and productivity, placing itself in a favorable place in Ragnarok. At this rate, there was a high probability that as Ragnarok progressed, the Gullveig Union would gain control of Pangea. To tip the balance on the power struggle among the three Powers, it was important to disrupt Gullveig's economic power. In a war of attrition with the Gullveig Union, the one at loss would be only the Ishtar side.

“I would have set Gullveig to flames if not for these c.o.c.kroaches!” exclaimed Kang Chul-In, looking at the area marked to be the Baldur Alliance on the chessboard.

The Baldur Alliance was weak, able to be destroyed at any time if he set his heart to it.

Gullveig, also, could destroy the Baldur Alliance at any time. However, the Baldur Alliance survived by maintaining neutral diplomacy and collecting material benefits while the Ishtar Coalition and Gullveig Union were at war. They were certainly detestable.

In the eyes of Kang Chul-In, Baldur, who meticulously bore between the two Great Powers and ate up the dropped pieces from the ground, without any contributions or losses, was the most indecent one of all. However, he couldn't just push off the Baldur Alliance out of anger. If Kang Chul-In was to hit the Baldurs, these bats would just side with the Gullveigs and wage a war of two against one.

Of course, these progressions were not problematic to Kang Chul-In alone.

Both Gullveig and Baldur camps were not free of these sorts of problems. In these sorts of wars, the outcome would be the same, the only difference being which p.a.w.n, which power would make the first move. The roles would be different based on this move, but the outcome alike. Whatever choice and move was made, the one who made the first move would be at a disadvantage.

“Urg! If I had brought Lee Gong-Myung under me, no, even killed, things would not

have been this twisted,” growled Kang Chul-In, sitting on his throne.

Lee Gong-Myung.

A Chinese emigrant from Busan, he was not a Sovereign nor a Grand Sovereign, but rather just an insignificant traveling worker ant. However, his significant role in the Ragnarok created the current three-cornered battle. Lee Gong-Myung was an excellent strategist who served faithfully under Alex Rothschild, leader of the Baldur Alliance. He was so intelligent that travelers of the Eastern part of Eurasia called him the rebirth of Zhuge Liang (Chinese strategist well known for his achievements and success in battle strategy) and praised him greatly.

“I should have killed him or had him serve under me then...”

Kang Chul-In, who regretted very little in his life, regretted losing Lee Gong-Myung.

If he could return in time, if he had been wiser then, he could have gained Lee Gong-Myung and unified Pangea, possibly becoming the Greatest of the Great Powers, Emperor of Pangea.

No, not possibly. More like very likely.

Kang Chul-In, who was skilled in martial arts and a great leader, would have been able to defeat the Gullveigs and the Baldurs easily right after with the help of Lee Gong-Myung’s strategies.

“If Kwak Jung at least had been working under me, the situation would have been a lot different... it’s a pity. You died because you served under such an incompetent leader.”

Kwak Jung served under a different Great Power leader, but died of lung cancer in the early years of the war in 2040. He had died early at 38 years of age. If Kwak Jung had been Kang Chul-In’s subordinate, he would have cured the lung cancer, no matter what stage, and worked Kwak Jung until he died from overwork... but there was nothing to do for one who had already pa.s.s.ed.

“Everything has already pa.s.s.ed and cannot be reversed... regret that bears no fruit.” Kang Chul-In shook his head, swallowing his regrets.

There was no point in wanting what he could not have.

Of the two strategists that he desired, one belonged to and served faithfully to his rival, Alex Rothschild, and the other had died before he could even attempt to recruit him. Regretting now would not change anything.

It was then.

As he was thinking and regretting alone, Alfred, the vampire butler created by the NPC unit under Kang Chul-In's reign, burst into the room and bowed down before him.

"Master!"

"What is it, Alfred?" Kang Chul-In asked with a slight scowl.

Alfred, who had always maintained a gentle and calm characteristic of vampires, suddenly bursted in and stumbled before him with a fl.u.s.tered expression.

"Master... something big has happened!"

"Something big?"

"It... it is... the scout who just returned to report...!"

"Speak calmly. I will not be surprised."

"It... It..."

Alfred, as if he was afraid of the words that were to be said, took a large breath in and took a hand to rest on his chest. As if that was not enough, he clenched two fists, closed his eyes softly, and opened his mouth.

'What is wrong with him?'

Kang Chul-In, seeing Alfred in such a state, was puzzled; wondering what could fl.u.s.ter him so. Had the sky fallen? Or was there impending danger in the great land of Valhalla?

"Current... currently, 50km from the southwest, the Gullveigs' and Baldurs' alliance troops are approaching."

He had said he would not be surprised, but the report that Alfred brought was

surprising indeed. The Gullveigs and Baldurs have joined hands... it was really a matter of great account that he had not even dreamt of.

'Is that... possible? Our Valhalla is in the innermost region of the Ishtar Coalition... betrayal...? Who?'

Kang Chul-In, instead of being surprised, remained level-headed and worked to find the solution to the situation. In the Ishtar Coalition, there were no outstanding strategists and He, Kang Chul-In was the smartest of them all.

With the problem already warning its impending doom, it was not very difficult to a.n.a.lyze where the leak had originated.

'Southwest... If they are approaching from the Southwest... Aleister! It is that d.a.m.ned necromancer!'

The betrayer was undoubtedly the necromancer leader Aleister who was, like Kang Chul-In, part of the Ishtar Coalition. Aleister's territory was located exactly southwest of Valhalla, and that abominable Aleister had probably opened the way for the alliance troops, or joined them altogether.

"Alfred." Kang Chul-In, who had finished his thoughts called his butler.

"Yes, master."

"How large are the troops?"

"It's that... an entire continent has come and the number of combined troops is huge."

"Continent? It's that despicable Rothschild's Cyamodus, yes?"

"Yes, master... the mobile fortress is Cyamodus...!"

"We've been had."

Cyamodus, the home of Alex Rothschild, was a mobile fortress built on the back of a giant monster that resembled a tortoise. This meant, his rival's entire headquarters had come right to Valhalla.

'Movable fortresses... it was always a sore spot. Ideal for running like a rat as well.'

Valhalla, the home of Kang Chul-In, was a little peculiar due to its location underground, but it was not as much as the mobile fortress of Alex Rothschild. It was a question of the ability to move headquarters or not. By nature, the mobile fortress would have varied and more numerous options in strategy compared to rooted ground.

“What about Hecate? Connect me to her.”

Hecate was a Great Power skilled in magic and part of the Ishtar Coalition. For Kang Chul-In, who had numerous enemies, she was one Great Power he could trust.

“Its... It’s that...”

“Nothing?”

“Yes, master. In my invaluable opinion, they might have been attacked first...”

“Stop. There is no need to hear this further.”

Kang Chul-In stopped Alfred mid-sentence.

And in his head, the scattered pieces fit together to explain this sudden catastrophe.

‘The Gullveig Union and Baldur Alliance. They joined hands first. They turned Aleister against us, and will fight half and half, after dividing me and Hecate amongst themselves... This would have been at a large disadvantage to the Baldurs... this strategy... had this too been created by Lee Gong-Myung?’

Lee Gong-Myung, in addition to strategy and tactics, had great gifts in looking through personal relations.h.i.+ps between the Great Powers. In this current event, Kang Chul-In was sure that Lee Gong-Myung was in the center of it.

‘The betrayal of friendly forces... and with no word from Hecate. The union of the enemy. I lost, it is a defeat.’

Kang Chul-In bit his lower lip, and plainly accepted this dark and hopeless situation. No, he was left with no other choice. Even with his strength, and even with the military capabilities of Valhalla, there was no way out of this current situation. He did not want to accept it... but the Great Power Kang Chul-In and the continent of Valhalla as of today looked as if it would need to leave Ragnarok.

However, Kang Chul-In did not despair.

In place of anger and fear, he took time to think about the causes of this crisis and the mistakes he had made. In the impending doom of his headquarters, he struggles to a.n.a.lyze the situation.

Because, he had a final card to play.

A secret card...

# Chapter 2

## The end of The Absolute, But...

'Fine. Since it has already become like this, maybe it is a good thing.'

For what reason?

Kang Chul-In flashed a faint smile.

'I focused too heavily on military power. My neglect on economic strength was detrimental. My lack of trips to the library and closeness to books... I'm a Grand Sovereign. I did not have time to focus on foreign and diplomatic policies, as well as, military tactics and strategies alone. With the progress of war, slow and immobile, I neglected collecting intelligence and diplomacy. If I could not maintain good relations, I should have at least had good, solid information and intelligence. Then, I would not have been caught off guard like this.'

In the face of destruction, the mind of Kang Chul-In was ruthlessly calm and quiet.

If his enemies had known the current state of Kang Chul-In, they would have thought he had given up, or that he had nothing left but regret. Like this, Kang Chul-In was calm.

"Master! You need to give a countermeasure to go against the enemies..." Alfred pleaded with Kang Chul-In, as if frustrated by his state. It was understandable, considering the threat impending on the headquarters.

"Alfred."

"Yes, Master."

"Do not act rashly and do not tremble with fear. Maintain your dignity. We have not lost yet."

"Sir...?"

The vampire butler Alfred was taken aback by Kang Chul-In's calm composure, but worked to regather his nerves and composure soon after. As a NPC unit, Alfred could not know the internal workings of Kang Chul-In.

“Call the five Great Generals in right away, and send all troops out of Valhalla to meet the enemy as soon as they return.”

“Master...! That, that cannot happen! Do you not think encouraging a siege would be better? A big bloodbath would put Valhalla at a great disadvantage...!”

It was true.

Numerically inferior. Even with a 1% chance of getting out of this situation, it would be better to encourage a siege.

“No. It would only drag on the battle longer, without changing the outcome. We will square off with our enemies instead of cowardly holding out of battle.”

“Master...!”

“Do not worry.”

“We will lose today, but not next time.”

It really did not make any sense.

It was obvious that today's defeat would lead to obliteration and destruction, but Kang Chul-In remained calm and composed.

“Lucy, Bella!”

When Kang Chul-In called their names, two Dark Elf Guards Lucy and Bellatrix, who had been hiding in the darkness behind the throne, showed themselves.

“Yes, Master.”

“Did you call for us.”

Lucy and Bella who were the same NPC Unit as Alfred were both guards who specialized in magic and martial arts. They were stronger than most mid-level

Sovereigns.

“My sword and armor.”

As soon as his word fell, Lucy and Bella brought forth the epic items Fragarach, the Great Sword, and ‘Vali’s Burning Vengeance Armor Set’ in front of him. These items had made Kang Chul-In the Grand Sovereign of War, the Hunter of Sovereigns.

‘Alex Rothschild, and Lee Gong-Myung.’

He calmed his thoughts thinking of his enemies while he dressed for war with the help of Bella and Lucy.

He shuddered in anger as he thought of the two who had brought upon his destruction. He had been the most viable candidate for the unification of Pangaea. And it was his no longer.

He had stepped on them countless of times, and they had come alive like c.o.c.kroaches, repeatedly. It would have been more accurate to describe them as zombies and not Grand Sovereigns. He was regretful to have left them alone instead of killing them or subjugating them under him, but since things have come to this point, he would have them feel the full wrath of the Grand Sovereign Kang Chul-In and Valhalla, in this great slalom.

Boom! Boom!

Cyamodus, the giant tortoise, breathing fire and lava moved towards the Grand Sovereign Kang Chul-In’s headquarters. There were almost 15,000 troops total when one combined the allied troops of Baldur and Gullveig, as well as two thousand troops tailing the headquarters.

“Master.”

Lee Gong-Myung, the pinnacle and mastermind behind Cyamodus, turned towards his leader, Alex Rothschild.

“Are you really going to fight head-to-head with Kang Chul-In?”

Alex Rothschild had already put on a full plate of armor, scattered with white and gold. Like a Grand Sovereign, all his items were also Epic Items.

“He will not just stand and watch, that’s for sure.”

“But my Lord, Kang Chul-In is strong. One-on-one, no, with even many, you know it is difficult to win against him. Kang Chul-In is in reality, Pangea’s strongest—your life may even be in danger.”

“That’s why I am going against him with others. A combined attack with other Grand Sovereigns, there is plenty of prospects for victory. We also have overwhelming numbers of troops.”

“But...”

“Debt.”

Lee Gong-Myung spoke no further as soon as Alex Rothschild uttered that word.

It was understandable.

Since the start of Ragnarok seven years ago, Alex Rothschild had always been entrapped in Kang Chul-In’s plots, struggling to survive. He lost two subordinates he had treasured as if they were his brothers, and his headquarters Cyamodus, was stomped to nothing, not once but four times.

If Cyamodus had not been a mobile fortress, Alex Rothschild would have been crushed at the hands of Kang Chul-In long ago.

“I need to avenge their deaths, and I need to repay him for the humiliation that he gave me in the past. If not today, I will never be able to pay off this debt. Maybe if it was another day, I would have avoided this, but not today.”

He stated this so firmly, that it was obvious his mind was made. No matter what Lee Gong-Myung said, he would not be able to convince him otherwise. Therefore, Lee Gong-Myung did not question his liege further.

“It would have been nice if we could break him with Cyamodus alone... it’s too bad that it had to be this way.” Alex Rothschild stated regretfully.

“It’s an overused phrase, but ‘The last one standing is the victor’. Kang Chul-In was too strong. He would not bend against the wind, even if it means he would break... his fatal flaw is that he was not rounded but rigid.”

“True... if he had been more cautious, this day would have not come.”

“Yes. And that is one of the reasons why I chose you, my liege, and not Kang Chul-In.”

As the two conversed, Valhalla’s troops slowly showed itself from afar.

“It cannot be...!”

Lee Gong-Myung exclaimed, seeing what lay ahead of him.

“My liege! Look over there! It is a giant slalom! He has given up siege warfare and he has chosen a face to face confrontation...!”

Kang Chul-In’s choice was a stupid one, but it did succeed in bringing an element of surprise.

“It cannot be...!”

Alex Rothschild also could not hide his surprise.

“Gong-Myung, is this maybe a trap? Even if Kang Chul-In is reckless, a confrontation...!”

He had suffered immensely due to Kang Chul-In until now—it was natural for him to be taken aback in Kang Chul-In’s choice of confrontation in threats of complete obliteration.

“No, it is not.”

Lee Gong-Myung had different ideas.

“It is his pride.”

“Pride?”

“I am sure of it.”

Lee Gong-Myung was sure.

“According to the intel that just arrived, Hecate’s headquarters has already been

destroyed by the Gullveig Union. Aleister, who is part of the Ishtar Coalition, is over there.”

Lee Gong-Myung’s finger pointed at the Grand Sovereign Aleister, who was sitting atop the giant undead monster, Bone Dragon.

“He has already judged that there is no hope and he will go out with a bang. It is not Kang Chul-In’s style to drag on a fight that will lead to nothing.”

“Oh...!”

“To go out with a bang, instead of holding out... isn’t that just the embodiment of Kang Chul-In’s personality? He means that he will not plead for his life, nor would he seek to save himself. This is who he is.”

It was Lee Gong-Myung, indeed.

He had seen through Kang Chul-In’s intentions and he had assured the Grand Sovereign while sitting... It was obvious as to why Kang Chul-In had regretted not having Lee Gong-Myung himself.

“My liege, order for attack in full force. As long as Kang Chul-In has chosen a slalom, it is impossible to absorb Valhalla’s military force. There is no other way than to completely destroy it.”

“Is that right?”

“Yes, my liege.”

“I will do so.”

Alex Rothschild nodded at Lee Gong-Myung’s counsel.

The great slalom that was thought to end easily lasted for three long days and nights. To that extent, Valhalla had great military power, and Kang Chul-In also displayed great skill—withstanding the combined efforts of the Grand Sovereigns on the allied side.

But the limit was three days.

But he was outnumbered. In the face of overwhelming numbers, there was no victory.

Ultimately, the five proud Grand Generals of Valhalla fell one by one, and Kang Chul-In was pushed all the way to his throne inside Valhalla headquarters. As predicted by both sides, Kang Chul-In had lost.

“Hey, you came?”

Kang Chul-In, who sat alone in his throne, greeted the Grand Sovereigns on the allied side.

Taken aback, the allied Grand Sovereigns were at a loss for words.

In that moment, the roles had reversed, and it looked as if the defeated Kang Chul-In was the victor, and the victorious allied Grand Sovereigns had lost. Like this, Kang Chul-In remained proud and held his head high.

The face of Kang Chul-In, sitting on his throne alone, was not that of a loser. Rather, the wry smirk spread across his face looked as if he was looking down at the allied Grand Sovereigns.

“You cannot believe your defeat?”

Alex Rothschild, the rival of Kang Chul-In, finally spoke.

“Because, I stepped on you, after being stepped on countless of times?”

It seemed as if Alex Rothchild was overcome with resentment.

Indeed, who knew he would deliver his enemy Kang Chul-In to the clutches of death. It was a new feeling.

Kang Chul-In sneered.

“Why, were you disappointed at my reaction? I guess... you would have been satisfied if I had cried and cowered like yourselves, you losers.”

In that moment, Alex Rothschild almost lunged at Kang Chul-In.

How could he push his b.u.t.tons so?

His cheeky mocking of the victors was enough to drive anyone crazy.

“You have really lost your mind.”

The Grand Sovereign necromancer Aleister, who had remained quiet, spoke. He had raised the visor in his skull armor, exposing his crude, vulgar face.

“You would have never guessed, huh? But what can you do? You lost. That is what you get, for being a c.o.c.ky and arrogant...”

Aleister smirked at Kang Chul-In.

And in response...

“Shut your mouth.”

It was a menacing statement, enough to send chills down the spine of even the icy, Grand Sovereign Aleister.

“Shut up before I break that skull of yours. I do not wish to speak to a little traitor like you.”

Disgusted, Kang Chul-In turned his head away from the necromancer Grand Sovereign, towards Alex Rothschild.

“Hey, Rothschild.” He pointed at Alex Rothschild with the end of his chin.

“You work hard to act like you work for a just and great cause, to act nice and good.”

“What are you saying?”

Alex Rothschild answered.

“What am I saying? Well, if you are going to play dumb, I’ll kindly tell you. You want Pangaea all for yourself, but to pretend you don’t, doesn’t that just keep you up at night?”

“No way. I am different from you.”

“Ha. Different. I can recognize my own kind. You are the same as me. Except you

pretend to be on the side of the angels, instead of being honest like me. You took everything you could and benefited all you could, and now you are pretending you did not?”

“Evil only recognizes evil... Kang Chul-In, you, are just that.”

“Is that so? It seems like you are going to kill that traitor first as soon as I’m gone.”

And in that statement, the traitor Aleister s.h.i.+vered.

“Coward.” Kang Chul-In sneered at Aleister, and continued.

“Well, whatever happens, all will be after I die anyways so it is business among yourselves. Now, end it.”

And Kang Chul-In put down his Fragarach and opened his arms wide.

“What are you scheming, Kang Chul-In?”

Rothschild asked, his guard up.

“What scheme, you idiot. End it. You don’t understand?”

“Are you just going to die?”

“Well then? I don’t want to cry and run away like someone after a little attack on their headquarters, nor do I want to come back to life like a c.o.c.kroach either... not my style...”

It was a direct hit at Rothschild, and the veins in his temples bulged.

The angry Rothschild’s sword gave off a glint as it penetrated Kang Chul-In’s heart in an instant.

“It is my victory...! Kang Chul-In!”

“Yes, enjoy it. Enjoy it all you want.” Kang Chul-In laughed.

“Today will be the first and last day that you will be victorious against...”

“Shut up!”

Rothschild’s sword gave off another glimmer.

And Kang Chul-In’s head fell and rolled on the ground.

Dead.

The Kang Chul-In had died.

“It is my victory... My victory, Kang Chul-In!”

Alex Rothschild announced his victory with red, bloodshot eyes.

And that face, was to be feared.

The face of the man, who had defeated the enemy he had despised and feared, was like the devil. However, the menacing face of the man soon disappeared, and was replaced with joy and accomplishment.

“You all worked hard.”

Rothschild spoke, looking around at the faces of the Grand Sovereigns as well as Aleister.

“And now, this head will be...”

As Rothschild was about to suggest hanging the head for all to see and celebrate their victory, he suddenly stopped.

Crack!

The ground began to shake.

It did not seem like a good thing.

The vibrations that they felt beneath their feet and the noise that grew louder and closer was ominous and strange. It was as if... a big explosion was going to happen.

“No way...!”

Rothschild yelled.

“Suicidal explosion!?”

“We need to get out of here right now!”

“Kang Chul-In, you despicable, crude jerk!”

And just when everyone had processed the situation, a fiery storm overcame them with a loud bang. It was, until the end, a despicable and crude tactic.

“Stupid, foolish, idiots.”

Kang Chul-In smirked and mumbled.

# Chapter 3

## Return (1)

Kim Min-Chul, the CEO of an Entertainment company, was like any other day, taking out his stress on his subordinate. He was a 'half-gangster' evil boss, not a full gangster, but not just a normal citizen either. He often liked to call his coworkers and banter with them. He would curse at the young interns in their 20s, insulting them and hara.s.sing them. He even secretly s.e.xually hara.s.sed female employees. People would question why there's still s.e.xual hara.s.sment going on today, since s.e.xual hara.s.sment had been heavily criminalized. However, the year 2020 in South Korea had been host to skyrocketing levels of unemployment, due to a long-term recession. In the perspective of the victims, they had to endure hara.s.sment if they did not want to lose their job. And Kim Min-Chul was cunning and sly with his hara.s.sments, making it a bit too foggy for a formal accusation. It was fair to say that at this point, he had reached a professional level with his hara.s.sments.

And Kim Min-Chul's target for the day was an intern who had been employed for ten months.

The poor intern, who's position in the company was still not guaranteed, had to endure Kim Min-Chul's quest to find fault in all he did. It was as if he gave up all hope and was just waiting for Kim Min-Chul's mood to improve.

His choice was understandable... since he had spent a year of his golden years being an intern in this company, and could not let it all go to waste. It was a common thing in these times, for young people to spend all their 30s, moving from interns.h.i.+p to interns.h.i.+p. This was a needed sacrifice for a paycheck in times where many companies paid little to none and worked young people to the bones.

"How can you be a permanent employee, working like that? What do you have, like one or two months left of your interns.h.i.+p? You don't want to get the full-time offer?"

Kim Min-Chul's specialty was to manipulate subordinates with their weak points.

Those who were candidates for promotion were threatened with promotions, those who were retiring were threatened with unemployment benefits, and those who were

interns were threatened with full-time offers.

“You are making it difficult if you are going to act like this! There are so many people who can work~ If I put up an interns.h.i.+p spot right now, at least 50 applications will be submitted. You know that, right?”

Kim Min-Chul flashed a nasty smile and threatened the poor intern, while the other employees pretended to be immersed in their work in fear that he might come for them next. One wrong move, and their day might just be h.e.l.l.

“I chose you despite your poor test scores and mediocre education because I felt sorry for you...”

and before he could finish his sentence, Kim Min-Chul stopped, because an unimaginable thing came out of the intern’s mouth.

“Stupid, foolish, idiots.”

Intern of 10 months, Kang Chul-In smirked and mumbled.

A deafening silence filled the room.

“What did he just say?”

“I misheard, right?”

A couple of female employees whispered amongst themselves.

“What, what? Hey, Kang Chul-In. What did you just say? Stupid and foolish? Do you want to lose your job?”

Kim Min-Chul roared, blood rus.h.i.+ng to his face and neck. Even a worm squirms when stepped on, and Kim Min-Chul, who had been told off by a worm was overcome in anger.

“Oh?”

Kang Chul-In seemed surprised to see Kim Min-Chul, as if he just noticed the angry man standing there.

“Oh, oh? You idiot, what did you just...”

“Shut up and be quiet.”

“My head is killing me.”

And Kang Chul-In with those words clenched his head in pain and left the office, not giving a second glance at Kim Min-Chul who was roaring in anger.

“What, what the. What is that idiot!!!!!!”

Kim Min-Chul’s voice rang in the office that Kang Chul-In had left. The poor employees who had been left behind, looked to each other, worried.

Kang Chul-In who had left the office headed straight for the bathroom.

“Ouch...!”

His head hurt badly.

It was as if someone was... h.i.tting his head with an axe, and he felt as if he was going to vomit. He rushed to the sink and turned on the faucet. He needed to splash his face with cold water to ease his headache. Water, cold as ice, poured from the faucet. Kang Chul-In shoved his face into the sink as soon as the water began to flow.

“Oh...!”

He groaned. His face felt as if it would explode from the cold, but he did not care. He would do anything for the headache to go away.

His pain subsided after almost ten minutes in the cold water. But that was not the end.

Vomit from deep within threatened to explode out, overcoming him with nausea. Kang Chul-In ran to the toilet, grabbed the sides, and everything exploded out.

He vomited again and again.

And when there was nothing to come up, he vomited stomach acid, and anything left after that.

He struggled in the bathroom for about an hour, and was finally able to stand.

“Sigh...”

And when Kang Chul-In let out a long sigh and looked in the mirror, there stood a pale-faced, 28-year-old man.

It was the same face from 10 years ago.

Kang Chul-In flashed a wry smile, and the poor intern who until an hour ago, had received all sorts of harassment, was no more.

And there remained only the ‘King Slayer’ Grand Sovereign, Kang Chul-In, who had reigned over Pangaea and made his enemies cower in fear.

“The timing is right, too.”

Kang Chul-In’s face flashed with satisfaction as he checked the date on his smartphone.

It was the year 2020, November 6th, two months before the great slalom. He had returned to the past.

Well, technically, it wasn’t that he had returned to the past.

Soul backup.

Soul backup was a skill that upon death, transferred his current memories to the past and was only available to a Grand Sovereign.

And in this ‘resurrection’ through soul backup, he avoided the ‘time paradox’ while given a chance to change the future.

‘I must be cautious from this point on. I have no more chances now, if I die, it’s over.’

Kang Chul-In repeated this warning to himself over and over again.

Quite obviously, soul backup was a skill available only once. If it was available more than once, it would have been called a loop instead. Anyways, as long as he chose to use soul backup once, everything would be over if he died again. This unprecedented

power would never be once more, and would disappear forever.

However, Kang Chul-In's face flashed with confidence.

I mean, of course it would.

He had already seen the future, and Kang Chul-In would be reborn as a stronger Grand Sovereign with his past experiences and mistakes behind him. All the trials and errors as well as threats of death would be no more. And a few of his fatal mistakes, such as his rashness and disregard for key individuals, as well as negligence of information and intellect—he would never make the same mistakes again.

'I will be a Grand Sovereign, complete and without error.'

As Kang Chul-In clenched his fists and assured himself... a fiery pain stabbed him in the middle of the heart. He grabbed his chest and clenched his jaw.

"Rothschild... you c.o.c.kroach."

The origin of the pain was a painful memory.

His body was that of a young 28-year-old man, but his mind still remembered the pains of the past— the humiliation of being defeated by an enemy he had stomped on over and over again!

His neck burned also where his head had severed, and the memory had sent chills down his spine.

"I will crush you. Even more than before, until you beg for death."

Kang Chul-In's eyes burned with vengeance.

It was said that the one who hit forgot, but the one who got hit, could never forget.

Kang Chul-In was like that.

He was not a man who would forget his enemies, and he would only be satisfied by avenging ten-fold, no, a hundred times worse than what was done to him. In his fiery thoughts of vengeance towards Rothschild, another face emerged in his thoughts: the strategist Lee Gong-Myung.

‘Lee Gong-Myung... would he choose Rothschild once again?’

If he could not have him?

He would break him to pieces, until one could not even recognize what he once was. That was Kang Chul-In’s way.

It was then, as he was overcome with the thoughts of his enemies that a thin, low voice called him.

“Um, Chul-In?”

He turned his head and a female coworker, Lee Chae-Lin was poking her head in the door and looking at him.

“Are you okay? You look sick.”

Lee Chae-Lin’s face looked worried. It was obvious that she was sincerely worried about him. There was no other reason as to why she would come looking for him in the bathroom after he had been in there for an hour. No one had come out of fear of Kim Min-Chul, the CEO.

“I am completely fine.”

Kang Chul-In answered, with a leisurely smile.

“First, I look crazy though. Sorry, give me a minute.”

He excused himself and took off his suit jacket that had some water and vomit residue, throwing it in the trashcan. He took some water in his hands, was.h.i.+ng around his mouth and slicking back his hair. He undid his tie, and threw it away as well. And he looked more presentable.

“Chul-In...”

“Yes?”

“The CEO is very angry. He is threatening to fire you immediately...”

“Let him do what he wants.”

“But you persevered well for the last ten months! If you beg the CEO to forgive...”

“No.”

Kang Chul-In stopped Lee Chae-Lin mid-sentence.

“A man should never beg.”

“But...!”

“A man should never beg to anyone aside from his parents. I also don’t have any intention to cower under that sc.u.m.”

“Chul-In!”

“I should pack my things and leave, actually...”

His eyes lingered at his smartphone.

“It’s perfect timing since we are almost done for the day.” Kang Chul-In flashed his signature smirk and pa.s.sed Lee Chae-Lin out the bathroom.

“No! If you go in now...”

“Why?”

“The CEO is waiting with a golf club, threatening to kill you if you come back!”

Kim Min-Chul, who ran with gangsters a bit a while back, had the habit of creating a fearful atmosphere with golf clubs when he was angry.

“Oh, is he really?”

Kang Chul-In snickered.

The fat pig with a beer belly that s.e.xually hara.s.sed for a living, coming for him with a golf club—it was funny to even imagine.

“Well, at least I won’t be bored.”

“What? Chul-In, what are you saying? You will really get hurt! You know how he is...!”

“Stop.”

“I will take care of it. So, stop.”

Kang Chul-In assured Lee Chae-Lin with a gentle voice. And he calmly passed her towards the office.

# Chapter 4

## Return (2)

Kang Chul-In's first task after returning to the past, was to organize his normal life before the great summoning. And to do so, he needed to quit this dirty, horrid job.

'I was nothing back then, wasting away in a company like this.'

Before the great summoning, Kang Chul-In was a normal, gruff young man no different from anyone else. A life struggling to make ends meet, living day to day.

He flashed a smile thinking of his past ten years ago, and walked into the office.

And as soon as he showed himself, all eyes fell onto him. It was obvious that they were nervous, like a group of poor farmers in the face of the government.

"Hey, you punk!"

Kim Min-Chul, who had been prowling the office with his golf club, roared as he laid eyes on him.

"What, you punk."

Kang Chul-In answered.

The office went cold.

The male employees thought,

'Kang... Chul-In, he has finally lost it from all the stress. He has lost it.'

'Wow, he isn't even scared.'

'Poor guy, he should just let it slide... these are tough times... '

And the female employees thought,

‘Oh my, what is he going to do...’

‘That CEO, he is a gangster... is Chul-In going to be alright?’

“Wait, what? ‘What you punk?’”

“Yeah, you punk.”

Kim Min-Chul felt like his blood was flowing backwards. Who would have guessed, the CEO being cursed by a newbie not even a year into ‘the real world’?

“You... you... little intern bug... who do you think...”

“What do you mean who? It’s a newly rich, oily fat b.a.s.t.a.r.d. Or what, a gangster? Thug?”

That did it.

Many who used to or currently use their fists for any gain, tended to react sensitively to the word ‘thug’—calling themselves gangsters, or a man with a chivalrous spirit.

It was c.r.a.p.

In the eyes of Kang Chul-In, anyone seeking to gain by using violence was the same thing—sc.u.m.

Especially, gangs had evolved after the 90s to use the law to their advantage and hid behind enforcement and authority. Kim Min-Chul was a perfect example of this.

“Well, I say it like it is. What else would I call a thug? Human trash?”

Kang Chul-In sneered at the evil CEO, unfazed by Kim Min-Chul’s obvious anger.

And in that, Kim Min-Chul exploded.

“Hey, you f.u.c.king b.i.t.c.h!”

The golf club with a loud whoosh, fell on Kang Chul-In. It had happened in the blink of an eye. But the club hit nothing but air.

“Huh?”

Kim Min-Chul looked around.

“False swing.”

Kang Chul-In sneered at Kim Min-Chul. He had avoided the club swung at full speed just by leaning slightly away.

“This son of a b.i.t.c.h!”

Kim Min-Chul, red-faced and overcome with anger, ran towards Kang Chul-In. However, he could not even brush the corner of Kang Chul-In’s clothes.

But was it surprising?

Kang Chul-In was recognized even by others of his physical strength and power—even in such form, he was still Kang Chul-In. One needed to be at least a professional boxer to be a threat, and even that would have nothing against him in two months.

“Huff... Huff... you little rat...!”

Kim Min-Chul huffed and puffed, gritting his teeth.

“Aren’t you the incompetent one, not being able to hit me?”

Kang Chul-In smirked.

“More importantly...”

And his expression changed. His burning eyes seemed to pierce the heart.

“You play with the golf club one more time, and it won’t be fun anymore.”

It was a clear warning.

However, Kim Min-Chul, already overcome with anger and unable make proper judgments, ignored the warning and lunged forward. I mean, if he swung around golf clubs in his office because he was a little angry, it was obvious the man didn’t have common sense nor curtesy.

“Die, you dog!”

Crack—!

“Ah!”

Kim Min-Chul fell, with one lone scream.

The man on the ground could not even breathe normally. The fist had struck right in the gut.

“Blech... Blechhhhh...”

The blow was so strong that Kim Min-Chul vomited all the fish stew that he had had for lunch that day.

“You don’t take punches well. I thought you would hold out because you are fat.” Kang Chul-In looked to Kim Min-Chul and delivered the final insult.

“Boss! Are you alright?”

An employee rushed to Kim Min-Chul’s side and a.s.sisted him.

“Oh... our boss...! Kang Chul-In, you jerk! Get on your knees and apologize to the CEO now!”

His calculating move made Kang Chul-In hopeful of his success in the workplace in the future. Even if he was just going to be here, rotting away.

Kang Chul-In did not respond to the male employee. He was not worth even acknowledging.

‘Human groups.’

They were all the same, the pig that swung golf clubs out of anger and the calculating sc.u.m that sought favor from the pig. Of course, he had no intention of purely criticizing the male employee for being calculating. It was not bad to try and survive, one needed to do what one needed to do to live. But, to throw one’s pride and everything else away for it—didn’t seem too appetizing. And to reminisce at Kim Min-Chul’s previous actions... he could only flash a bitter smile.

“You... you jerk... I... I will kill you... you bug...”

Kim Min-Chul, being escorted by the male employee, spitefully glared at Kang Chul-In.

“Call Manager Park... Tell him to crush him!”

Manager Park was a thug who worked for Kim Min-Chul and oversaw a small gang.

“Oh, I’m so scared.”

Kang Chul-In scoffed.

Times have changed and he was still trying to use violence over a petty argument—and announcing it in front of people. Kang Chul-In wondered if Kim Min-Chul was just stupid or unable to see logic, overcome with anger.

“You jerk... if Manager Park arrives...”

Kim Min-Chul brought up Manager Park repeatedly, threatening Kang Chul-In. It seemed like he had no doubt Manager Park would be able to take down Kang Chul-In.

“Ah ah... M, manager Park!”

Looking behind Kang Chul-in, the person he had sought for this whole time could be seen. Coincidentally, Manager Park had come into the office.

“CEO Kim?”

Manager Park seemed a little taken aback at the unexpected satiation, but he ordered his subordinates to assist Kim Min-Chul.

“Oh... Manager Park...! That jerk hit me! He hit me!”

Kim Min-Chul whined to Manager Park hanging on to him, leaving out the part where he had swung the club first.

“That jerk, because I lectured him a little... because I told him to do his job right! He cursed at me and hit me!”

“Boss. The whole story...”

“Never mind the whole story! He hit me! Beat him right now!”

Kim Min-Chul was stubborn. He caused a ruckus, waving his arms and legs like a whining toddler.

‘You stupid idiot. What are you doing in front of all the employees?’

In that moment, Manager Park felt a headache coming, but also could not ignore the complaints of his boss. Kim Min-Chul was the fatal source of income for him and his family, which was nothing but a small gang.

‘I’ll need to clean it up briefly.’

Manager Park made up his mind and decided to clean up the office first.

“What are you all looking at!” When Manager Park roared, all eyes fell back to their respective desks.

“Everyone, quiet, work quietly. Instead of needlessly gossiping. And Team Manager Oh.”

Manager Park pointed at the calculating male employee who had helped Kim Min-Chul.

“Bring the CEO back to his office.”

“Oh, yes! Let us... let us go, boss.”

Team Manager Oh struggled to help Kim Min-Chul who was fat and overweight.

“Haha... you are dead now, you jerk.”

Kim Min-Chul, on his way to his office snickered at Kang Chul-In. It was as if the image of Kang Chul-In, beat to death by Manager Park, was already engrained in his head.

“Oh, really?”

Kang Chul-In, who had been silently watching the situation unfold, had nothing else to say. He really did put on every kind of show. He wondered how he could have worked at such a company for nine months.

“Hey, intern.”

As Kang Chul-In was wondering, Manager Park called him.

“You should have known when to lower your pride. Just because he gave you an earful, you shouldn’t come at him like that. You should have just agreed with him and left it at that.”

Manager Park, although he scolded Kang Chul-In, didn’t seem too convinced. He also knew well of CEO Kim Min-Chul’s wrongdoings, and he had received immense stress from him until that point. Although he worked for Kim Min-Chul, he did understand this young intern’s anger.

‘I will scold him a little and let it go.’

Manager Park made up his mind. These were new times, and using fists to solve problems were no more. A wise thing for a gangster living in these times would be to roughly create a situation where Kim Min-Chul would be satisfied. However, all of Manager Park’s good intentions disappeared with the intern’s smug tone.

“What adult?”

Kang Chul-In asked.

“In your eyes, that pig looks like an adult? Well I guess for a gangster; the financier is the adult.”

The veins bulged in the slicked back forehead of Manager Park.

“Hey.”

Manager Park glared at Kang Chul-In.

“Watch your mouth. Think of the situation, think of the person. That’s how you live for a long time. Yeah?”

“That rule only applies to thugs like you.”

The word ‘thug’ triggered Manager Park, as it did Kim Min-Chul, and he clenched his fists.

“You crazy dog!”

“You want to die?”

It seemed as if Manager Park’s two subordinates were more infuriated than the Manager himself.

“You little dog, did you just call my boss a thug?”

“Oh, you smile? You want me to ruin your face?”

And a threatening atmosphere formed, as if punches were going to be thrown at any minute.

“Sigh... I was just going to let it go, but I need to fix your attitude today.” Manager Park did not lose his cool and calmly let his anger simmer despite being insulted.

“You, follow me up to the roof.”

Manager Park pointed to the office door.

“No, not like that.” Kang Chul-In answered.

“You follow.”

And he exited the office door first.

“...What is that kid?”

Manager Park scoffed at this absurd situation.

# Chapter 5

## You, work for me

Kang Chul-In, Manager Park, and two gangsters faced off on the windy rooftop.

‘Hm... I still have a little headache. I should rest for a couple days.’

Kang Chul-In was busy thinking of other things even in front of three well-built gangsters.

It was understandable.

A lion would not be afraid or restless because of some flies on him, just bothered, and like so, Kang Chul-In didn't have any interest.

‘First, I'll rest for a couple days... then what should I do first? I should first work out again... oh! Kwak Jung! Kwak Jung first!’

And right then, he decided that he would need to find a strategist who would match up to Lee Gong-Myung. From all of Kang Chul-In's tasks, finding Kwak Jung was top priority. It seemed logical because around this time, Lee Gong-Myung would have been attending Harvard University in the United States with Alex Rothschild, building their friends.h.i.+p—making it difficult for him to approach anyway. In contrast, Kwak Jung might be easy to find. According to the word on the street, Kwak Jung was from Seoul, and although it was not solid information, it was enough to go on.

‘I must find him.’

It is not too hard to find someone in South Korea. If you have a name, one could search for them on Facebook or Twitter, and if not those two, then Google. If these ways didn't work, one could hire a detective—it would cost some money, but to locate someone in a short amount of time, this would be the best way.

‘I'll make some inquiries.’

It would be better to spend some money than to be stuck in a room with a computer,

searching for Kwak Jung's whereabouts. I mean, he does have a reputation to maintain as the Grand Sovereign.

'Hm... if it is a private detective office or inquiry office, it was usually run by gangsters and thugs.'

The thought flashed through his mind, and that thought brought Kang Chul-In's eyes to the gangsters standing in front of him.

"Here are just the perfect ones at the perfect time."

Kang Chul-In's mouth flashed a large smile.

"What is this, this dog?"

Manager Park who met the eyes of Kang Chul-In shivered, as chills spread all over his body. He felt uneasy as if he became prey, and he also bruised his ego. And a thought popped into his head—that he might be the one to get hurt instead of Kang Chul-In.

"Hey, gangster boss."

Kang Chul-In called Manager Park.

"Gang... Boss?"

"Well, of course you are a gang boss, what else would you be, a civilian boss?"

"You little...!"

"I'm not scared of you, so cut the bluffing. I want to make an appealing offer."

The three gangsters, including Manager Park was speechless for a moment and Kang Chul-In continued.

"You."

Kang Chul-In poked Manager Park's chest.

"Work for me."

Manager Park was speechless and stared at Kang Chul-In, baffled at this unimaginable situation. He could think nothing else than to beat some sense into this rude little b.a.s.t.a.r.d. The problem was the b.a.s.t.a.r.d who said this meant every word.

“You crazy b.a.s.t.a.r.d!”

Manager Park’s subordinate who could not hold his anger any longer roared, and took a swing at Kang Chul-In.

“What is this?”

Kang Chul-In easily dodged the swing, and threw a knee kick. With a large ripping noise, the Manager’s subordinate fell like a rag doll.

The gangster clutched his stomach, groaning.

He got knee-kicked as a counter after he stupidly used his fists, and the damage was not something that would be overcome that easily.

“Bo... boss!”

The other gangster who was the youngest of the three called to Manager Park. And he lunged at Kang Chul-In.

“Hey, you b.a.s.t.a.r.d!”

The gangster tried to pin down Kang Chul- In by using all his body, which seemed to easily weigh more than 100kg. However, Kang Chul-In had once been the strongest man on Earth. Even without his skills, his power would be unmatched by a common human.

Bam, bam!

A One-Two punch landed on his face...

Crack!

And a hook landed on the gangster’s chin.

Thud!

The large gangster fell on the ground, making a sound so loud that it seemed as if a stone had split in half. And he was silent. He had knocked out.

“This b.a.s.t.a.r.d... is he an athlete?”

Manager Park who had seen his two subordinates fall in a flash then realized that he had messed with the wrong man.

“What athlete.” Kang Chul-In answered, smirking.

“Anyways, why don’t you give me an answer to my appealing offer? Work under me?”

“This b.a.s.t.a.r.d...!”

“Hm, you will anyways!”

“Shut your mouth!”

And with that, Manager Park lunged at Kang Chul-In.

And Kang Chul-In noticed that Manager Park had used a ground fighting technique as he lurched at him like a bear. It seemed like he did have an athletic background.

“You have met your match today, you b.a.s.t.a.r.d!”

Manager Park roared.

You could feel the determination in his voice to pin Kang Chul-In to the ground.

But...

Unfortunately, Manager Park’s determination was nothing but a delusion.

Kang Chul-In had been gifted in his strength and leadership at birth, but he was also an extremely hard-working man.

In his past life, he had mastered and studied almost all contemporary martial arts on his own.

And Manager Park, who was amateur at best, was no match.

Whish whis.h.!.+.

Kang Chul-In turned his body and bore into the Manager's sides.

"Huk!"

And the surprised shout was brief as Kang Chul-In grabbed Manager Kang's waist, and lifted him backwards, flipping him on his back. It was a modified Suplex.

Thud!

Manager Park landed on his back on the roof.

"O... Ouch...!"

Manager Park gripped his back and moaned.

"Stand up. It doesn't even hurt that bad."

Kang Chul-In said, heartlessly.

To be honest, suplex is not a skill that inflicts too much damage, but that is in the instance that the skill is performed on top of a mat. If it is performed on bare ground, it would not be an exaggeration to say that the damage could be fatal.

"You... you b.a.s.t.a.r.d. I'll kill you...!"

And Manager Park's initial thoughts to just scold Kang Chul-In lightly and let it go, disappeared.

"You b.a.s.t.a.r.d!"

Manager Park stood up and lunged at Kang Chul-In again. It seemed like he had quite a bit of pain tolerance and endurance, being a gang boss and all.

'Not bad... but he needs to know his place.'

Kang Chul-In recognized Manager Park's endurance, but decided that he will teach him a lesson. If you wanted to have someone work under you, you would need control.

Thwack!

Kang Chul-In spun a low-kick, hitting Manager Park's calf.

"AH!"

Manager Park screamed.

However, he wasn't fazed and Manager Park came at Kang Chul-In again, closing the distance between them. It was Manager Park's pride that would not allow him to lose.

'Oh? How long are you going to hold out?'

Kang Chul in thought, as he hit the Manager's left calf again with a low kick. He hit the same spot!

Thwack-!

A tenacious, clear sound filled the rooftop.

"Urgh..."

It would not have been a surprise if Manager Park had broken his s.h.i.+n.

Plop.

Manager Park fell to his knees. His legs had gone limp.

"Hm... it probably didn't break?"

Kang Chul-In looked at Manager Park as if he was a piece of art that he had painted and mumbled to himself. And for Manager Park listening in, Kang Chul-In was adding fuel to fire.

"You evil b.a.s.t.a.r.d!"

Manager Park exclaimed, as if he was complaining of an unfair situation.

"Just beat me up! You hit the same place over and over again you b.a.s.t.a.r.d!"

As he was screaming, tears were streaming down his face, and snot was running from his nose. On the rooftop of a building in Seochodong. A grown adult... who's job was a gang boss, was crying with snot running down his face.

"Hm... he still hasn't learned."

And looking at this, Kang Chul-In's face seemed unsatisfied.

"Hasn't learned yet?"

Manager Park flinched. Was this not over yet?

"I'll ma.s.sage you for a little while longer."

Kang Chul-In flashed an evil smile and stepped towards Manager Park.

"Mo... mom...!"

Manager Park recognized that his endurance and pride as a gangster was breaking down as he called for his mother, who he had left behind in his hometown.

And soon after, the sound of pig slaughter and blows landing filled the rooftop and rose to the sky.

# Chapter 6

## I will give you a hundred thousand dollars

The rooftop of a building in Seochodong.

On the windy rooftop, three gangsters including Manager Park was kneeling in front of a man, sniffing.

“Sob... sob... it, it hurts so much...”

“Mo... mother...”

The gangsters who had received Kang Chul-In’s brutal “mental training” had thrown away all manly pride and dignity. To that extent, Kang Chul-In’s blows were scary, and merciless.

“Stop crying.”

Kang Chul-In, who was sitting dangerously on the rooftop edge said.

“It... it just hurts so bad...”

“I think... we need to go to the hospital...”

The gangsters moaned and defended themselves.

“Do you guys need some more mental training?”

Kang Chul-In asked with a disapproving look.

“No, no! It doesn’t hurt!”

The gangsters all exclaimed together.

“Mmm. Good.”

And Kang Chul-In smiled and nodded approvingly.

“Hey, you gang boss.”

“Yes, yes!”

Manager Park answered the call of Kang Chul-In.

“You, you need to run an errand for me.”

“An... errand?”

“Find a person for me.”

“An inquiry office or things like that, isn’t that gangsters’ specialty?”

“Ye... yes!”

And like Kang Chul-In said, Manager Park was running a personal inquiry office. It was a sort of side job.

“Write it down.”

“Huh?”

“Write it down.”

“Yes!”

Manager Park quickly shuffled inside the pocket of his suit jacket and pulled out a cheap monami pen along with a small notebook.

“The name is Kwak Jung, age 28, area is Seoul. They say he is a heavy chain smoker and will go through a pack in a sitting, so keep note of that.”

“Yes... Kwak Jung... 28... Seoul... chain-smoker...”

Manager Park carefully wrote down all that Kang Chul-In had said.

“How long would it take?”

“Excuse me?”

“How long does it take.”

“That... um... well... is this it?”

“What is?”

“So... just a name, age, area, and him being a chain-smoker... this can't be all the information you...”

“That's it.”

Manager Park's mouth hung open at Kang Chul-In's careless response.

“Um... I'm sorry to ask this... but don't you think there is too little information?”

“Really?”

In that moment, Kang Chul-In was taken aback.

Thinking about it more, there was some truth in what Manager Park said. There was very little information. It would have been easier to at least know his alma mater, but all Kang Chul-In knew about Kwak Jung was what he said to Manager Park above. He too, had never meet Kwak Jung.

‘Did I ask too much... no, no. Why would I make an inquiry if he was easy to find?’

And Kang Chul-In who had developed a bit of a soft heart soon regained the cruel and wicked mind of an employer.

“Hey, gang boss.”

“Yes, sir.”

“If you are running an errand office, act like one.”

“...excuse me?”

“If I had a lot of information, there will be no point in me asking you, would there?”

“But...!”

“But?”

“...nothing.”

And Manager Park had to accept Kang Chul-In’s inquiry with not much choice.

“Time?”

“Well... because we don’t have much information... if it was fast, maybe 2 or 3 months, and if it was long, maybe a year? And if it takes years, then you would just have to say it would be impossible to find him.”

“You get six months.”

“...Yes, sir.”

“Price?”

Manager Park’s eyes widened in surprise.

“You... you will pay money?”

“If I made an inquiry, I should pay.”

“I thought you told me to work under you...”

“So, a subordinate does not get paid?”

“It’s not that...”

“Speak clearly.”

“It’s just that... I lost to you, and you told me to work under you... so I thought you were going to take our gang...”

And in hearing that, Kang Chul-In’s face crumpled.

“Did you say you were called Manager Park?”

“Park Du-Sik. You can just call me Du-Sik, sir.”

“Park Du-Sik... yes. Park Du-Sik.”

“Yes, sir.”

“In your eyes, does it look like I would just go and be a gang boss?”

“No... no sir!”

And Manager Park, no, Park Do-Sik who felt danger immediately answered with a loud voice.

“I...”

Kang Chul-In began to speak with a low, authoritative voice.

“I hate gangsters. Using your fists and violence to con others—your kind is the one I hate the most. Strong against the weak, and weak against the strong, the worst of the worst.”

And in the criticisms of Kang Chul-In, all three gangsters including Park Du-Sik could not say anything. First, what he said was true and in 30 minutes of “mental training”, they realized blows will land the minute they raised any opposition anyway.

“Well, I’m in no position to say these things to you as well but... you’ve heard of hating your own race.”

Honestly, Kang Chul-In was in no place to lecture the gangsters. He too had used force and power to make countless Sovereigns of Pangea bow down to him. He was the gangster of Pangea. However, there were a couple things different between Kang Chul-In and the gangsters. One was that he would not bow down to anyone.

“If you want to act tough, be tough even when someone holds a knife to your neck,” Kang Chul-In said.

“Isn’t it embarrassing to act all tough depending on who you are talking to? What is this about loyal gangsters and chivalry. You gangsters are nothing but hyenas following the smell of money. You are nothing but items that are thrown away after being used. And less than 0.1% of gangsters become CEOs or bosses of anything when they get

older—most just get stabbed and die early or go in and out of prison. I won't be like that, I will be successful—throw those groundless hopes in the trash.”

Kang Chul-In's words accurately pointed out the limitations of being a gangster—limitations and qualities that were characteristic of gang members from thousands of years ago.

“And after the 5th act, being a gangster will not be too fun. Even if this country has gone to h.e.l.l, the public still has a lot of power. You've never heard of the war against crime?”

As Kang Chul-In spoke, the three gangsters just blinked and listened, as if they were all mute. For them who were uneducated and stupid, it was difficult to understand all of what Kang Chul-In was saying. Park Du-Sik, who was the mob boss seemed to understand a little.

“Anyways.”

Kang Chul-In tilted his head sideways, as if too annoyed and bothered to speak further and clarified him and Park Du-Sik's relations.h.i.+p.

“You work for me, but I have no intention of being a mob boss. When I need an errand done, you need to get that done for me. Do you understand?”

“Yes, boss.”

Park Du-Sik nodded.

“The fee for the inquiry would be 20,000 upfront, and 80,000 after you find Kwak Jung. It will be 100,000 total.” And the three gangsters' eyes opened wide.

“100 thousand?”

“Why? Too little?”

“Its... too much.”

“No, it needs to be at least that much.”

To find the one person who could go against Lee Gong-Myung, or even beat him—100

thousand was basically nothing.

“No, but this is too much. For this kind of inquiry, it would start at 8000 to max of 30,000...”

“If I say I will pay, I will pay. Oh, you by chance...”

Kang Chul-In’s eyes narrowed and glared at Park Du-Sik, as if he realized something.

“You must think, how I can pay that much money being an intern.”

“No, no!”

Park Du-Sik shook his head and waved his hands. It was the image of a man whose intentions had been found out.

“What do you mean no?”

Kang Chul-In smirked.

“I will write you a contract. In three days, I will bring 20,000 in cash and be at your office. It would not be a bad deal even with just the 20,000 anyways.”

Park Du-Sik, who had been found out was speechless and could only blink in response.

“Well, then I will be leaving, so you clean up after yourselves. We will talk more in detail at the office then.”

Kang Chul-In with those words left the rooftop.

It was silent between the three gangsters who had been left on the rooftop.

“Boss...”

The first one who spoke was the muscle who had been hit on the chin by Kang Chul-In.

“What, punk.”

Park Du-Sik answered.

“What should we do? Should I gather all the boys?”

“Boys?”

“You aren’t going to get revenge? Even if he is good, he is alone. There is strength in numbers.”

“...Kw.a.n.g-Pil.”

“Yes, boss.”

The gangster called Kw.a.n.g-Pil answered to Park Du-Sik’s low voice.

“You, can you land even one punch?”

“Punk, even if I haven’t been in a while, I was once the gold medalist of the National Sports Meet.”

“I know, boss.”

“That guy, no, that boss, isn’t just anyone. Even with tens of us, we probably won’t be able to bring him down. From the start, if you aren’t a professional boxer, you won’t even be his match. You call the guys, and you are just prepping for mourning.”

Park Du-Sik remembered Kang Chul-In’s fighting skills, and shook his head.

“Boss, but we have a face to maintain...”

“Why, because your pride is hurt so you will go at him again?”

“It’s... it’s not that... but...”

“Leave it. Why dance with knives just to clean up after the CEO?”

Although his pride was hurt, Park Du-Sik was not stupid enough to retaliate because of an incident like this.

“For some reason, I don’t have a bad feeling about this one.”

Park Du-Sik looked thoughtful for once.

“I don’t know if we can believe him, but if he pays a 100 thousand for an errand, it is better than cleaning up after a couple of newly rich kids.”

“Boss! You believe him? He looks like a young little thing!”

“Hey, you stupid idiot!”

Park Du-Sik roared.

“You, did you ever meet someone who used his fists that well and had that much guts? He isn’t just anyone, even with just a glance. Even if you waved a branding iron in front of his face, he would not have blinked an eye.”

“That’s true.”

“You will survive as a gangster with an eye for people. Fists? Don’t be stupid. Like that boss said, gangsters these days have no fun. You throw around punches and fool around in these times, and you will go in and out of school collecting more and more stars.”

“We won’t lose anything anyway, so let’s just wait. Let’s wait and see, it won’t be too late for a decision then. First, we should see if he brings the 20 thousand in three days.”

And the eyes of Park Du-Sik shined sharply.

At the same time.

Kang Chul-In who had gone in a taxi had been quietly heading to his studio apartment.

‘Finding Kwak Jung has been done for now... and now I need to focus on exercise with the remaining time.’

It was crucial to train the body with the Great Summoning ahead. Pangaea was a different world than earth. There were all sorts of dangerous monsters all over, and there were no laws governing the lands. To prepare for any situation, it was necessary to build strength and power.

‘I also should get a gym membership. Wait... how much is in my bank account?’

To build muscle in a short amount of time, one-on-one personal training was needed

from a good trainer. And to get a trainer, one needed quite a bit of money, so Kang Chul-In checked his bank account with his smartphone app.

‘c.r.a.p.’

There was no money.

‘I can’t even give those kids the money upfront.’

Forget the \$20,000, there was barely enough for \$2,000. It wouldn’t even be enough to maintain dignity as a Grand Sovereign.

‘I’ll need to borrow some.’

Kang Chul-In, even as he saw his empty bank account, was calm.

It was nothing, to get a private loan. He would be filthy rich in 3-4 months.

# Chapter 7

## The Great Summoning, again!

Kang Chul-In got the 100 thousand by using all means. Aside from the 20,000 he had borrowed from the bank, the interest for all the rest was 34.9% per year (or even more), but Kang Chul-In was not afraid of the interest. It was recklessness stemming from confidence.

“Here is the upfront payment of 20,000. I put in 5,000 more so eat a meal with your subordinates.”

And as promised, Kang Chul-In who had come to Park Du-Sik’s office, placed 20,000 in cash on top of a desk, and signed the contract.

“You didn’t have to do this much... haha”

Park Du-Sik who was on the fence about trusting Kang Chul-In for the last three days rubbed his hands together smiling when he saw Kang Chul-In and his cool spending habits.

“Report to me if you have anything.”

“Yes, boss.”

“Oh, and...”

“Yes?”

“Can you get me a car?”

“A car, sir?”

“From what I know, you guys do some used car dealings as well?”

“Ah, that... I don’t have enough to deal used cars because as you know, we are small, but I can ask around for you.”

After hearing what Park Du-sik had to say, Kang Chul-In thought for a while, and spoke.

“Can you find a car that I can have starting tonight? Rent, lease, used, it doesn’t matter. I’ll need it 3 months at most anyways.”

He did need a car.

He was a Grand Sovereign, after all, and it was uncomfortable for him to use public transportation like buses or the train.

“What kind of car..”

“A coupe.”

Kang Chul-In answered.

“I would like a Chevrolet Corvette or Ford Mustang. The price doesn’t matter—around that price is fine. Again, I won’t be using it for long.”

Because his budget was limited still, he chose muscle cars like Corvettes and Mustangs.

“I will find out right away.”

Park Du-Sik took his smartphone out right away, and spoke on the phone for about 10 minutes.

“They will bring a Mustang right away. It is a rental, but they need a down payment of about 10% because it is a foreign car.”

“Hey, you.”

Kang Chul-In called Oh Gw.a.n.g-Pil upon hearing about the down payment.

“Yes, yes?”

Oh Gw.a.n.g-Pil, who almost had his chin broken by Kang Chul-In’s hook, hesitated and headed towards Kang Chul-In with a slightly frightened expression.

“Don’t be scared. I won’t hit you.”

“Yes, yes. Thank... thank you!”

“Go get my money. The pa.s.sword is 4581.”

Kang Chul-In handed Oh Gw.a.n.g-Pil his card.

“How, how much do I withdraw?”

Oh Gw.a.n.g-Pil asked, relieved that Kang Chul-In would not hit him.

“Two.”

“Two dollars?”

Oh Kw.a.n.g-Pil made a stupid expression.

“Du-Sik, right?”

Kang Chul-In looked to Park Du-Sik.

“Are all your guys like this?”

“I’m, I’m sorry.”

Park Du-Sik’s face was red as he bowed his head in embarra.s.sment.

“Hey, you stupid idiot!”

Park Du-Sik roared as he kicked Oh Kw.a.n.g-Pil’s large, thick b.u.t.t.

“Urgh!”

“Why are you still here! Go bring the money!”

“It’s... it’s... the amount...”

“You think the big boss would ask you to withdraw 2 dollars? Huh? You stupid idiot!”

Park Du-Sik had begun to call Kang Chul-In big boss.

“I... I will go right away!”

Oh Kw.a.n.g-Pil went out of the office like a boar who had been burned after being slapped multiple times. Both, in a social setting and in a gang, it is tiring to deal with those who don't have any sense.

“10%... If it is a Mustang, the down payment would probably be about 8-9000, and the monthly rate would be right under 1000?”

“Yes, boss. It probably will be around that much.”

“You take care of the insurance and stuff as well, and then with the rest, split it in half with the one bringing the car and yourself.”

“Rea... really?”

Park Du-Sik's eyes widened. Who would have thought that Kang Chul-In would be this generous?

“Don't make me say it twice.”

“Yes, boss!”

Kang Chul-In with that, ended his deal with Park Du-Sik.

‘Kwak Jung... for right now, this is the end. If there are connections between us, I would be able to find you.’

Of course, even if it wasn't meant to be, he did not have any intentions of giving up on Kwak Jung either.

If it wasn't meant to be?

You can make it meant to be.

He was going to use any means necessary to have Kwak Jung work under him. That was the style and way of the Grand Sovereign, Kang Chul-In.

“Then, report to me once every two weeks. I will see you after three months.”

“Yes, boss. Drive carefully!”

Kang Chul-In left Park Du-Sik’s office in his Mustang.

The Mustang, a symbol of the American muscle car with a V8 engine, seemed to flaunt its power as the engine revved.

‘Not bad.’

Although it could not give him the satisfaction of the Bugatti Veyron that he rode in his past life, the American muscle car had its charms.

Kang Chul-In who had inquired about the whereabouts of Kwak Jung to Park Du-Sik and his gang, focused only on exercise and working out as he waited for the Great Summoning.

Pangaea was a land where dangerous monsters roamed all around, and to survive in such a place, it was necessary to build strength.

And like that, two months pa.s.sed... and it was December 24th, 2020, one day before the great summoning. And, Kang Chul-In went to bed that night with a composed, calm nature. ‘Calling’, the dream that will lead everyone to Pangaea, would come to him when he fell asleep.

‘Father.’

Just before he fell asleep, Kang Chul-In thought of his father who had pa.s.sed away.

Usually, the person that he trusted most would appear in the ‘calling’; whether it was a G.o.d or human. In Kang Chul-in’s case, his late father had appeared and led him to the land mark. Perhaps, his late father would appear in his dream again after he fell asleep. As he was thinking so, his eyes slowly closed.

— I don’t have to say anything, right?

Surprisingly, it was not his father who had appeared in the ‘calling’.

— I’ll just be tired if I say it, do it well.

It was himself, the Grand Sovereign Kang Chul-In, fully equipped with the epic item

'Vali's Burning Vengeance Armor Set' and the sword Fragarach.

"I really do all sorts of things."

The present Kang Chul-In snorted.

The one he trusted and believed in the most, was himself. It was funny.

—You will not fail this time?

The past Kang Chul-In asked.

"Of course."

The present Kang Chul-In answered with a faint smile.

There is no such thing as two failures.

If he fails again after returning, he would be nothing more but the most powerless Sovereign throughout history.

Next morning.

30 thousand people from around the world, and future travelers to a different dimension, began to search for their landmarks.

This was a silent change.

The superpower nations that surveilled the entire world through satellites, as well as the Echelon (A surveillance system that wiretaps the entire world under the control of England and the United States) Network, would also not recognize the signs of the impending great summoning.

Only Kang Chul-In would see what was to come.

Kang Chul-In, after waking up, got in his Mustang and headed towards the 63 building, one of Seoul's landmarks. He could have looked for other landmarks, but he went to the 63 building in case of any random variables. Like the b.u.t.erfly effect, a small insignificant thing could twist the determined future. And, he did not want the misfortune of not getting his Sovereign class because he had gone to a different

landmark than in his previous life.

(Djinn – The 63 building is called so, because it has 63 floors)

Kang Chul-In paced around in front of the 63 Building solemnly, and waited for the great summoning.

5 minutes... 4 minutes... and 1 minute.

As it grew closer to 10 in the morning, the clear skies began to fill with storm clouds.

Flas.h.!.+

There was a flash of light as lightning fell from the sky.

Cras.h.!.+

And there followed thunder that seemed to rip one's ears and shook the earth.

And then...

From the sky, a golden aurora fell and shone on Kang Chul-In and a few others.

'It's coming!'

Compared to others who were screaming or falling to the ground, Kang Chul-In received the light calmly.

There was no reason to be surprised.

He had already experienced the Great Summoning before, and had already risen to the status of Grand Sovereign once, so it didn't make sense for him to crumble without dignity.

Swish...!!

Those who got hit by the golden light disintegrated into particles and disappeared like smoke. Kang Chul-In was no exception. He also disintegrated into particles and disappeared. It was the entering in to Pangaea, the Great Summoning.

Shortly after, in Kang Chul-In's line of vision, a message popped up.

[Welcome to Pangaea.] And the next message...

[Congratulations! You have been appointed to the Sovereign Cla.s.s.] It was as expected.

# Chapter 8

## Akan, the G.o.d's Representative

While the 30,000 dimension travelers, who were scattered all over the world, metastasized throughout Pangaea, 300 true dimension travelers of the Sovereign class opened their eyes in a different location. It was a large hall bigger than most gyms. And, on the ceiling was a grand chandelier and shining floors. The wall was covered with life murals and crowned portraits of people all with dark, black hair.

“What, what is this?”

“Where is this!”

“I was... at the Madison Square Garden!”

Those who had been appointed Sovereign unexpectedly were flustered, all talking in their respective languages.

“Where is this! Was the dream true...! Allahu akbar!”

“Oh my G.o.d!”

There were also those who called out for their G.o.ds (that probably appeared in their ‘calling’). As everyone called out in confusion, one man with crossed arms was slowly scanning his surroundings amidst the chaos.

‘It is the same. Nothing is different.’

It was he, Kang Chul-In, former Grand Sovereign.

‘I see a few familiar faces.’

Kang Chul-In did not know all 300 Sovereigns that had gathered in the hall, but he could recognize a few familiar faces. And amongst them were a couple who he had killed himself. But... someone called his name.

“Chul-In?”

When he turned his head, a pure looking Asian woman was looking at him with wide eyes. It was Lee Chae-Lin, the employee at M Entertainment.

‘Gosh, she was a Sovereign too.’

Kang Chul-In who had recognized Lee Chae-Lin was astounded that that woman had also become a Sovereign. It was something he had not known in the past.

“You are Chul-In, right?”

“Yes, I am.”

“I was worried! What happened? No, more importantly, where is this? Do you know, Chul-In?”

Lee Chae-Lin didn’t seem like she was in her right mind.

That was understandable, because aside from Kang Chul-In who knew everything, this was a different world that was beyond one’s imagination.

“Just wait and see.”

Kang Chul-In did not pretend to not know.

“Huh? Chul-In, what do you mean?”

“There he is. If you listen well to what he is saying, you’ll get the gist of it. Of course, it won’t seem real anyways.”

Kang Chul-In pointed at the platform that was at the middle of the hall.

Crack!

There were sparks from some current, and shortly a purple portal emerged.

[Welcome, Sovereigns.]

The being who had come through the portal was not human, but had a human-like

figure and was wrapped in golden light.

[I am Akan, the G.o.d's Representative who oversees this world and who will oversee you.]

Akan's voice vibrated and filled the room, as if it was under the echo effect.

"Oversee?"

"G.o.d's Representative?"

"What are you saying!"

A few Sovereigns exclaimed at Akan's words.

[Silence!]

Boom!

Akan's voice roared as if thunder had hit.

Silence filled the hall immediately.

Only Kang Chul-In remained composed with his arms still crossed.

'There is no point complaining at him.'

Kang Chul-In knew well of Akan, the G.o.d's Representative and his role. Akan was to put in gaming terms, an operator or a NPC of sorts, and could not be touched by any means. He was not an opponent that could be shaken.

[I know that you are all confused and puzzled. But!]

Akan spoke with power.

[Your role right now is to listen, and nothing more. Please quietly listen well to what I am about to say.]

It meant that he was going to have a one-sided communication, but there was no one who opposed. There was an unimaginable sense of dominance in Akan's words.

[You have been called the G.o.d as a Sovereign, the most prestigious level of dimension traveler traveling between Earth and Pangaea.]

Akan began his explanation.

[A Sovereign status means that you will be managing your respective areas of land. From this moment forward, you will expand your lands to control Pangaea and reign supreme.]

The Sovereigns began to listen carefully.

However, Kang Chul-In was different.

‘Rothschild, where is this b.a.s.t.a.r.d?’

Kang Chul-In was half-heartedly listening to Akan’s words as he moved face to face, searching for a familiar one. Akan’s words were not new to Kang Chul-In, and was rather boring.

‘It’s hard to find him.’

He had looked carefully at the 300 faces, but he could not see Alex Rothschild. It seemed as if he was farther away.

[From this moment on, all your actions and decisions will be recorded onto a system and will be a.n.a.lyzed for the rise and fall of Sovereign points. Please proceed with wisdom and caution.]

Akan’s explanations continued for a while longer while Kang Chul-In focused on other things.

To summarize Akan’s explanations,

All Sovereigns will manage one area of land respectively. The Sovereigns’ actions will be recorded in points. There will be a yearly gathering of Sovereigns and the 10 Sovereigns with the most points will be appointed to the position of ‘Grand Sovereign’ and will have additional benefits and power. To gain more points, it will be favorable to win and conquer in war with other Sovereigns.And...

[There will be some who have still not fully grasped what is going on. I understand.

Earth is not a place where supernatural events occur. However...]

Akan spoke clearly so all 300 Sovereigns could understand.

[Pangaea is not a false reality. It is reality. Therefore, death in Pangaea...]

Gulp.

Someone swallowing echoed in the hall.

[Has the same meaning as dying on Earth. Whether you die in Pangaea or in Earth, the fact that you died does not change. Please be mindful of this fact, and do not waste your life in vain.]

Horror overcame the faces of the Sovereigns in hearing Akan's words.

However, Akan quickly continued, as if he could care less about their responses.

[More information will be given in detail later by your advisors, so please learn slowly. Now... it is time to choose your lands.]

And hundreds of models appeared when Akan waved his hands in the air.

[The models that have appeared are smaller versions of lands that you will get to rule. Currently, there is ten thousand gold in your inventory. With that gold, you will need to choose and purchase the land that you wish. When you purchase your land, you will be automatically transported to Pangaea. Well, then, best of luck to all of you.]

Akan, with those words, left in the portal in which he came. And the portal disappeared along with Akan, and the Sovereigns were left in the large hall.

"What... what is this?"

"Darn! What a strange dream."

"What kind of irresponsible b.a.s.t.a.r.d is that!"

As soon as Akan left, the hall filled with complaints and protests from Sovereigns who could not believe what was happening to them. It was like a flea market.

'Every single thing is the same.'

Kang Chul-In was reminded again that he had been rebirthed.

"Chul-In..."

And in that moment, Lee Chae-Lin spoke to him.

"I don't know what is happening. What am I supposed to do?"

Kang Chul-In thought for a moment and spoke.

"Like Akan said, you need to choose your land."

"I really don't understand..."

"Even if you asked me, you will not get an answer."

"Excuse me?"

"There is a saying 'Seeing is believing.' It will be faster for you to experience it for yourself." Kang Chul-In treated Lee Chae-Lin coldly.

'I could help her... but then I will be adding more unexpected variables. I will need to be careful with my words.'

If he were to help Lee Chae-Lin in choosing her land, it was more likely for her to choose a different land than what she would have chosen before. Then, it might change the determined future, so he decided to not say anything else. Of course, the future had begun to s.h.i.+ft already, but if a big frame s.h.i.+fted, it would be bad. It would be right to not do anything different than before.

"First, let's move separately. We can talk in detail when we return to earth."

With those words, Kang Chul-In moved towards the models to choose his land.

"Chul-In..."

Lee Chae-Lin looked as if she was going to cry as she stared at the back of Kang Chul-In.

Kang Chul-In immediately went to select his land.

'I need a mobile fortress. It would be nice if it is an airborne city.'

For Kang Chul-In who had to suffer because of Alex Rothschild's mobile fortress, his preference for a mobile land was understandable. Therefore, he would not choose Valhalla, his past headquarters. In the war between Sovereigns, the 'mobility of land' was not just a strategy but a tactical card and advantage. His teeth still clenched when he remembered how the entire Cyamodus invaded Valhalla when he met his end.

And that was not the end.

He had tried multiple times to take out Rothschild, but he had lost him multiple times because the mobile headquarters had escaped with great speed. If Kang Chul-In had a mobile fortress, he would have been able to kill Rothschild earlier, and he would not have fallen from the alliance of Baldur and Gullveig.

His pride would have hurt, but he could have escaped.

If Rothschild had a tactical advantage only because of his mobility, he would teach Rothschild a lesson by choosing an airborne fortress.

'Wait... this looks different.'

Kang Chul-In, who was looking carefully at over 900 models stopped at a land that was atop a whale's back. And information about the land appeared after a few sparks appeared in the air.

-[Ura.n.u.s]

Type: Airborne city

Tendency: Conquest

Location: Southern Part, Alpheon province

Description: Land atop the back of a flying whale, Ura.n.u.s

Ability: Tactical weapon, Hydro Beam

Price: 8,000 Gold

'Hydro Beam... Is that the energy cannon that completes quickly?'

The lands that the Sovereigns could buy had one or two special abilities and were limited to these, so he needed to decide carefully.

It was then.

Someone spoke to him as he was looking at the lands.

"Can you by any chance... tell me how you got the information to pop up?"

Kang Chul-In turned his head and looked to the person who had spoke to him. And that person was...

# Chapter 9

## Reunion with the enemy

Alex, Alex Rothschild. It was the Grand Sovereign who had pierced Kang Chul-In's heart and cut off his head.

'His face is still sickening, even for the second time.'

Kang Chul-In evaluated his enemy's face like this, the moment he faced him.

Alex Rothschild.

Full name was Alexander Mayer von Rothschild.

He was the descendant of the Rothschild family, well known in the finance world as a powerhouse. Rothschild was the top 0.01% of society as a Hollywood celebrity and as part of an extremely wealthy family. And it was ironic that he had fought battles upon battles and was on the brink of death countless of times because of Kang Chul-In, a commoner from South Korea.

'If it was up to me, I want to kill him right here... but Akan will not just watch.'

Kang Chul-In, with all he had, held in the burning desire to twist Alex Rothschild's neck on the spot. Akan had disappeared from sight, but Kang Chul-In knew that he would be watching from somewhere. And there were also a lot of eyes on them. He could not murder in front of 298 people, excluding himself and Rothschild. Although Kang Chul-In was not one to worry about others' opinions of him, there was a right time for everything.

'Revenge is a dish best served cold.'

Kang Chul-In remembered the wise saying regarding revenge, and sharpened his knives quietly in his heart. It was not wise to act rashly before it was the right time anyways. Revenge was the best when one could plan every detail meticulously and was able to detach all humane emotion. It would be more fun to impose the maximum torture and humiliation as well.

“Excuse me... can you speak English?”

Rothschild who was unaware of Kang Chul-In’s thoughts smiled kindly at him and carefully asked.

‘I feel like throwing up.’

As Kang Chul-In looked at the face of Rothschild that was filled with pretense, he felt himself wanting to vomit. Although Rothschild acted like the definition of a gentleman and that he worked for the benefit of the majority, in the inside, he was ruthless, cruel, and vile. Although it seemed like he was conversing with Kang Chul-In with no motive, he would have previously calculated this very moment. Rothschild, in the mind of Kang Chul-In was like himself, if not crueler. Kang Chul-In had actually found out about a couple of evil deeds that Rothschild had committed in secret. It was a sort of hatred of one’s kind. Kang Chul-In had thought of Rothschild like himself and knew about his true self— therefore he despised him. If Rothschild had admitted his wrongdoings maybe the outcome would have been different, but it was not so, and therefore Kang Chul-In hated this descendant of the rich family.

“You can’t speak English? Chinese? j.a.panese?”

Rothschild asked again.

“Korea.”

Kang Chul-In answered.

“Ah...!”

Rothschild exclaimed, as if he realized something amazing.

He was able to understand.

In Pangaea, language barriers did not exist. In whatever language one spoke, it was understood 100%.

“I can hear it. Your words, and that person’s words over there.”

Rothschild pointed at the person talking loudly in Arabic. The Arabian was calling for Allah and was busy practicing his religion.

“This situation is amazing! assuming that it isn’t a dream, of course!”

Rothschild was amazed.

“It would be difficult if it was a dream.”

“Excuse me?”

“No, nothing.”

Kang Chul-In changed the subject from his unconscious answer.

‘Yes, if it was a dream, that would be difficult. Yes, it would. I need to kill you.’

As Kang Chul-In thought, Rothschild spoke again.

“If it isn’t too much to ask, can you tell me how you got the information to pop up like that?”

“It is not hard. Just look at it for 2, 3 seconds and it will open on its own.”

“Ah, I see!”

“If you got it, get lost.”

“It makes me nauseous looking at your face.”

In Kang Chul-In’s unexpected violent language, Rothschild’s face hardened and his eyes flared with rage. Kang Chul-In did not fail to take note of that brief moment. However, the face quickly disappeared and the polite person’s face returned.

“You are overstepping your boundaries.”

Rothschild’s face as he said these words were calm and collected. He was acting like a gentleman and not a rich heir of a powerful family.

“What is overstepping is your social managing. It would be right to frown a little as a human being if you had something bad said to you. Isn’t that so, Alex Rothschild?”

Rothschild was taken aback hearing his name from an unfamiliar Asian man.

“Do you know me?”

“Any civilized person would have seen your face at least once. Entertainment reporters are busy writing every little thing you do.”

It was true.

Alex Rothschild appeared very often on the media outlets for someone with the Rothschild family name. Dating a rich heiress, friends.h.i.+p with an actor from a pro-wrestling background, charity benefits gathering hundreds of thousands of dollars... 24-year-old Rothschild was known not only in America but the whole world.

“Ah, that might be so. Unintentionally...”

“What do you mean unintentionally? It’s probably is a foundation for you to get your feet into the movie industry. Aren’t you going to buy out 20th Century Fox?”

Rothschild was definitely taken aback this time.

Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation, as mentioned by Kang Chul-In, was a major film production company and the buyout deal was kept strictly confidential to the public or media. And this young Asian man had known.

“There is no such thing as a perfect secret.”

Kang Chul-In did not give Rothschild a chance to protest.

“Whether it is business secrets, or personality, I believe that all will be exposed at some point. What do you think?”

Rothschild, still could not come to his senses, and kept quiet as if mute.

Who in the world was this man?

‘Knowing me, sure... but how did he know about the buyout deal with 20th Fox... that aside, his words bare teeth. As if he knows me well... who is he? Who are you?’

Rothschild ransacked his smart brain, the brain smart enough to major in business at Harvard, to find a point of contact with this unfamiliar Asian man.

‘Where...!’

There was no way he could get an answer.

Kang Chul-In had come from the past, and naturally, Rothschild could not find a connecting strand between the two of them.

‘Spinning your brain again.’

Kang Chul-In, looking at Rothschild, had the devil’s smile on his face.

“Well then, keep on thinking. I will be choosing my land like Akan told us to do.”

Kang Chul-In, grinning widely to mock Rothschild, moved towards the models.

“Wait! Who are you!”

Rothschild called for him, but Kang Chul-In did not even look back.

‘Your smart little brain, think all you want. You won’t even be able to step on my shadow.’

A smile formed on the face of Kang Chul-In as his back faced Rothschild.

This was enough for today.

If he was to attack Rothschild who knew nothing, it would bring him no satisfaction. The revenge would not materialize.

‘Just wait. I will crush you slowly.’

Kang Chul-In pledged his revenge.

Kang Chul-In with Rothschild behind him, went through the trouble of looking at all 900 models carefully. It was a wise and clever choice. The land that they were to choose in the hall was land that they would spend the rest of their life growing and living together. It was important to be cautious and sure since it could not be changed.

Many lands were up for candidacy.

-[Stingray]

Type: Airborne city

Tendency: Conquest

Location: Southeast, Hyperion Province

Description: land atop the back of the flying stingray

Ability: Tactical weapon, Venom Gale

Price: 8,700 gold

The Stingray land was able to release a blood poison called Venom Gale from its long tail and seemed very powerful. Biochemical attacks, both on Earth and Pangaea, had great destructive power. However, Kang Chul-In did not make the mistake of choosing his land rashly.

'It is tempting... but Ura.n.u.s and Stingray, I can't.'

Whale's back and Stingray's back. It got to him that both were lands that were on a living organism. Land atop a living thing was difficult. Even if it is a magical creature, it is living. It could get sick, or die during battle. Also, he would need to feed it and worry about defecation as well.

It was a big responsibility and work to raise a cat or a dog, but to raise a giant animal carrying land would require immense food and work. Therefore, he eliminated lands dependent on living organisms from his list. For these reasons, Simurgh, Ziz, and other lands atop animals were dropped from Kang Chul-In's selection. It was not an easy thing to do to look at 900 lands while weaving through 300 Sovereigns, but Kang Chul-In slowly looked at the lands with patience. Meanwhile, Sovereigns who had already chosen their lands were disappearing one by one. They had purchased their lands and were transported to Pangaea. Alex Rothschild also was nowhere to be seen, and Kang Chul-In guessed he had chosen his mobile fortress, Cyamodus.

'It would be better to be left alone.'

Kang Chul-In decided to just take his time in purchasing his land. To decrease chances of unforeseen variables, it was better to not disturb other Sovereign's lands anyways.

The future changed the moment he had made up his mind to choose an Airborne city instead of Valhalla, so for Kang Chul-In, it was an inevitable thing. In order to make up for the lost s.p.a.ce, he would need to run all over Pangaea. While Kang Chul-In was taking his time, a few familiar faces pa.s.sed him. From Albrecht Wilhelm, the Grand Sovereign who was the leader of the Gullveig Union to the dirty traitor Aleister (Kang Chul-In who spotted him slyly pushed him to the ground after he b.u.mped shoulders), and the Grand Sovereign Dorian Explorer who was more focused on exploring for ruins and monuments than war—there were many. It was a new experience.

While he was taking his time looking at the other Sovereigns' land selections, most had already been transported to Pangaea and in the great hall, only two remained: himself and a reddish-brown haired woman.

'Hecate.'

Kang Chul-In recognized the woman right away.

From Eastern Europe.

The woman who preferred the nickname Hecate over her given name. She was the Grand Sovereign who had not betrayed Kang Chul-In to the end. Hecate was contemplating between her future land Temeraire and Helios, a land that was more of a chariot pulled by four Pegasus.

'Temeraire is perfect for Hecate.'

Kang Chul-In smiled, remembering Hecate who reigned over Temeraire.

-[Temeraire]

Type: Airborne City

Tendency: Conquest

Location: Western part of Pangea, Countach province

Description: Land made in the form of a boat using Magic Spell-tech

Skill: Tactical weapon, Fire

Price: 9,500 gold

Temeraire was expensive but it was in the formation of a s.h.i.+p with 74 cannons, and it had unimaginable fire-power.

'I need to intervene.'

Kang Chul-In could not leave his future ally to choose a worthless land like Helios. If she was to choose Helios, it would come at a great loss for him.

"A s.h.i.+p seems to suit you."

Kang Chul-In said.

"Right?"

Hecate was cool and finical, and she answered without hesitation even when a stranger talked to her.

"I like it."

Hecate nodded and chose Temeraire without hesitation, disappearing out of Kang Chul-In's sight.

'Now I just need to choose.'

It was Kang Chul-In's turn.

About 600 lands remained, excluding the 299 lands and Valhalla that he had chosen previously.

'Let's choose slowly.'

Kang Chul-In looked at the lands slowly. It was repet.i.tive, but Kang Chul-In did not seem impatient or bothered. It was said that 'Perseverance is sour, fruit is sweet.' Who knows? He could buy a land that other Sovereigns could slap their knees about.

# Chapter 10

## The best land chosen

Choosing a land was like using a filter bed, filtering through again and again. The land qualifications that Kang Chul-In wanted was the following:

Have a floating skill Not dependent on a living organism The starting point not be within Gullveig or Baldur Have a specialized ability like the Fire from Temeraire or Venom Gale from the Stingray It was a picky list, but even if he could give up the fourth; the first, second, and third were not negotiable, and therefore Kang Chul-In had to carefully look at the remaining 600 lands.

‘No, not this one either.’

Kang Chul-In, who was alone, looked endlessly. Desdemona, Cube, Angra Mainyu, Svarog, and more lands caught his eye. However, no land grabbed his attention and gave him the assurance that he was looking for. It was very difficult for him to find any land that fulfilled all his qualifications.

‘There has to be at least one. There is still a hundred left.’

Kang Chul-In reminded himself to be patient over and over again, and continued to search. However, by chance, his eyes lingered on a plain fortress.

‘Why does this seem so plain?’

It was a fortress with no outstanding characteristic. It was so plain that even in the 21st century, one could find similar fortresses all over Europe. It seemed as if it would have no other skill, or abilities, and be just the fortress itself.

‘Pfft. Whoever G.o.d is, he isn’t too bright. Does he think marketing is nothing? Who will choose a land that looks like this?’

Kang Chul-In cursed at the G.o.d who had brought him through the Great Summoning.

‘So, he doesn’t care whether this is sold or not? Seems stupider than the ‘marketing is

useless' idea. Well I guess since he is G.o.d, he doesn't care anyways.'

Well, what is the use for a G.o.d to get so fired up over selling land. He snorted and thought the G.o.d as a 'marketing is useless' believer and pa.s.sed the model of the land. No, he was about to pa.s.s it.

'No, let's not pa.s.s it.'

Kang Chul-In stopped, just in case. There was a saying, 'The beacon does not s.h.i.+ne on its own base' and 'Look before you leap'. Who knows? This land might be a jewel that has immense skill and power. Kang Chul-In decided to look carefully at this plain fortress. Looking at it for 2,3 seconds, the description window popped up. The land's name was the Sky Fortress, Laputa.

Kang Chul-In who had checked the description of Laputa was more surprised than he had ever been since he had rebirthed. It was said, 'True treasure will find its owner.' Like the Excalibur stuck in the rock waiting for King Arthur, or like the Qinggang Sword that was given to Ha Hu-Eun by Cao Cao, but was ultimately owned by Jo Ja-Ryong.

He was just going to pa.s.s by the land, but if he had, then he would have regretted it immensely. It was said to 'paddle when water came in'—looking carefully and not pa.s.sing by a plain fortress was the once-in-a-lifetime chance given to him. It seemed as though the plain appearance was the G.o.d's test or trick.

-[Sky Fortress, Laputa]

Type: Airborne City

Tendency: Multipurpose

Location: Southwest Pangaea, Pandemonium Province

Description: Ancient Empire Fortress applied with advanced magic

Skill: Cloaking, Self-Healing System

Additional Options: Cosmic Force, a multipurpose magic engineering satellite

Price: 9,800 gold

‘Did a land like this exist?’

The aspect of the Fortress that surprised Kang Chul-In was the Cosmic Force, a multipurpose magic engineering satellite.

Artificial satellite.

He did not think an artificial satellite would exist in Pangaea. It was found on Earth, where science and engineering was extremely advanced due to their lack of supernatural powers like magic. It was a surprising fact for even Kang Chul-In, who had experienced all sorts of things in Pangaea. To be honest, Spell- Tech, a combination of Spell and Tech was commonly found. Regular dimension travelers, commonly called ‘Hunters’ who hunted for monsters may not have known, but Grand Sovereigns would have guessed that the past Pangaea was well known for their magic.

But artificial satellites!

What an amazing thing!

“It’s this one. I have finally found my land.”

The Sky Fortress Laputa fulfilled almost all of Kang Chul-In’s qualifications perfectly. First, it fulfilled the first qualification of being airborne, while not being dependent on a living organism. Secondly, it was far from the future Gullveig and Baldur lands. If it was the Southwest Pandemonium province, it was the outermost edges of Pangaea.

‘Pandemonium. It is perfect for a conquest Sovereign like me.’

The Devil’s Land, a paradise for war-crazed people. Pandemonium, the start of Laputa did not have a quiet day even before Ragnarok due to war amongst the Sovereigns. It was to a point where other Sovereigns named it the paradise of the war-crazed. It was a perfectly isolated league. They fought amongst each other so much that from the Sovereigns who had chosen land near Pandemonium, there was not one Grand Sovereign. Like this, Pandemonium was a province of great competition where not one triumphed over the other. Instead of building their land, they were busy going to war with each other, leaving themselves no time to fatten their assets.

‘I will need to bring peace and calm to Pandemonium and make it my headquarters. Then, I will head to Valhalla as soon as I can, and realign the deviated future.’

In Kang Chul-In's head, future plans were already underway.

'The location is good. If something goes wrong, defense is also advantageous to us.'

Pandemonium was also extremely far from the mainland in addition to being a mountainous range with high, dangerous cliffs—giving him the ability to defend his headquarters effectively in case he was defeated in the mainland.

Everything was perfect.

The cloaking skill probably allowed for the land to be completely hidden or disguised, meaning the land's covert activities would be guaranteed. Concealment was a useful option for both defense and surprise attacks. It was right to call the tendency as multipurpose, seeing that it was advantageous in both offensive and defensive strategies. And the Self-Healing system meant exactly that: the land will heal itself in the destructed area, as if the land itself was alive!

'Why hadn't I chosen a land like this in the past?'

Kang Chul-In thought of the past when he had chosen his land rashly and smiled bitterly. Valhalla, which he had chosen with no other apparent reason but its cheap price had, until the end, brought about his downfall. If he had mobility, he would not have gone through the humiliation of losing his head at the hands of Rothschild.

"This is my land."

Kang Chul-In, who had finally found his land mumbled and pressed the buy b.u.t.ton with no hesitation.

There was no need to contemplate, nor look further.

The fact that the land fulfilled all his qualifications was one thing, but he was also curious of what the 'Cosmic Force' skill would be. He wanted to see the land as soon as possible for himself. Could it be used for military force as well?

Would things like Orbital Bombardment, shooting lasers and firepower through satellite be possible? Even Earth in the year 2020, where technology was extremely advanced, Orbital Bombardment was only possible in books or movies. If not even that, it might be possible to lead the weapon made specially through the Cosmic Force directly to the enemy's land. It would be like working the ICBM (the Missile in

Pangaea).

There was no way to know as of right now, but if he was to methodically grow his land, he would be able to know how to use and make use of Cosmic Force.

[Will you purchase Laputa with 9,800 gold? Yes or No]

A notice requiring a final decision flashed.

[Yes]

Kang Chul-In pressed the buy b.u.t.ton.

[Congratulations! You have purchased the Sky Fortress, Laputa!]

The conventional message congratulating the land purchase appeared and disappeared, followed by a message notifying transfer into Pangaea.

[Sovereign Kang Chul-In, transferring to Pangaea. Dimension leap in 5... 4... 3... 2... 1...]

Kang Chul-In's body broke into particles and disappeared. He had been transported into Pangaea like the other Sovereigns who had bought their land!

[Dimension Leap Complete!] [Sovereign Exclusive Level-Up System On!] [Tutorial Quest Present!] [Welcome to Pangaea.]

Many different phrases formed in front of him, and the scenery changed.

“For a long time, truly for a long time, I have been waiting, my forever Sovereign.”

There was someone who was greeting Kang Chul-In who had opened his eyes in the heart of the Sky Fortress in Pangaea.

She was kneeling in one knee and bowing down to Kang Chul-In, revealing her full b.r.e.a.s.t.s in an extremely short turtleneck dress and with strict looking plastic rimmed gla.s.ses hanging on the tip of her nose.

“I am your advisor who will serve and remain loyal to you until my last breath, Lucia Headmistress.”

# Chapter 11

## Starting a new post at Laputa

'Advisors seem to vary from land to land.'

Kang Chul-In looked at Lucia and thought of his old advisor Alfred, the vampire butler.

"My lord... caution...!"

"Your Alfred is amazed by your strength and prowess!"

"You are getting older, so isn't it time for you to start looking for a wife?"

"It is this Alfred's wish to see your children! Please get married before this old vampire dies!"

Alfred, for a vampire had a 70-year-old man's face, but he was extremely good at his job in assisting Kang Chul-In. Also, usually he was a professional like no other, but he knew how to scold Kang Chul-In for his rashness or to nag at him like a mother-in-law.

'Alfred.'

Kang Chul-In was sad that he was to never meet Alfred again and thought of the words that he had said to Alfred.

"Do not act rashly and do not tremble with fear. Maintain your dignity. We have not lost yet."

"We may lose today, but not next time."

It was.

Before the end of Valhalla, Kang Chul-In had said those words and calmed down Alfred. That was not a lie. Although Valhalla had disappeared with the times into a history that never happened, Kang Chul-In remembered those times.

'Alfred, are you watching? If you can, if you can see me... wait for it. I will make those cowards pay for messing with Valhalla.'

Kang Chul-In promised and pledged to Alfred who had remained faithful and loyal to him until the end. This time around, he would crush Rothschild, unify Pangaea, and take possession of the glorious title of Emperor amongst the 10 Grand Sovereigns!

"My lord... Can you hear me, my Lord?"

The advisor Lucia, who did not know of Kang Chul-In's thoughts carefully spoke. It was obvious she was very worried she would displease him in any way.

"Ah, are you my advisor?"

Kang Chul-In finally turned his eyes towards Lucia.

"Yes, my Lord. My name is Lucia."

Lucia bowed towards Kang Chul-In again.

"Lucia... you don't seem like a humanoid, are you human?"

In Pangaea, there were other lifeforms that were cousins to humans. Primary examples would be Elf, Dark Elf, Vampire, Lycanthrope, Dwarf, Orc, Mermaid, devil, angel and a couple more that were fewer in number. Combined, there were about 20 different lifeforms. Those who were advisors to Sovereigns, or the NPC unit that came along with the land purchased, were always other lifeforms. However, Lucia did not have any characteristics of a lifeform that Kang Chul-In was aware of.

"No."

Lucia answered.

"Hm, not human?"

"Yes, my Lord. My roots are human, but my body was engineered as a magical design and therefore am not a humanoid, nor human."

"Mmm... I see."

It was somewhat complicated, but it seemed that she would be more powerful than a human woman, and therefore he nodded his head and waved his hand in the air.

“My Lord.”

“Speak.”

“With my limited intelligence, I believe that you are not from Pangaea, but from a foreign land far away.”

“You are right.”

It was mostly true, so Kang Chul-In nodded.

“Although you are the highest Sovereign, I think there are some things you have not been able to completely understand because you are from a different land. Therefore, this Lucia...”

“No.”

Kang Chul-In cut Lucia off.

“I know your role is to help the Sovereign adjust to the new surroundings, but I do not need it.”

“But...”

“You don’t need to worry. First, can you wait while I take care of some things?”

“Yes, my Lord.”

Lucia followed the wishes of Kang Chul-In, but had a worried expression on her face.

‘It is my job to help the Lord adjust to life in Pangaea, but he has turned it down... does he not like me?’

Lucia was restless in the thoughts that Kang Chul-In did not take a liking to her.

‘First, it would be good for me to check my information and the land’s current status.’

Kang Chul-In did not care about Lucia's restlessness, and moved to the tasks that he must complete.

"Open my information."

As soon as the order left his lips, an information screen showed his current descriptions.

-[My Information]

Name: Kang Chul-In /Rank: Sovereign/ Cla.s.s: Warrior

Score: 0 Point/ Complete Ranking: —

Level: Level 1 / Specialty: Conquest (B Grade) / Tendency: Conquest Sovereign

Kind: Human / Skill: Locked (Unlocked when Grand Sovereign status is obtained)

Spouse: — (Maximum of 7)

Charisma: 67 (B+)

HP: 200/200

Mana: 100/100

Physical Attack: 67

Magic Attack: 10

Physical Strength: 120 / Intelligence: 141

Agility: 110/ Spell Management: 20

Accuracy Rate: B+

Evasion Rate: B-

Fatal Blow: B-

Defensive Power: 9%/ Endurance: 3%

Finance: D- / Internal Affairs: E-

Resource: B- / Politics: C+

Diplomacy: C- /Command: A+

Attack: A+ / Defense: C-

Military Force: A+ / Charm: A+

Obtained Points: 0 (+5 Per level)

Remaining Points: 0

‘Not bad. Actually, much better than when I first started.’ The past level 1 Kang Chul-In and the current level 1 Kang Chul-In had a big difference in ability. It probably was due to the experiences of the past that had influenced him and allowed him to obtain a good score. Kang Chul-In’s abilities were definitely great. It was probably enough to place him in the top 1% of the 300 Sovereigns.

‘Okay, so the weaker areas will be filled naturally as my level rises, so there will be no need to worry greatly.’

Kang Chul-In smiled, pleased after checking his [My information] menu. Next, it was his turn to check the state of the Sky Fortress, Laputa. Kang Chul-In, who had high expectations about the land quickly ordered to see the information screen. A brief overview of Laputa appeared.

-[Sky Fortress, Laputa]

Type: Airborne City

Tendency: Multipurpose

Location: Southwest Pangaea, Pandemonium Province

Description: Ancient Empire Fortress applied with advanced magic

Skill: Cloaking, Self-Healing System

Additional Options: Cosmic Force, a multipurpose magic engineering satellite

Lord: Conquest Sovereign Kang Chul-In

Level: Level 1 (Maximum Growth to Level 30)

Status: Calm

Maneuver: Landed state (Gold, Mana, Fuel used for Take-Off)

Lowest speed: 5km/ h

Fastest speed: 100km/h (Fastest speed limit depending on level)

Basic Expense: 100 Gold/ 30 days (fluctuates depending on land condition)

Public Order: Very Good/ Financial Affairs: Weak / Food: A small shortage

Population: 500/500

Military Force: 100/100

Facilities: 11 / Durability: 1,000/1,000 / Loyalty: 90/90

'Everything seems to be okay other than the finance and food... I would need to take care of these as soon as possible.'

The finance and food was short because he had used 9,800 gold out of the 10,000 given to him in the beginning to purchase the land.

'I will need to fix these one by one... next, Cosmic Force.'

Kang Chul-In briefly checked the status of the land and then ordered the information on the additional option of Cosmic Force.

-[Cosmic Force]

Type: Magic Engineered Artificial Satellite

Tendency: Multipurpose

Description: An artificial satellite with advanced magical engineering

Level: Level 1 (Maximum growth Level 5)

Level 1: Exploration (Able to be Used) Level 2: Location System (Unable to be used)  
Level 3: Pulse Wave (Unable to be used) Level 4: (Unable to be used, Unlocked when  
Level 4 Obtained) Level 5: (Unable to be used, Unlocked when Level 5 Obtained)'This  
is crazy...!'

Kang Chul-In was surprised once again after seeing the brief information on Cosmic  
Force.

'Exploration is recon, and the location system is GPS. Pulse wave... confusing the  
enemy's communication lines!'

These first three skills were enough to toy with the other Sovereigns, but he could not  
even begin to imagine what the 4th and 5th levels would unlock. He thought that  
maybe even Orbital Bombardment might be possible.

'Kang Chul-In! Remain calm!'

He worked hard to calm his heart that was pounding with excitement.

'You must be cautious. Don't waver and find ways that you can use what you have to  
the fullest. Even with a treasure in your hand, it is useless if you cannot use it at the  
right place at the right time. What comes first is to gain back your power. You cannot  
lose again this time.'

Kang Chul-In steadied himself, thinking about his failed past due to his arrogance and  
rashness. One failure was unacceptable, but another even after another life—he could  
not even raise his head properly in the afterlife.

"Sigh..."

Kang Chul-In exhaled loudly organizing his thoughts, and decided to focus on slowly  
growing.

'Let's first complete the tutorial.'

When one was first given land, there were various quests to level up in the starting stages.

“Lucia.”

Kang Chul-In called Lucia.

“Yes, my Lord.”

Lucia answered.

“I am going to inspect my troops after looking over the land. Prepare accordingly.”

Kang Chul-In’s eyes twinkled as he gave his order.

# Chapter 12

## Advisor Lucia

Kang Chul-In ordered Lucia, but she did not move as if she had a mechanical malfunction. Something was bothering her.

‘Uh, how does he know all the commands?’

Lucia did not show it on the outside, but in the inside, she was very surprised and taken aback. Kang Chul-In, who had ordered to see the [My information] and [Land Status] without any help from her was a shocking sight.

‘Would he not need me, by any chance?’

Lucia stiffened.

It was understandable.

The reason for her existence was for her to advise the Sovereign and grow Laputa, but if Kang Chul-In considered her useless, then her existence was also useless. For Lucia, it was understandable for her to be worried and upset.

“Excuse me... my Lord.”

Lucia mustered up the strength to ask Kang Chul-In, because her existence was threatened.

“May I ask you something?”

Lucia, who had a cold and stern feel about her that contrasted her full body, asked Kang Chul-In timidly. Kang Chul-In wondered why she was acting strange but he nodded, allowing her to speak further.

“Of course.”

“You, my Lord, was able to command without my help. You also were not surprised

nor taken aback. Despite your sovereignty, you are too calm and composed in a strange, new place.”

Kang Chul-In did not agree or disagree with Lucia’s words, and silently listened.

“So that’s why I am asking you. Are you... by chance the All-Knowing?”

It was a far-off guess.

‘What the heck.’

Kang Chul-In was taken aback by Lucia’s guess.

All-Knowing?

What was he, a G.o.d?

It was an absurd statement.

“No, I am not the All-Knowing.”

Kang Chul-In shook his head.

‘I acted too deft. It makes sense that they are puzzled.’

Kang Chul-In realized why Lucia had thought that and was briefly stumped on what to do next, but decided to give an evasive answer.

“This place is a foreign place to me, but also not so foreign.”

Lucia tilted her head at the confusing statement.

“You mean...”

Lucia spoke first before Kang Chul-In could explain further.

“That the place in which you were born and here is similar?”

The corners of Kang Chul-In’s lips twitched upwards. It was annoying anyways to try to explain, but since she had misunderstood first, it made it easier for him to make up

something.

“Yes.”

Kang Chul-In answered quickly.

“So, in your hometown, did you reign over a land and was in the position of a Sovereign?”

“You are right.”

It was a lie, but in some sense, it was also true. It was fact that he did reign over a land and rose to the position of Grand Sovereign.

“Oh, I understand now, my Lord.”

Lucia nodded her head like she understood.

“So... may I know what kind of Sovereign you were, my Lord?”

That question, Kang Chul-In could give an answer to so he revealed his previous status as Grand Sovereign.

“I was a Grand Sovereign, one of the strongest Sovereigns amongst Sovereigns.”

“Grand... Sovereign!”

Lucia shivered. It was as if she felt a shudder in Kang Chul-In’s words.

“Here, here in Pangaea, there is also a status of Grand Sovereign! They reign over large lands and command entire continents! My G.o.d! You were like a Grand Sovereign— I am honored to serve you, my Lord!”

Lucia’s response was dramatic to a point where it left Kang Chul-In surprised. However, it was not surprising. Like the Sovereigns, Advisors also had their own worlds. They were more revered and respected the more powerful the Sovereigns they served.

“Then, did you also have an advisor?”

Lucia asked.

“I had a vampire butler named Alfred.”

“How was the advisor called Alfred? Was he competent? Were you satisfied with Alfred?”

Lucia who was questioning Kang Chul-In was all worked up, and eyes burned with jealousy.

‘Compet.i.tion.’

Kang Chul-In saw right through Lucia’s emotional state.

“Hmm.”

Kang Chul-In looked at Lucia who wanted, like a puppy, to hear that Alfred was an incompetent advisor and started to speak.

“Alfred was...”

Lucia’s eyes glimmered as she concentrated on Kang Chul-In.

“competent.”

It seemed that Lucia was shocked at his answer, but Kang Chul-In could not talk badly about Alfred who was faithful to him until the end.

“He was that good?”

“I was able to rise to the position of Grand Sovereign because of him.”

“...Really?”

Lucia’s face darkened.

‘He was a Grand Sovereign in his hometown and had a good advisor... if by chance, what if he casts me out? Will I be thrown away?’

Lucia whos existence was threatened and was overcome with jealousy was about to

burst in tears at any moment.

'Is she afraid that she will be cast out? I will need to reas.sure her a little.'

Kang Chul-In, who could see right through Lucia, smiled widely and decided to prescribe a fitting medication. Even with his horrible personality, Kang Chul-In used to hold the position of Grand Sovereign. He knew how to handle his subordinates.

"Lucia."

Kang Chul-In called Lucia in a gentle voice.

"Yes, my Lord..."

Lucia's voice was down.

"You do not need to worry. I will not abandon you."

Lucia was surprised. It was understandable, seeing Kang Chul-In had seen right through her.

"From where I am from, the relations.h.i.+p between Sovereign and Advisor is that you can share your deepest, and most private thoughts—things that you could not even tell your family."

"Yes, yes! It is the same here as well!"

"Then you will understand quickly. Listen. You are my advisor, and you are like family I would spend eternity with. Why would I abandon you?"

"Are... is that true?"

"Yes. Although I might know a lot more than others, there will be much that I do not yet know. Also, instead of being jealous of Alfred, you just need to be better than him. Do not look so down and let's work together in growing this land."

"Ah...!"

Lucia exclaimed.

‘Yes, what the Lord says is right! I will prove that I am more capable than Alfred!’

Lucia who had been encouraged by Kang Chul-In clenched her fists and vowed that she would prove to be more useful than Alfred.

‘Simpleton.’

Kang Chul-In looked at Lucia and smirked, but he did not get caught. A Sovereign must not look easy—and he needed to maintain his dignity.

“My Lord.”

Lucia spoke with a determined face.

“Speak.”

“I, Lucia, will serve you with all my soul and heart, and will prove to you my competence!”

“Good.”

Kang Chul-In looked pleased.

“First, I will complete the tutorial quest. Get my troops ready for inspection like I had ordered.”

“Yes, my Lord!”

Lucia answered lively.

“I will order the troops to ready!”

While Lucia left to prepare for inspection, Kang Chul-In took time to look at the Tutorial Quest description.

-[Tutorial 1] Level 10 Obtained

Description: Reach Level 10

Reward: Experience +500/ 20 gold/ Use of Warp Gate (Unlimited)

Reference: Unable to return to Earth without completing Quest

Reference: Conquer other Sovereign +5 Levels

Reference: Related to Tutorial 2 Quest

The warp gate was the passage that connected Earth and Pangaea, and was a must for dimension travelers. Therefore, in order to return to earth, Tutorial 1 Quest needed to be cleared.

-[Tutorial 2] Monster Subjugation

Description: Conquer the monsters living in the land

Reward: Experience +250 / 20 Gold

Current Status: 0/500

'It's the same as the past.'

Kang Chul-In who had checked that the quests were the same as the ones he experienced before, he decided that he would clear the tutorial quests as soon as possible. It would be difficult because he was in a low level, if he put all his energy into it, 3 or 4 days would be enough. As he was thinking, Lucia appeared and notified him that the inspection preparations were complete.

"Let us go quickly my Lord. The troops are longing to meet you."

"Really?"

"Yes, my Lord."

"I will go right away."

Kang Chul-In headed out.

# Chapter 13

## Monster Subjugation (1)

“The Sovereign is coming! Troops... attention! Salute!”

When Kang Chul-In appeared, the Commanding officer ordered.

“Sir!”

About 70 troops saluted Kang Chul-In.

‘They are well trained and on their toes.’

Kang Chul-In’s face filled with satisfaction as he saw the troops.

“My Lord, this is the main military of Laputa, the Royal Guard. If you count those who are standing guard on the outer edges of the land, there is a hundred troops.”

Lucia explained alongside him.

‘A hundred... it’s a lot.’

It was a large troop, considering Valhalla had 50 soldiers.

“Troop, at ease.”

With Kang Chul-In’s orders, the troop fell to the ‘at ease’ position. In the faces of the soldiers who were staring at Kang Chul-In, there was loyalty and fiery passion.

‘He is our Lord!’

‘How long have we waited for him!’

‘I will make him proud with my distinguished service!’

It was understandable.

All NPCs in Laputa, including Lucia, were asleep for an unimaginable number of years waiting for a master. Without Kang Chul-In's choice, they would have never been able to wake up—and therefore, their loyalty was not an overstatement.

“Nice to meet you all. In three hours, we will patrol the lands and go on a monster subjugation. Prepare accordingly. That is all.”

His speech was short.

Kang Chul-In, instead of going on and on, spoke concisely, delivering only the limited amount of information.

“And you.”

Kang Chul-In pointed his chin towards the one standing at the head of the troops.

“Name?”

“Commander James, my Lord!”

“I have things that I need to discuss, so you will patrol with me.”

“Yes, my Lord!”

James' voice resonated.

“Uh... my Lord.”

Lucia carefully began to speak.

“May I also accompany you...”

“Of course.”

Kang Chul-In nodded.

“If you are my advisor, naturally you will always be with me when I am in Laputa.”

“Yes, my Lord!”

Lucia proudly answered, overjoyed.

Like that, Kang Chul-In, Lucia, and Commander James slowly walked together around Laputa.

“Commander.”

“Yes.”

“What are the characteristics of the land that Laputa is on right now?”

It was an important question.

Laputa was an airborne city but it was not flying at the moment, which meant that it was important to know the land that it was currently dependent on.

“Yes, my Lord. It is a wise question.”

James smiled, and started his debriefing.

“Currently, Laputa has the Dragonia mountains that act as the border of Pandemonium and the mainland on her back. It is in the Southern most area of the mainland.”

It meant that it was the most isolated of the isolated, the countryside.

“Those large mountains are the Dragonia mountains, my Lord.”

James pointed at the large and vast mountains that had no end.

“And if you look at the western side, there is a river that reaches all the way to the mainland called Khartoum river. It is a long river that cuts through all of Pandemonium to the mainland’s northern side.”

Kang Chul-In was well aware of the Khartoum river as well. It was a ca.n.a.l that went through all of Pangaea. In order to gain control of Pangaea in the future, it was necessary to gain control of the Khartoum river.

“In the south, there is a magical forest, but it is an ancient one that has existed even before history was recorded. It is filled with monsters, and it won’t be an overstatement to call it the devil’s forest.”

“Hm...”

Kang Chul-In, after hearing James’ briefing, began to speak.

“To the east, the mountains, the west, the river, and the south, the devil’s forest. It is a land where three sides are steep.”

“Yes, my Lord.”

“So... the north is the key.”

“You are right.”

“The North will be our entry point and where we would need to guard for enemies. Farms and ranches will also be at the northern side around the castle. It will be key to gain control of the north as soon as possible.”

At Kang Chul-In’s words, James’ eyes opened wide. Lucia’s widened as well.

“My... my Lord.”

James spoke, his voice quivering.

“May I ask how you came to such a conclusion?”

“Isn’t it obvious?”

Kang Chul-In answered.

“The eastern mountains would be useful for defense, but it isn’t a great option for us to go through, if we are not going to use the flight skill and just fly over the entire thing. Also, if we wanted to go through the western ca.n.a.l, we would need to train naval forces, but it won’t be an easy task. It won’t be done overnight. In order to build s.h.i.+ps, you would need to gain control of the southern forest, but it is not plausible considering the time and finances of right now. So, the only thing left, is the north.”

Kang Chul-In said everything casually, but for James and Lucia who were listening, it was a shocking thing to hear.

“How...!”

James exclaimed.

“You are so intelligent, my Lord! How are you so wise? I, James, am so honored to serve a wise leader as yourself!”

He was almost going to get down on the ground and bow to him.

‘Wow! He is different because he had been a Grand Sovereign before! Ah, I am such a blessed advisor!’

Lucia did not show it openly, but was equally impressed.

‘What is this?’

Oppositely, Kang Chul-In was taken aback by the responses of the two. He had said something so simple, but they were so amazed... he was even doubting whether they were able to think or not.

“Hm Hm.”

Kang Chul-In cleared his throat, calming the atmosphere and asked James,

“Are there any farms and ranches of ours in the north?”

“Yes, my Lord! Every morning, your people go to the plains in the north and farm.”

“Are there monsters?”

James froze.

“You... you mean...”

“Of course, I will guarantee the safety of the north first. I cannot leave my people to be eaten by monsters.”

It was a definite choice for a ruler.

It was important for the economy to be stable for the land to prosper—and the people who were producers of the land were the first priority. Also, if the public sentiment was negative, loyalty will decrease and there will be problems in the fighting power.

Kang Chul-In's specialty was charisma and internal affairs, but that would decrease as well.

"My Lord..."

James, unaware of Kang Chul-In's thoughts, was awed by him, shaking.

"I, James, am so honored to meet a benevolent ruler like yourself... how are you so wise and caring of the people...!"

Seemed like his intentions were understood like that.

'c.r.a.p, I can't say anything anymore.'

For every word he spoke, they were in awe, so even for Kang Chul-In, who had no conscience, was a little embarrassed.

"Anyways, I will take care of the monsters from the north plains first, so prepare accordingly. I will give you three hours."

"Yes, my Lord!"

James answered excitedly.

"Lucia."

Kang Chul-In called Lucia this time.

"Yes, my Lord."

"Feed the troops who will go to the monster subjugation ahead of time with bread and milk."

"I will also disburse, ahead of time, two days worth of rations."

"Good thinking."

Kang Chul-In nodded his head. Monster hunting could sometimes take a long time, so it was wise to bring two days worth of rations.

“Then I also will get ready, so you guys prepare as well.”

Kang Chul-In said, and James and Lucia nodded vigorously and answered.

“Yes, my Lord! I will do so!”

“As you command, my Lord.”

And with that, Kang Chul-In left, and Lucia called to James.

“Commander James.”

“Yes, advisor.”

“It is the Sovereign’s first quest, so pay heed so the troops will not make any mistakes.”

Lucia as she said this looked cold and stern. It was the complete opposite of how she treated Kang Chul-In.

“Yes.”

“If the troops do anything out of line or seem like they are not in high-spirits, I will not just watch. Do you understand?”

“Of course.”

James bowed his head.

Lucia was second-in-command to the land. She was an advisor to Kang Chul-In, and for James who was the Commander, Lucia was an extremely authoritative figure.

“Then, do your best. I will be watching.”

Lucia stared behind her plastic rimmed glasses. A penetrating glare shone in her usually beautiful eyes.

Three hours later.

Kang Chul-In on top of a white horse, left for Laputa along with James and 50 troops.

'I can't believe I'm armored with these low-level items.'

Kang Chul-In, through the [Warrior Shop] system, purchased and wore rare level armor and rare level Blood Sword.

Blood Sword.

It was an Arming Sword the foot soldiers of the Ancient world had used. It was a sword enchanted with blood magic and increased endurance of the user.

This item had 40 Striking Power, and absorbed 10% of the damage that it inflicted for its own powers, making it effective in increasing endurance. However, for Kang Chul-In who had used only epic items in the past, it was not satisfactory.

"My Lord, do you see that?"

As Kang Chul-In was thinking of the past, James pointed at a faraway place. It was about 30 minutes since they had left.

"That is your land, my Lord."

Where James had pointed, there was a vast area of fields and a farm where there were cows and horses.

'It's small. Since the land is small... if I would take the entirety of these plains, it will be a sturdy foundation for me.'

Although the farm and fields were small, it was not even 0.1% of the northern plains. In the future, if he could completely make these plains his, he would not fall behind with even the producing power of the previous Gullveig Union.

And as Kang Chul-In was thinking such thoughts, one of the units that was standing in front of the troops with binoculars, yelled loudly.

"Mo... monsters!"

With the soldier's notice, all the other soldiers pulled out their swords.

"What monsters, out of the blue? What do you mean!"

James yelled.

“About 20 orcs are running towards our farms in the front!”

# Chapter 14

## Monster Subjugation (2)

The troops started talking amongst each other immediately upon hearing the report.

“20 Orcs!”

“We are short in number!”

“20 of them...”

It was a natural response.

It would have been a different story if Orcs were weak monsters, like they were in games or fantasy novels, but in Pangaea, Orcs were strong enough to take on at least four or five adult males.

And there were 20 of them. 50 soldiers were not enough to fight them.

“Quiet, quiet!”

The Commander James also seemed to be taken aback, but he tried to maintain his composure as a commander and worked to calm his troops.

And he carefully addressed Kang Chul-In.

“My Lord, there are too many Orcs. I think we should retreat and bring more troops...”

“No.”

Kang Chul-In cut James off firmly.

“Are you telling me to turn my back because of a group of Orcs?”

“But... but, my Lord... with our numbers...”

“I know.”

Kang Chul-In said.

“It would be a stretch. No, it seems like a stretch. Logically, to take those Orcs, you would need at least a hundred soldiers.”

“Yes, my Lord. For your safety, as well...”

“But that is something an incompetent leader does.”

“As a commander, your judgement is right. In order to fight those Orcs, you would need to prepare for complete annihilation. A competent commander knows also when to retreat. However!”

Never, Kang Chul-In had no intention of backing down.

“We can win. There is plenty of prospect for success. If you can follow my lead, then we can take all those Orcs without one casualty:”

“How... how...!”

“I will show you.”

In that moment, with Kang Chul-In at the center, an intangible aura covered James and the troops.

‘This is enough to take the Orcs.’

The aura that Kang Chul-In created was the skill that all Conquest Sovereigns had: the ‘Morale Stimulator’. Although he was only Level 1 so the skill only lasted for 10 minutes, but against the Orcs, this was enough.

“Everyone listen!”

Kang Chul-In roared.

“Those monsters over there are trying to take our people and our a.s.sets!”

The troops s.h.i.+vered at his charismatic, loud voice.

“I know you are afraid. However, if we retreat here, now, all those people will die. We will also lose all of our farmland and animals. And therefore, I, Kang Chul-In will not back down. I will kill those Orcs and I will protect our people and our a.s.sets!”

In the mind of the troops, the thoughts of retreat disappeared completely in the soldiers’ minds. The saying ‘Lead by Example’ was there for a reason.

“Let’s go! Let’s defeat those Orcs together!”

Kang Chul-In decided to add an incentive around this point.

“I will reward the soldier who shows exceptionality in killing these Orcs!”

And the soldiers upon hearing this became restless.

“If you follow my orders, I promise that no life will be sacrificed! Trust me! Trust in me, and do not doubt our victory!”

And with these words, the faces of the soldiers began to fill with decisiveness.

It was as expected.

They were originally extremely disciplined and eager, but with Kang Chul-In’s ‘morale stimulator’, promise of a reward, and a.s.surance of a victory—all were extremely effective. He had exaggerated, but human history was written on exaggeration.

“I will lead the way!”

Kang Chul-In drew his Blood Sword and roared.

“All troops! Attack!”

And with those words, the white horse that Kang Chul-In was on started running full speed. Laputa’s Royal Guards, high in morale, followed behind fiercely.

“Oh, my back is going to break like this. Oh... my back...”

Rustler, a farmer who was taking a break from the farming to soothe his aching back furrowed his brow when he saw a dust storm forming from far away.

“What is that?”

Rustler squinted.

With all the dust, it probably was the dust storm that would start around this time. When the storm came, he would cough for a while with the dust covering him, so he was going to leave the work for later and rest in his hut.

“Huh? That... that!”

Rustler, who had been looking at the dust storm for a while, stuttered in surprise.

No, he wasn't surprised, but horrified.

“O... Orcs!”

Despair filled Rustler's face.

It was understandable.

If it was a goblin or other small monster, he would try to protect himself with his farming machines, but Orcs were a different story. One Orc meant destruction amongst the farmers, but they were coming in a group.

“R... run!”

The farmers hard at work, raised their heads with Rustler's scream.

“Orcs! A group of Orcs are coming! Everyone run!”

And with those words, chaos and fear spread throughout the farmers of Laputa.

“Hurry!”

“Run!”

“You need to run! Fast!”

“Orcs are coming!”

For the farmers who had no power, Orcs were destruction itself.

The moment they were cornered, they would be hit with blunt weapons or axes, and eaten alive. They would die either way. They must run if they wanted to live.

“Run... Lana, Lana!”

Rustler, who was going to run for his life remembered his only daughter and began to look around frantically.

“Lana! Lana!”

Lana was Rustler’s only child, and she had brought afternoon lunch with a couple of other women from the village.

“Da... dad!”

Upon hearing his daughters voice from far away, Rustler’s fear of the Orc disappeared and began running back towards where he had heard her voice.

“Lana!”

When Rustler found Lana, she was on the ground with a sprained ankle.

“Quickly, get on my back!”

Rustler quickly carried Lana on his back. Lana, who had sprained her ankle could not run from the Orcs.

Squelch!

While, the group of Orcs had almost reached the farmland.

Rustler ran.

He ran with every ounce of strength he had.

Or he was going to die.

And not only him, but his lovely daughter would also be eaten by the vile Orcs. And if

not that, she would be a s.e.x slave for the Orcs, birth a cursed Half-Orc, and be eaten.

“Huff... huff...”

Labored breathing left Rustler’s mouth.

However...

A common farmer could not surpa.s.s the speed of a monster. Orcs, who had much better muscle build and stamina than humans had unimaginable speed. Rustler had no other option than to be caught by the Orcs.

Squelch!

The Orcs, with prey in front of their eyes, cried with excitement.

“NO, no you animals!”

Rustler ran and ran, trying to save at least his daughter, but finally fell on the ground along with his daughter.

“Ah!”

Rustler yelled as he rolled on the farmland.

“Ahhhhhh!”

Lana also had fell hard.

“Lana!”

Rustler yelled his daughter’s name from the ground.

“Dad!”

Lana, in front of her father, was about to have her head smashed in with the Orc’s metal bat. It was the same for Rustler as well, but he looked only towards his daughter without worrying about himself.

Squelch squelch!

The excited orc breathed roughly as he brought the metal bat above his head.

‘Oh, Lana, my daughter...!’

Rustler foresaw the event that was to happen, and closed his eyes tightly.

No, he tried to close his eyes.

He could not see his daughter’s b.l.o.o.d.y end, and so he was going to close his eyes, curse these monsters, and end his life... but the unfortunate end that he had predicted did not occur.

Swis.h.!.+

Rustler opened his eyes wide at the change of fate that had happened suddenly.

“Ah... Ah!”

A knight on a white horse suddenly appeared and was taking off the head of the Orc.

The Orc’s neck was gus.h.i.+ng with red blood that soaked the ground underneath. It was a beautiful performance.

Hinnnggg—-!!

The white horse whined loudly and kicked its front legs.

“Arise, dear child.”

The knight who had rescued Lana told him.

“Your daughter will not die, and you also shall live, for your Sovereign has come.”

And that day, Rustler realized that his sun had risen high above the sky.

# Chapter 15

## Monster Subjugation (3)

Kang Chul-In, in the eyes of Rustler and Lana, was like a beam of light.

The impending doom, and the invasion of the Orcs.

And the Sovereign that appeared at the moment of death.

The strength and prowess of slitting the Orc's throat in one stroke while on the back of a white horse. For this father and daughter, Kang Chul-In was their life savior and a rope sent by the heavens.

'Oh, my Lord has come...!'

Rustler was overcome with awe.

It was the same for Lana.

She thought she was going to die.

The Orc's fierce cries when she and her father had fallen to the ground was enough to bring chills down to her bones. And when she had given up all hope and accepted her fate, a miracle happened.

'Oh, my Lord...!'

Lana, as her life hung from a thread, felt her heart pounding as she saw Kang Chul-In on top of the white horse.

'He is Laputa's Lord...!'

Amidst the b.l.o.o.d.y situation, a spring wind formed in the heart of the young girl. It was an unforeseen thing, but it was understandable. A knight on top of a white horse was every girl's dream!

However, Kang Chul-In had no interest in the feelings of Lana.

And he never even looked at her in the first place. He solely focused on the Orcs that were to harm his people.

“You four!”

He called to the soldiers who were armed with s.h.i.+elds and spears.

“Move that father and daughter to somewhere safe.”

“Yes, my Lord!”

The four soldiers who were commanded quickly moved to Rustler and Lana, escorting them out of the danger.

“James!”

“Yes, my Lord!”

“Take ten soldiers and protect the people escaping. I will take here.”

“But... but... how will you...!”

“Now!”

“Ye... yes!”

And like that, James and ten soldiers left the group.

‘Fifteen gone. 35 left. This is enough. I will end this in 10 minutes.’

Kang Chul-In, who had divided the little he had, remained calm.

“Those with s.h.i.+elds, come forward and maintain a close formation!”

Kang Chul-In roared and began to lead the troops.

“Those with muskets, head to the back!”

The troops moved quickly with Kang Chul-In's orders. They were quite good in following orders.

Squelch!

Squelch!

The Orcs, that until a couple seconds ago was looking forward to their killing and stealing, showed their fangs and screeched at the unexpected visitors. They were menacing.

'How dare you?'

Kang Chul-In's eyes, that were looking at the Orcs, were filled with disgust and anger.

Dirty living things that would have not even been able to look at him before, were threatening him and his people. This was disrespect unforgivable by the Grand Sovereign Kang Chul-In.

"Sigh..."

Kang Chul-In dismounted from his horse with a loud sigh.

He did not fit well with horseback riding.

The speed and weight that a running horse brought was definitely powerful. He had just killed an Orc with one swing. They did not call Calvary troops powerful for nothing.

However, with battles like these, it was better to just fight on foot. Kang Chul-In himself also preferred to fight with his two feet on the ground compared to on a horse.

"Musket soldiers, calmly shoot!"

Kang Chul-In ordered immediately after he had gotten off his horse, and joined the Royal Guard's ranks.

Boom! Boom!

The Breech Loading muskets that loaded every two shots, fired at the Orcs, leaving a

thick smoke.

“s.h.i.+elds, hold! If you crumble, we all die!”

Kang Chul-In worried most about those who faced the Orcs in the front of the line. In order for the musket soldiers to safely fire, the role of the s.h.i.+eld holding soldiers were important.

“Use your spears when you can! Aim for the neck!”

The soldiers’ spears penetrated the Orcs’ necks.

‘Orcs are nothing.’

In the face of Kang Chul-In who was staring at them, was a smug smile.

Orcs were quite dangerous monsters.

Even for Kang Chul-In, in his current state, it was difficult to take on even two Orcs. If he had overextended himself, three. And if four, then he too would have to put his life on the line. However, that was in case of a 1:1 battle. He had an army.

Orcs were strong, but their only tactic was to use their large physique and group together to break and hit everything in their way. It was primitive and one sided. This might be effective in a scuffle or hand-to-hand combat, but if it was a battle with ranks, it was a different story. Humans knew how to group, and knew how to use that to their advantage. Especially Kang Chul-In, the master of war strategy!

Boom! Boom!

The ten musket soldiers fired their weapons again.

‘Reload!’

The basic musket had two fires. A bit of time was needed after two blows in order to reload.

“s.h.i.+elds! Push harder! Hold!”

Kang Chul-In yelled.

If there was a threat, it would be this moment.

The moment where firepower had seized for a quick moment during reload—it was a bit of time for the Orcs to attack.

Kang Chul-In's prediction was right.

Squelch!

The Orcs who had realized the flying bullets stopped for a short while began to advance fiercely. They were monsters with a bit of intelligence.

“Prepare well and brace yourselves! It won't be easy!”

Kang Chul-In warned the soldiers holding the s.h.i.+elds in the front of the lines.

Boom—!

An explosive sound was released as the soldiers' s.h.i.+elds and Orcs' body met. The soldiers swayed. An Orc's average weight was about 120kg, much larger than a human. It also had great muscular strength. It was expected.

'Danger.'

Kang Chul-In, when he saw this, realized that it was his turn. He could not just sit back.

If the front formation was destroyed, then the soldiers will be hit by the Orcs in an instant. In order to win this battle, the formation must be maintained.

“Sigh...”

Kang Chul-In released a loud breath.

His heart pounded.

From the top of his head to his feet, he felt all his muscles tighten.

And a lone s.h.i.+ver went down his spine.

Because he was afraid?

No way.

Kang Chul-In's body that had been away from battle was filled with excitement.

It was a thrill of sorts.

Like people who enjoyed extreme sports, Kang Chul-In enjoyed going to battle with his life on the line. It was something that the ruler of a land should never do, but what could he do. He was born a destined warrior and had a heart of steel. He could not control his blood boiling when he went to battle.

'Let's have some fun.'

Kang Chul-In left his spot from behind the shield and went towards the Orcs.

"Ah!"

"My Lord!"

A couple of the soldiers called to him when they saw his unexpected action.

"Do not worry!"

Kang Chul-In yelled.

"Do not concern yourselves and maintain the ranks!"

Kang Chul-In, after giving his order, began to swing his Blood Sword as if he was possessed.

Swish swish!

Thick weapons flew towards him from all directions. It was expected, seeing that he had made his way right in the center of the Orcs.

'I just need to create enough chaos.'

Kang Chul-In, who had made his way into the Orcs as a Level 1 Sovereign, was extremely level-headed.

He knew something.

Orcs were much larger than humans, which meant there was not enough s.p.a.ce for more than three Orcs to attack one person at once. Even if there were a lot of Orcs, no more than three attacks will come at once. Although, this was the typical 'theoretical' battle. It was easier said than done—therefore, this was almost suicide.

But Kang Chul-In could.

Countless, numerous battles and the swordsmans.h.i.+p of his past life was clear in his head. Although his physical state would not completely support him, it was enough to buy a little time.

Swish,

Swis.h.!.+

The Blood Sword grandly drew deathly tracks as it bore through the Orcs. Kang Chul-In did not show brute courage and foolishness.

He faced the weapons that came to him, but he did not wrestle strength. If he did, he would break bones, or be in a disadvantageous position that would get him lynched by the Orcs. If he was to fight with strength, he would cross the valley of death. And therefore, the method he chose was to pretend to respond to the Orcs' attacks while actually letting it flow through. It was a skill that was only performed by extremely well trained and experienced swordsmen.

“Huh?”

The soldiers were surprised when they saw Kang Chul-In.

There could have been no other feeling.

A Sovereign had used himself as a distraction amongst the Orcs... he had put his life on the line. A person of his status?

“You... you... retched Orc b.a.s.t.a.r.ds!”

A soldier enchanted by Kang Chul-In's example yelled with rage.

And that was the start.

“How dare!”

“I will kill you!”

“You dogs! Die! Die I said!”

As the musket soldiers were reloading, the other soldiers started to put forth immense fighting power and began pushing back the Orcs. They had skyrocketing morale, but it was possible because Kang Chul-In had disheveled the Orcs.

“Reload complete!”

The reload was finally done.

“Fire!”

Kang Chul-In roared.

He was still in the center of the Orcs. He could, by chance, be shot by friendly fire.

“Bu... but!”

“Just shoot!”

Kang Chul-In yelled and the musket soldiers slightly hesitated, but went into firing position, aimed at the Orcs, and pulled the trigger.

Boom! Boom!

Ten gunmen, and ten bullets were fired, aimed for the Orcs.

‘Down!’

Right before the soldiers pulled the trigger, he threw his body quickly on to the ground.

Squeal!

Three or four Orcs were shot and fell to the ground. The soldiers’ spears found its

home in the fallen bodies.

The sharp spear penetrated their necks.

“Push further! Do not give them a chance to think!”

Kang Chul-In, who had moved to safety in a moment shouted, encouraging his troops.

And it was then.

The soldiers who had gotten the hang of the battle began to push further into the Orcs' ranks. They adapted fast, as if to prove that nothing was better than practice.

‘It's done.’

Kang Chul-In, who realized his troops had gained momentum, smiled.

From this moment, everything will fall in place. All they needed to do was to move like a machine, taking the Orcs one by one. Almost ten Orcs had fallen, so it was already a battle won.

“How... how can this...!”

Commander James who had returned to join Kang Chul-In and his forces, after evacuating the people of Laputa, could not believe what was happening in front of him.

It was a grand victory.

There was not one Orc alive. 20 Orcs were littered on the plains, cold and dead.

Compared to that, how were the friendly troops?

There were some with minor abrasions, but there were none with serious injuries.

“If you follow my lead and orders with loyalty, I promise no lives will be lost. Trust. Trust me, and do not doubt victory.”

Commander James remembered what his Lord had said right before the battle occurred.

'Really, not one has died...!'

It was hard for James to believe what was happening, because something that he was on the fence about had become reality. To completely wipe out 20 Orcs with 35 soldiers! With no casualties!

"Did you evacuate the people to a safe location?"

James heard Kang Chul-In's voice as he was marveling and admiring his Lord.

"Yes, my lord!"

James quickly turned towards the direction of the voice and answered.

And there was Kang Chul-In.

Kang Chul-In, sitting atop a straw bed, sipping beer like any other foot soldier.

# Chapter 16

## Someone has their eyes on our land (1)

The day's battle came as a shock to all the people of Laputa.

Their ruler, who had just come from a different land, had defeated 20 Orcs with 30 soldiers. It was not only a win, but a grand victory.

And that was not all.

A rather exaggerated rumor had spread across the lands, where Kang Chul-In had supposedly courageously ran into the center of the Orcs alone, and was unmatched by any. Kang Chul-In's popularity soared.

It was understandable because for the common folk, it was a surprising thing for lords, Sovereigns, Kings, emperors, and other people of high ranking, to lead by example. This went beyond Panagea to Earth as well, and was relatable to all those who were under authority.

It was the same thing as a politician, who was visiting and inspecting military troops, to grab a K2 and engage in combat against a North Korean guerilla team. Furthermore, it was like the politician then contributed and played a key part in winning the battle. Of course... something like this would not happen.

And after the battle, him sitting casually on a pile of straw drinking beer with the other soldiers added to his image as an approachable, familiar leader.

Of course, these effects were not at all intentional.

All Kang Chul-In did was battle because a group of Orcs appeared, and drank a cold beer after a victory. No prior calculations were made.

'What are these people?'

Kang Chul-In, who had returned to Laputa as a triumphant general, no a triumphant Sovereign, tilted his head in confusion at the loud cheers from the people. In his head,

he wondered if this was something to praise about to this extent.

It was quite an understandable question coming from Kang Chul-In.

Valhalla, the land he ruled in his previous life, had very few humans. Most of its inhabitants were vampires, death knights, 마인, and other non-human species, so Kang Chul-In could not understand human emotion too well. Why were they making such a big deal, and why were they even singing about him?

[Favorability due to leading by example +20] [Free-Spirited Leader image gained so Charisma -3] [Free-Spirited Leader image gained so Approachability +30] [Positive response by people of the land, Sovereign Point +20]

When he had removed all his gear and returned to the Sovereign's hall, an information screen appeared in front of him.

'Hm... I don't like charisma decreasing.'

Charisma was an extremely important skill needed for a Sovereign.

It was key for commanding and ordering subordinates as a Sovereign. For example, the first thing to think about when purchasing a strong unit through the automated store, was charisma. If charisma was low, one could not control a strong unit even if they purchased one. If a Sovereign with a E Grade charisma purchased an Ogre through the automated store, it was likely that the Ogre would not blink an eye at the orders of the Sovereign and do whatever it pleased. Also, if charisma was low, disobedience of orders or revolt of subordinates might occur.

'I will be more careful from now on.'

Kang Chul-In swore that he would not let his charisma fall again. There will be nothing worse than not being able to control his troops at a critical moment.

However, not all was bad.

It was actually good.

The people's favor meant that the loyalty levels would also rise, and approachability and friendliness also helped in internal affairs. Also, Sovereign Points, which have the biggest role in determining the Grand Sovereign status had risen 20 points, so it was

definitely an achievement.

Sovereign points were the key to becoming a Grand Sovereign.

Sovereign points rose when one gained the respect of the people, hunted monsters, or won a battle against another Sovereign. It was rewarded when one had achieved something.

All Sovereigns were required to participate once a year at the assembly. It was called the 'Sovereign Meeting'. And in this 'Sovereign Meeting', 10 Sovereigns who had gained the most points would be elected as a Grand Sovereign. Although his charisma had decreased a little, if he had gained 20 sovereign points, it was not a loss.

'Hold on, how many points was the cutline for the first Grand Sovereign election?'

He could not remember clearly.

The first election would take place about a year after the current time, which was December 25th, 2021, and the past Kang Chul-In would remain in 13th place, not being able to become Grand Sovereign by a close fraction. At that time, he was immersed in dungeon exploration and solely concentrated on increasing his personal specs. However, he had ranked 13th, so he was going to become something in the future.

'Well, there is no rush.'

The position of Grand Sovereign was risky, so there was no reason to obsess over it from the beginning.

Why?

Because they are watched by all the other Sovereigns!

It was especially worse in the first and second years, where the skill set of the Sovereigns were downwardly similar. If they showed a bit of prominence, they would be ripped and bitten apart from many different Sovereigns. For example, during the first Sovereign Meeting, five of the Grand Sovereigns elected including Baroque al Yousef and Scotty Andbury, had not been at the second Sovereign meeting (they had died, or escaped to Earth).

“My Lord.”

As Kang Chul-In was thinking about Sovereign points and Grand Sovereign appointments, Lucia called to him.

“Rustler and his daughter Lana has sent you tribute.”

“Rustler? Lana?”

Kang Chul-In’s brows furrowed in confusion.

“Are they my people?”

“They are the father and daughter that you rescued from the Orcs. I believe they have sent tribute in thanks for saving their life.”

“Really?”

“Here...”

Lucia handed Kang Chul-In a basket with a clean cloth covering it. Lucia’s expression as she handed over the basket seemed a bit disapproving.

‘A tribute.’

Kang Chul-In had mixed feelings, receiving his first tribute. In the past, he had never received such things. I mean... how many humans were there in Valhalla—there weren’t many to send him tribute.

“Bread and ham.”

Kang Chul-In mumbled, after opening the basket.

In the inside, there were four rye breads and a large chunk of ham, along with a bit of honey and beer made from pure malt. It was a plain tribute, but filled with thanks from the poor.

“Thi... this...!”

Just when Kang Chul-In was going to be pleased, Lucia s.h.i.+vered.

'What is wrong with her again?'

Kang Chul-In was confused. He could not understand why Lucia was shouting suddenly.

"Is something wrong?"

"How dare..."

Lucia seemed like she was extremely angry.

"Dare?"

Kang Chul-In asked in return.

"My Lord!"

Lucia shouted.

"Speak."

"You must bring this father and daughter here right away and punish them!"

"...what?"

"This rude father and daughter are harassing you my Lord! How could they send such a plain thing as tribute! About a hundred hits with the club would not even be enough! My Lord, if you order me now, I will go to their home right away and cut their necks..."

Kang Chul-In then understood why Lucia was so enraged.

"Lucia."

"Yes, my Lord. I will right away..."

"I am satisfied."

"Huh? What do you mean..."

Lucia seemed confused and her eyes opened wide.

“Is it right to be angry that what they have sent is not much?”

“Yes, my Lord. How can they send to you bread and ham, something eaten by commoners? And rye bread! Of all the bread in the world, how is it they send rye bread! It is a bad tasting bread, my Lord! Not sweet at all!”

Lucia seemed really angry. It seemed personal to a certain extent, but Kang Chul-In, instead of pointing that out, gently scolded her.

“Lucia.”

“Yes, Sovereign.”

“I will say again, I am satisfied.”

“But...”

“Of course, if premium quality wine, gold, or jewels were given as tribute, I would have been happier. It is not that I do not like materialistic effects. In fact, I love money.”

That was Kang Chul-In’s honest thoughts.

Money?

The more the better.

In order to have a strong, powerful army, it was common sense that a strong, powerful economy was needed. To gain control of Pangea, money was a critical element. Also, to maintain his dignity and status in Earth, he needed more money.

“However.”

Kang Chul-In spoke.

“They also have their position. How would a farmer who tends to the land send me gold? They might have starved a meal or two so they could send me these.”

“If a poor man sent tribute with the little he had, it is right to see the heart behind the gift and not the gift itself. Isn’t the man quite loyal?”

“Ah...!”

Lucia exclaimed.

“Sure, if there were to be tribute, it would be good to have a bunch of gold and jewels... but this kind of gift is not bad either.”

“You are a fair ruler! How you love your people so, my Lord!”

“Perhaps.”

Kang Chul-In did not agree with what Lucia had called him.

His goal, primarily, was unification! It was to be the emperor.

For that goal, war was tied together, and that tie could not be severed. For him to fulfill his desire, a tower of bones must be built, and countless must stack their bones atop another.

‘It isn’t even true.’

What common farmer would like war? How many things would match the horrors of war. Kang Chul-In ultimately, was just a war crazed animal, and could never be a benevolent king.

“My Lord?”

“What are you thinking so intently about?”

Kang Chul-In shook his head slightly at Lucia’s question and spoke.

“I will punish them.”

“...my lord?”

Lucia seemed confused at Kang Chul-In, who had praised the father and daughter and now was saying that he would punish them.

“What you said is also true. I am pleased, but they would need to be punished at least a little, for gifting a Sovereign such plain things. Appoint the farmer called Rustler to

oversee the farming and give him heavy responsibility. There is no heavier punishment than being responsible for something.”

Lucia was in awe of Kang Chul-In’s consideration.

What Kang Chul-In had ordered wasn’t just a punishment, but also a reward. In the background of this order, there was Kang Chul-In’s intention to listen to Lucia’s advice in punishing the father and daughter but also in acknowledging their heart in sending him gifts. He had caught two birds with one stone.

‘Ah... the Sovereign is not just anyone!’

Lucia once again was in awe of Kang Chul-In, thinking how extraordinary and competent he was as a leader. That moment, Lucia’s loyalty and respect for Kang Chul-In grew deeper. However, Kang Chul-In did not understand why Lucia made such a big deal and served so often.

And even after this, Kang Chul-In spent many days on the quest for monsters.

The monster subjugation, which was originally supposed to last 3, 4 days grew longer and longer, until ten days had passed.

It was not because Kang Chul-In was incompetent.

Actually, Kang Chul-In and the Royal Guard under his leadership had outstanding victories in every battle they had, defeating all the monsters. They were straight victories, with no losses—all done by Kang Chul-In and his soldiers.

However, despite Kang Chul-In’s efforts, the reason why the monster subjugation took a long time was because of a monster called the ‘mole looter’.

The ‘mole looter’ was a mole about the size of a midsize dog, and it would attack humans, eating chunks of ankles or the back of the foot making people handicapped.

The problem was that these annoying moles were all over the northern plains.

-[Tutorial 2] Monster Subjugation

Description: Conquer the monsters within the land

Reward: Experience +250 / 20 Gold

Status: 421/500

His level was already at level 8.

If he was to destroy 79 monsters, he would naturally be at level 9, and then simultaneously clear Tutorial 1 Quest as well, which was linked—putting him at level 10.

But these moles were ambushing Kang Chul-In and his Royal Guard, and the troops dug tunnels every single day, trying to destroy them at their source. Ironically, a low-level monster was hindering Kang Chul-In.

“Sigh...”

Kang Chul-In, who was hunting the moles with his Royal Guard in the northern plains, looked up at the blue sky on a quick break.

‘It’s already been ten days. I need to return to earth in two days at the latest.’

It was postponed over and over again because there were many things to take care of, but returning to Earth was unavoidable. He needed to pay back the money that he had borrowed, and also needed to hear reports about Kwak Jung from Park Du-Sik. Also...

‘Mother.’

He needed to visit his mother, who was alone.

Undutiful Kang Chul-In had never gone to see his mother after being rebirthed.

It was not intentional, but for Kang Chul-In who had been indifferent about his family for 10 years, he had not even thought about visiting. However, now that he had remembered, he felt a lot of guilt.

‘I should visit her more often.’

For various reasons, Kang Chul-In swore he would take care of his mother.

And it was then.

“Sovereign!”

A soldier who was on the lookout during the break shouted while pointing up to the sky. In the air, something that had been created with magic, radiating blue light, was circulating on top of the troops.

Kang Chul-In’s face hardened.

‘What the heck?’

It was a scout unit sent by another Sovereign called a ‘scout hawk’.

# Chapter 17

## Someone has their eyes on our land (2)

The 'scout hawk' was a one-time use scout that was sold in the 'Sovereign Store' for 10 gold. The Sovereign that sent the hawk would be looking at Kang Chul-In's land by using the spirit eye.

10 gold.

Converting one 10g of gold (97.8% purity) into Korean currency would be about 4,000 dollars, which meant the Sovereign who had sent the scout hawk invested 4,000 into this intel.

'Stupid idiot, doesn't know how to use his gold.'

Kang Chul-In snorted, looking at the imprudent scout hawk that was circling above his head. The scout hawk was only operable for an hour, and the distance that it could travel was about 20km, making it not worth its price. It was not an advised option except for urgent and pressing times like during war.

"Bow, does anyone have a bow and arrow? If not, a gun will work as well."

"Here, my Lord."

At his words, the one soldier who had a bow and arrow amongst the Royal Guard, handed them over.

'4000 dollars, I'll dismember it in the air.'

Kang Chul-In was going to shoot the hawk and bring it down.

Of course, he was not just going to shoot it without thought. It was built with magic, so it was impossible to intercept it with plain physics.

'It's been a while... I wonder if I will hit it.'

Kang Chul-In thought as he tugged at the bow.

He could not remember clearly the last time he had shot a bow and arrow.

He was a man of the military arts, but he was a swordsman. He was not too familiar with the use of arrows.

‘Well, that is doable.’

But he was not completely diffident in himself either.

Although he could not be an expert archer, he had excellent foundation for all martial arts. One scout hawk was nothing. Kang Chul-In was confident in his ability.

‘Aim, fire.’

Whoos.h!.+

The arrow that had left its bow became a glint of light as it shot towards the scout hawk.

Eeeeeeeek Eeeeeek!

The scout hawk that had felt the impending danger let out a distinguished sound, but did not attempt to dodge the arrow. It was as if it was mocking Kang Chul-In, saying ‘What can you do to me with an arrow?’

‘Stupid.’

Seeing this, Kan Chu-In smirked.

Kang Chul-In had not shot “just an arrow”. He put a bit of magic on the tip of the arrow and shot. It was not strong magic, but the scout hawk was extremely weak in taking attacks.

It was a secured win if the arrow hit its target.

Crack!

In the stomach of the scout hawk, the arrow hit its target and lodged.

Squeak?

In the beak of the hawk, a confused cry came.

As the magic from another interceded with the body that was made of magic, sparks began to form, and with a bang, the hawk disappeared without a trace. It had blown up. A 4000-dollar scout!

“Woah!”

“You are amazing!”

“The Sovereign is also good with a bow!”

The soldiers who had seen this, applauded and praised his skills.

‘It will hurt a little.’

Kang Chul-In smiled, satisfied, not caring about his troops’ praises.

A scout hawk has a mechanism where it is connected to its Sovereign mentally, so the moment it is destroyed, the Sovereign would also receive the same damage.

It was a penalty of sorts, and the reason why one must be cautious when using the scout hawk.

Although he couldn’t see for himself, the Sovereign who had sent the scout hawk would be holding his stomach and groaning. Painfully... as if he, himself was shot with an arrow.

“All troops, return to base.”

Kang Chul-In ordered.

“Already, my Lord?”

James asked.

“That is a scout that another Sovereign has sent. Therefore, it means that there is another occupied land within 20km.”

“Ah!”

“I don’t know what the Sovereign’s intentions are, but they might attack suddenly, so it is right to go back to headquarters and prepare. It might just be a routine patrol...”

And Kang Chul-In tapered off. He stopped himself from saying, ‘In Pandemonium, only the war-crazed are everywhere.’

It was true.

It was paradise for conquest Sovereigns, the war-crazed, and the devils. It would not be out of the ordinary or strange for them to start fighting and ripping each other apart.

“Tell the workers and farmers to retreat as well. It doesn’t hurt to be careful.”

“Yes, my Lord.”

It bothered him that the farming would cease for a couple days, but something told him to do so. If the enemy invaded, innocent lives would be lost.

“Ugh!”

Deep within a tunnel in the northern plains, the Sovereign of the Burrow lands clenched his abdomen and groaned.

“Sovereign! Are... are you alright my Lord?”

The advisor of the Burrow lands, Timothy helped his Sovereign. Timothy was a Goblin with a large white beard.

“Ugh...!”

“Oh, Lord! Did your scout hawk get ambushed?”

The Sovereign of the Burrows despite the questioning of his advisor was unable to answer for a while. It was difficult to be in the right mind as pain of an arrow penetrating his abdomen consumed him.

His pain lasted for 30 minutes. As the pain subsided, the Sovereign of the Burrows

grinded his teeth in anger.

“Retched b.a.s.t.a.r.d!”

“Are you okay, my Lord? Here is some cold water. Please drink this.”

“Shut up!”

Timothy brought cold water and served it to his Sovereign, but the Sovereign hit Timothy’s hand that was holding the cup. The cup dropped to the ground, soaking it.

“You ugly Goblin! I told you to not call me Sovereign! Call me Shogun, I said!”

“Ah, yes! Yes, Shogun!”

“Stupid idiot! Are you stupid because you are a Goblin! You old disgusting thing! Ha... why is my advisor a Goblin of all things...”

The Sovereign of the Burrows, Kimura Hideki, criticized his advisor Timothy and poured his rage on him.

“Useless idiot... why did I get a stupid Goblin... it would have been better if it was a girl!”

“What, is that expression? You, you have a problem with what I said?”

“Ah, no! No, not at all, my Sovereig... no, Shogun!”

“What do you mean no?”

Kimura yelled.

Slap-!

With a loud noise, Timothy, the Goblin advisor’s head turned.

“Dirty Goblin b.a.s.t.a.r.d!”

“I am sorry... I am a Goblin...”

Timothy thought it was unfair he got hit for no apparent reason, but he said nothing.

There was nothing he could do.

He needed to endure it even if it was unfair, and even if it hurt his pride.

The destiny of the advisor was to endure it, again and again, regardless of what kind of human his/her Sovereign was. Who would have wanted to be an advisor to this savage? The only thing that Timothy could do was to accept that he just had a bad draw, that the roll of the dice was unfortunate. Compared to this, it could be said that Lucia, who met a wise and competent Kang Chul-In as her leader, was an extremely lucky case.

“Ha... the Sovereign in the farmland shot my scout hawk.”

“He... he did, my Lord?”

“That b.a.s.t.a.r.d... I thought if I sent the moles he would give up the land... that stubborn b.a.s.t.a.r.d!”

Yes.

The one who had sent the moles to Kang Chul-In and hindered him on his quest was Kimura. More accurately, Kimura, who wanted to escape his underground headquarters and have an above ground land to rule was advised by Timothy to target Kang Chul-In.

“Shogun, what are you going to do?”

Timothy asked.

“What do you mean what am I going to do! I will attack right now!”

“But...”

“What?”

“If the scout hawk got ambushed, that means they are able to use magic. There is a possibility that he won’t be an easy opponent...”

“I got played. Me!”

“I, sir, completely understand how you feel. It is definite that you were surprised and hurt. But Shogun! A war is not play...”

“Shut up, shut up I said!”

Kimura had no intentions of listening to Timothy’s advice, advice that would become flesh and blood. The thing that was most important to him was revenge against the man who had killed his scout hawk. For him, other facts such as Kang Chul-In’s ability to control and use magic, was not important.

“Hey, Goblin.”

“Yes, Shogun.”

“Prepare my troops. I will invade his headquarters right now.”

“Shogun... could you listen to my dearest wish just once, please?”

“Your wish? I need to fulfill your wish?”

Timothy accepted Kimura’s scoffing and spiteful glare. That was the role of the advisor. No matter how badly they were to be treated, they were to serve their Sovereign with everything they had.

“Yes, Shogun. This Timothy, like you said, is nothing but a Goblin, but I am still quite useful. If you leave it to me...”

“What will you do then?”

“It isn’t an overstatement to say that a war’s victory depends on the intel. If you give me just two days, then I will give a full detailed report on the enemy’s current military status and facilities. If I do that, don’t you think the chances of a victory will increase?”

“Hm... so are you thinking that I am going to lose?”

“No... no, Shogun! It’s just that it is said, ‘if you know your enemy and if you know yourself, you will win a hundred battles’. I am just following the basic rules of war...”

“I know too!”

Kimura yelled.

“You think I don’t know at least that much? I was going to do that too!”

Kimura shamelessly spoke as if Timothy’s idea was his, and made a thoughtful expression.

“I will take all scouts available and a.n.a.lyze his potential.”

“Oh, Shogun! You are so wise!”

“You dare shoot me? I will repay this debt... ha... ha...”

He was obviously way too into it.

Kimura Hideki who had found Tokyo Tower and then fell to Pangaea by coincidence was a high schooler who at first could not believe this situation that he fell into.

Anyone would have had a hard time.

One day, without warning, if you had been transported to a different world and then made to fulfill quests that you don’t know who had created, and to rule over your land, you would have denied reality. However, Pangaea was reality, and Kimura accepted his status as Sovereign. As many j.a.panese, he quickly adapted to reality and adjusted. Kimura decided to follow the quest and defeat the monsters within his land, and then following the tendency of the conquest Sovereign, grow his land.

It was good until then.

However, a problem was that although he had accepted reality, he wasn’t conscious of the actuality of the situation.

Death in Pangaea was equal to death on Earth. This was the way of nature, and the laws of life that if one was a living organism, one could not cross. Only the man called Kang Chul-In had used the Grand Sovereign’s power of Soul Backup and returned to the past once.

Kimura wasn’t conscious of this important fact.

Attacking another Sovereign with only the excitement of being a Sovereign, like a high-school gamer, was a prideful, stupid decision.

If one was to take the life of another, one should be prepared to also lose their own... but in the mind of Kimura, there was only the image of his grand self, after he had conquered Kang Chul-In's land.

It was a foolish act that did not consider the aftermath of a war.

However, after he would realize reality... it would be too late. He had chosen Kang Chul-In as an opponent of all people.

After that day, Kang Chul-In felt war clouds forming.

It became more frequent to see the scout hawks circling Laputa, slightly beyond the reach of an arrow, and within two days, there were about five or six scout hawks around Laputa. He had openly started to patrol and spy on Laputa. And it was visible to anyone that he was announcing an invasion.

'Although I'll need to push back my return to Earth for a couple days, but it's good it happened like this.'

Kang Chul-In smiled.

His land's economy was all over the place anyways.

The cost of any plain land was about 3-4 thousand gold. However, Laputa cost 9,800 gold. Due to the price that was almost three times that of a plain land, they were on the borderline of chaos. And in such a critical time, another Sovereign wanted to invade on his own two feet—he had to be thankful.

The Sovereign who won in a battle gained much.

He would take the enemy Sovereign's gold, land, people, and military. And in addition, they would be rewarded Sovereign points, along with leveling up—which meant it was a shortcut to being a Grand Sovereign. In Kang Chul-In's perspective, it was a gift from the heavens.

"Lucia."

“Yes, Sovereign.”

“Soon, another Sovereign will invade.”

“The one that sent the scout hawks, my Lord?”

“Yes.”

“He is a stupid and foolish one.”

“I agree.”

“He is someone who will bring wealth to our land. We will welcome him well.”

“Of course.”

Kang Chul-In said, smiling.

A welcoming party?

He was going to go all out.

Very... harshly.

# Chapter 18

## A declaration of war

‘The enemy’s military is nothing, but... I don’t know why I feel so uneasy.’

Timothy was in a dilemma.

As a result of sending seven scout hawks over the last two days, Laputa’s military force was mediocre at best, if not a joke.

If military power was the only factor, the victory of the Burrow lands would be given.

The basic specs of the Burrows were overwhelmingly better than Laputa.

Kang Chul-In’s land Laputa was composed primarily by humans, but the Burrow land was comprised of ants, moles, centipedes, mole crickets, and others that lived primarily in the soil. If a war broke out, an overwhelming victory was to be expected.

But he felt uneasy.

In Kang Chul-In’s land, it was hard to find any big threats, but... this was commonly called ‘having a bad feeling’. Timothy did not feel too good about this impulsive and reckless battle.

“It is difficult. Very difficult.”

Timothy let out a long sigh.

It was understandable, because Timothy’s specialty was [Administration], and so he was an advisor best suited for paperwork. And so, he was not too competent on war tactics.

But also, he could not leave things to the Sovereign, Kimura either.

Kimura knew nothing.

He was immersed in role-play and wanted to be king, labeling himself as 'Shogun' and 'Great Warrior' and other things Timothy could not understand. He was a typical tyrant, a young tyrant at that.

"Sigh... my fate!"

A long sigh came from the old Goblin's mouth.

They definitely had the upper hand in military force, but he could not deal with the uneasiness that overcame him. It was as if he was to poke a beehive.

But there wasn't any solid excuse for him to convince Kimura to give up on war either. If he had a good enough excuse, it would be worth it to manipulate and convince him... but their superiority in numbers was so clear that there wasn't any foundation in telling Kimura to give up on battle.

It was then.

A pretty good idea crossed the old Goblin's mind.

"That's it!"

It was quite a good idea.

"This will do! I could make a suitable argument!"

Timothy smiled widely and went to seek his Sovereign, Kimura.

"b.a.s.t.a.r.d! How dare you shoot an arrow at me!"

Kimura was drinking honey water in the Sovereign hall located deep underground and was grinding his teeth thinking about Kang Chul-In.

"Shogun!"

"What, Goblin."

"Could you send me as a diplomat?"

"What?"

Kimura tilted his head, as if asking him what kind of a dumb question that was.

“Why would you send something like that? You can just invade!”

“There are rules in battle as well.”

“Rules?”

Kimura squinted and furrowed his brow at Timothy.

“Although he is the enemy, there are basic rules that one needs to keep.”

“Stop saying things that are difficult to understand, you stupid Goblin!”

“I’m sorry...”

“So, what’s your point?”

“As the old saying goes, the best victory is won without a fight.”

“Hm... yes that it true.”

Kimura nodded.

What Timothy said, anyone heard at least once, and it was a line from the ‘Art of War’. Although the world was different, it seemed that a victory acquired without a fight was valuable in both worlds.

“If you send me as a diplomat, I will offer the Sovereign who had wronged you to surrender.”

“Surrender?”

“Yes, Shogun. If you offer surrender and they accept, wouldn’t we be able to win without shedding any blood? It won’t be easy, but since our military strength is much greater, there is a chance.”

“Hm...”

Kimura seemed contemplated, and so Timothy took the opportunity to continue.

“Even if the opponent did not accept the offer to surrender, wouldn’t it be an advantage for me to go as a diplomat anyways?”

“Advantage? What advantage?”

In that moment, Sovereign or not aside, Timothy was about to scream ‘Why do you live with a head if you have no brain!’

This was not just an issue of age.

The human himself was just stupid and did not think much.

In the advisor’s position, his patience was tested again and again.

‘I must endure it... this is my Sovereign... I must... ’

Timothy persevered with all that he had, and held in his anger. And with a gentle and polite tone, he spoke towards Kimura.

“First, sending a diplomat shows that our Burrow lands is civilized and will not just use force. It is a show of sorts.”

“Is that it?”

“Of course not my Lord! A diplomat is a legal spy. While I offer surrender, I will also bring intel on the enemy. Wouldn’t it be more accurate to see it with my own two eyes instead of using expensive scout hawks?”

“Hm... I guess you are right as well.”

When Kimura seemed to agree, Timothy made a reliable face.

“And also, a war is not just invading whenever you want, but making a declaration first. It is a savage thing to do to just wage war without any warning. Aren’t you a good and wise leader, Shogun?”

“Hm... yes, that is true.”

“If you trust and leave it to me, although I cannot guarantee surrender, I will bring good intel.”

Kimura who had been manipulated by Timothy's words, allowed for him to leave.

"Ha. You make sure to tell that Sovereign. If he does not surrender, he would taste h.e.l.l."

"Yes, of course. Hehe~ Then I will be back, Shogun."

Timothy cheered on the inside, after finally getting approval.

'It is done!'

Honestly, Timothy did not want this rash, unprepared war. Therefore, saying that he would offer surrender was just to convince Kimura.

Timothy's intention was this.

He would go, but he would come up with an excuse to make Kimura give up on war such as they have a secret army or a weapon that they were concealing.

Timothy knew that a war was no child's play.

Also, he wanted to visit Kang Chul-In's land and relieve the unknown uneasiness that was consuming him. However, Timothy's delight was short-lived.

'Sorry, Shogun... but Timothy is prepared to sin if for the safety of the Shogun and the land!'

Timothy apologized to his Sovereign Kimura in the inside.

Intention aside, Timothy's actions were undermining the Sovereign Kimura, so he felt guilty.

"Sigh... I hope the Shogun would soon become a wise and quick leader."

Timothy mumbled, and went towards Kang Chul-In's land.

That afternoon.

Timothy went to Laputa as the diplomat for the Burrow lands. And he was able to meet the Sovereign of Laputa, Kang Chul-In.

“So, it was just a patrol of the surroundings, and you had no other intention?”

Kang Chul-In, sitting on his throne, made an interested expression.

“Yes, sir.”

“Oh ho... that’s funny.”

“Sir?”

“I wonder who would use seven of those expensive scout hawks to just patrol. And just my land... are you overflowing with gold over there?”

Timothy was speechless at Kang Chul-In’s sharp response, and started to make an excuse.

“It’s not that! The Sovereign of the Burrows want peace! It’s just that our lands are so close together, so we are just preparing for unforeseen events. Yes, it’s just that.”

“Unforeseen events?”

“I would be very grateful if you would think of it as like a patrol only on defensive terms. Kimura Shogun promised that there will be no more of these situations in the future. Please, this time...”

“Stop.”

Kang Chul-In stopped Timothy mid-sentence.

“What did you just say? Say it again.”

“Sir?”

“Kimura? Shogun?”

“Ah, yes. The Sovereign of the Burrows wishes to be called Shogun instead of Sovereign...”

“Hahahahahaha-!!”

Kang Chul-In exploded in laughter.

Timothy could not understand Kang Chul-In's sudden laughter.

The Kang Chul-In that he saw, was not someone who would laugh in a formal situation like now. Even with a glance, Kang Chul-In was filled with authority and dignity as he just sat on his throne, but he had laughed. Timothy could not understand.

"Sovereign, may I ask why you are laughing?"

"I laughed because it was funny. Do I need another reason?"

Kang Chul-In answered.

"Which part is funny?"

Discomfort filled Timothy's face. Although Kimura was incompetent and showed signs of being a tyrant, he was Timothy's Sovereign. In Timothy's position as a loyal advisor, it was right to feel offended. However, Kang Chul-In asked again with a smirk, not caring of Timothy's feelings.

"Your Sovereign, asked to be called Shogun?"

"Yes, Sovereign. Kimura Shogun..."

"is a crazy b.a.s.t.a.r.d."

"Sir?"

"Your Sovereign is the craziest of the crazy, a little rascal."

Timothy's face hardened at the words of Kang Chul-In.

"Sovereign, your words are insulting the Sovereign of the Burrow lands."

"I call a crazy b.a.s.t.a.r.d crazy, what else am I supposed to call him?"

"Sovereign!"

"Maybe if I were to call him something different, idiot? Mentally r.e.t.a.r.ded?"

Pandemonium... they said it was filled with crazy r.e.t.a.r.ds, it was true.”

Kang Chul-In snorted, as if this situation was absurd.

It was an expected response.

Maybe if Kang Chul-In was a different race, but as long as he was Korean, Kimura who called himself Shogun was crazy in his eyes.

Shogun.

It was the most important position of the bakufu, and was descriptive of j.a.pan’s supreme ruler in the medieval and current ages. Despite being j.a.panese, Kang Chul-In didn’t imagine there would be anyone shameless enough to call himself Shogun. However, Timothy who did not know this, had no choice but to be upset.

“Sovereign! Although Kimura Shogun is young, he is the ruler of a land! If you insult my land’s ruler in a formal setting like this...”

“What, are you going to go to war or something?”

“Sovereign! How can you say such violent things! As I said previously, Kimura Shogun wishes for peace...”

“Stop.”

Kang Chul-In stopped Timothy and said in a calm voice with authority.

“Timothy, you said? Do not insult me with such lies.”

In that moment, Timothy froze at the stare of the man sitting on the throne.

‘Huk...!’

The stare looking down was not that of a criminal. It was like a predator with its prey in front of it.

‘This... this man... is different from the Shogun...’

Timothy did not want to admit it, but he needed to accept that the man in front of him

had a much larger plate than Kimura.

The aura itself was different.

It was as if he was born to be king. The throne suited him. And this kind of man spoke with authority, so it was expected that Timothy was suppressed and speechless.

‘Timothy... remain calm! Wake up! Your Shogun was insulted! If you lower your tail here, it is the same as the Shogun losing!’

Timothy tried to be strong. He was trying to be a competent advisor.

“Sovereign, although you are upset, your words are too harsh. I would like you to apologize to Kimura Shogun, my Sovereign. If you don’t, the Burrow lands will declare war...”

It was then.

Before Timothy finished his sentence, Commander James hurried into the Sovereign Hall and bowed to Kang Chul-In.

“My Lord, I need to report immediately.”

“What is it?”

“The enemy has moved from the underground and begun to advance into our land!”

And in that moment, Timothy felt his world go yellow, and wished to bite his tongue.

‘He could not wait that much... that retched!’

As Timothy was thinking this, Kang Chul-In smirked and turned towards Timothy.

“What were you saying? Continue with what you were saying.”

What was happening. Timothy could not raise his head in embarrassment.

“From this point... forward... our Burrow lands... are declaring war... on you Sovereign.”

Timothy announced war with his head still bowed. It was a play to be written in

history: where the declaration and release of troops happened simultaneously.

# Chapter 19

## Show them what you have got

“Sovereign!”

As Timothy was at a loss for words, Lucia who had been quiet until then stepped forward and called towards Kang Chul-In.

“That Goblin, as the advisor for the enemy Sovereign has volunteered himself as a diplomat and visited this land, but in actuality has tried to undermine you and fool you. I believe that he needs to receive adequate punishment for this?”

Lucia’s opinion was fair.

Timothy up until a couple of seconds ago was a diplomat, but now was currently a key player in the enemy’s movements. It would not have been excessive to behead him this instant.

However, Kang Chul-In’s opinion was different.

“There is reason to what you are saying.”

“Then the guillotine...”

Lucia spoke cruelly. She had no intention of forgiving those who had been disrespectful to Kang Chul-In.

“Not yet.”

Kang Chul-In shook his head.

“Lucia, your opinion is rightful and proper, but there is no significance in killing the Goblin right now. It would not be too late to do it after the battle has ended.”

“I sir, do not understand what you are saying.”

“Look at the Goblin.”

At Lucia’s question, Kang Chul-In pointed with his chin to Timothy, who had frozen on the spot. Timothy was unaware of the conversations happening between Kang Chul-In and Lucia, and was just broken.

“That advisor was abandoned by his Sovereign.”

And Lucia’s eyes opened wide as she understood Kang Chul-In.

‘It’s true!’

In Lucia’s head formed a picture of Timothy’s situation.

‘That advisor did not know his Sovereign was invading our land! If he knew, he would not have that kind of response! Ah... the Sovereign does not miss out on the details as well!’

What crazy b.a.s.t.a.r.d will wage war not even a full day after he has sent a diplomat with not even a declaration? Violent and uncivilized diplomacy aside, it was a cruel and heartless decision made without even the smallest consideration of the diplomat sent.

“Yes, my Lord. The enemy Sovereign does not care whether his advisor dies or not. He was abandoned.”

As Lucia looked at Timothy, her eyes filled with sympathy.

She, too, was an advisor.

She knew better than anyone what being abandoned by a Sovereign meant. Lucia too, had been uncertain and afraid that she was of no use to Kang Chul-In and would be abandoned. Although she couldn’t know for sure, Timothy’s heart would be burned to nothing right now.

“Yes. What is the use of taking the life of someone who has already lost all?”

“Yes, my Lord.”

“But he still must pay for undermining me.”

“Huh? My Lord, what do you mean...”

“I will give him pain worse than death.”

Kang Chul-In had a profound smile.

“Timothy, you said?”

“Yes... Sovereign...”

Timothy’s voice had no strength as he answered. His ears were sagging as well, and he could not get any more pitiful.

“Follow me.”

“Wouldn’t you need to see how the one who abandoned you gets ruined?”

In that moment, Timothy saw in the face of this man called Kang Chul-In, the image of the greatest evil and the image of a benevolent leader overlap.

In Kang Chul-In’s previous statement, there were two meanings.

“James.”

Kang Chul-In called his Commander James, not caring about Timothy’s thoughts.

“Yes, my Lord.”

“Go and show that arrogant j.a.p his place.”

“Yes, Sovereign!”

James answered loudly and saluted Kang Chul-In. And... he carefully asked a question as if he was bothered by something.

“But... Sovereign.”

“What does j.a.p mean...”

“There is something like that.”

“...yes.”

Kang Chul-In did not answer. He was too lazy to give an explanation.

Kang Chul-In took Lucia and Timothy to the watchtower.

In Laputa, there was a 40km high watchtower called the ‘Watcher’s Tower’ which made it possible to look over the land and the surrounding areas in one look.

The reason for climbing the tower was simple.

Kang Chul-In was not going to participate in this battle.

It was not an urgent situation, nor was it a war big enough for him to go out into battle himself.

All he had done was order a few things previously, and those orders would be the key to determining the tide of battle. Kimura and Timothy would have no idea, but Kang Chul-In had used a two scout hawks of his own, as well as sending his scouts to gain intel on the Burrow’s current status.

Therefore, Laputa’s soldiers had already completed all preparations for war before Timothy had arrived and were just waiting for the soldiers of the Burrow lands to invade.

It was like a spider, waiting for its prey after spinning its web.

“Timothy.”

Kang Chul-In looked at the soldiers of the Burrow lands that were approaching from afar and called to Timothy.

“Yes... Sovereign...”

Timothy was still sullen. The thought of being abandoned was too much for the old goblin.

“What do you expect the outcome would be?”

Kang Chul-In asked.

“...if you compare just the strategies, it is expected that the Burrow lands will make a grand victory.”

“Really?”

“The military power of the Burrows is strong. There are 300 ants, 4 Giant centipedes, and the Shogun has a Flammable toad as well.”

“They are specs that would affirm a victory.”

Kang Chul-In nodded.

It was the truth.

Military power meant economic power.

Because Laputa was so expensive, Kang Chul-In did not have extra money to spend on the store. It was a bit embarrassing, but the current financial status of Laputa was destitute and sparse. Kimura's war potential was clearly better.

However, Kang Chul-In did not bat an eye after hearing Timothy. He smiled a leisurely smile.

“So, you think your Sovereign can conquer this land?”

“That...”

Timothy could not give an answer quickly.

“We definitely have higher war potential. We have the upper hand... but why do I feel so uneasy?”

The incompetence of the Sovereign, Kimura was that, but Kang Chul-In's confident demeanor got to him. How could he be so relaxed when he was extremely disadvantaged? Timothy could not guess the outcome of this battle.

“I'll give you the answer.”

Kang Chul-In spoke.

“I will win.”

It was a straight-forward, confident statement without an ounce of doubt.

“Today, your land will fall.”

“No!”

Before anyone could blink, Timothy shouted and disagreed.

‘So, he is still an advisor, I see.’

Kang Chul-In looked at Timothy and was a bit in awe of the old Goblin’s loyalty.

Timothy, as seen through Kang Chul-In’s eyes, looked as if although abandoned, he did not lose his loyalty towards his Sovereign.

“Altho... although the Shogun is inexperienced, he will not lose!”

“Hm... really?”

“Of course! Although your Grace seems extraordinary, you will not be able to easily overcome the difference in statistics...”

“Well, if you wait, you’ll see.”

Kang Chul-In cut Timothy off and spoke to Lucia.

“The megaphone.”

“Yes, my Lord.”

Lucia politely handed Kang Chul-In a megaphone bewitched with a sound amplifier.

“An offering of surrender is the virtue of the strong.”

Kang Chul-In looked below and spoke. And there was Kimura and the soldiers of the Burrow who had almost reached Laputa.

Beep-!!

-Ah Ah, Can you hear me?

Kang Chul-In did a mic test of sorts.

“Are you the Sovereign of this land?”

Kimura yelled to answer Kang Chul-In. Kimura, who hadn't brought a megaphone, had no choice but to yell as loud as he could.

“Surrende...”

-Surrender j.a.p.

-Then I will spare you your life.

Kang Chul-In beat him to the punch.

“J... j.a.p?”

Kimura's eyes burned up with rage.

“You, you... Joseon bug!”

As Koreans knew the insult “Joseon bug”, the j.a.panese also knew their insult.

“How dare you call me Ja...”

-I call a j.a.p a j.a.p, what else would I call you. Stop talking nonsense and surrender.

“You... you...!”

Kimura shook with rage.

Kang Chul-In's voice was so detestable and it felt as if his rage would bubble and fill into his bone marrows.

-If you don't surrender nicely...

Kang Chul-In, with a smirking voice sent Kimura the final punch.

-I will let you feel what it feels like to be hit with an atomic bomb. Wait, that is you j.a.ps' specialty. You are the only people who got hit with one. Two at that... you people can really take it though. You c.o.c.kroaches."

Kimura could not muster a comeback.

Although Kang Chul-In was pus.h.i.+ng all his b.u.t.tons, it was fact that no one could deny.

j.a.pan was the first to ever be hit with an atomic bomb in the world, and it was also the last to be hit with an atomic bomb.

'Little Boy', the atomic bomb made from uranium and 'Fat Man', the bomb made from Plutonium, was one of the biggest humiliations for the j.a.panese people.

"I will, kill you!"

Kimura, who was angered to the point of bursting, roared.

-Well, try it then.

Kang Chul-In sneered.

-Don't know if you are capable of doing so, though.

And in that moment, Kimura felt something snap in his head. He had lost his sanity.

"Attack!"

Kimura roared the command.

"Now! Go bring him to me! Attack, I said!"

And that was the start.

The soldiers of the Burrows under the leaders.h.i.+p of Kimura all began to charge towards Laputa's castle walls. The siege had started.

"Ah, oh Shogun!"

Timothy shut his eyes tightly at the dismal situation.

Even if he had lost in the verbal battle, the Sovereign had fallen easily by Kang Chul-In's taunts. For Timothy who was in the center of enemy territory, he was so embarrassed he wanted to hide in a hole.

"Are you still loyal to a stupid idiot like him?"

Kang Chul-In who had seen this, threw Timothy a question.

"Sovereign, please be watchful of your language. This Timothy, although he has been abandoned by the Shogun, still has his loyalty."

"Really?"

Kang Chul-In said, as if he was intrigued.

"Then..."

And he smiled. It was the devil's smile.

"Enjoy watching."

And it was then that the soldiers of the burrows began to climb the castle walls.

# Chapter 20

## Got you, you little thing!

The Ants were masters of siege warfare, or more accurately, masters of wall climbing.

It was expected, seeing that the Ants were basically enlarged ants. Although they preferred to walk on two feet like humans, their foundations were ants. It was no effort to climb walls.

Therefore, the time that the ants took to climb the walls of Laputa was almost none at all.

'If the ants climb the walls and make it over the edge, my Sovereign will win!'

Timothy watched and clenched his fists.

The current state of the battle was the 300 ants that were almost about to take over Laputa's castle walls. If the ants were to safely climb the castle walls, the victory would belong to Kimura. Although the soldiers were well trained, there was no way a hundred troops would be able to hold off 300 ants. Ants were extremely strong and able to hold up 20 times its weight.

But...

The ants that seemed as if they would make it over the castle walls at any minute, had to endure the humiliation of not even one making it over.

"Ready!"

James ordered and the soldiers of Laputa made suspicious movements.

What the soldiers had in hand were not swords, spears, bows, or muskets. Instead, they carried buckets filled with an unknown liquid.

And the liquid in the buckets were letting off warm steam as if it was boiling up until just a moment ago.

“Is it hot water? Ants can deal with hot water...”

Timothy tilted his head and mumbled. Then, Lucia stepped forward and shook her head.

“No.”

“Ah, it isn’t?”

“Yes, it isn’t. It is hot water, but there is no way we can win against the ants with just water.”

“Then, what is...”

“It is water infused with mint.”

Timothy’s face hardened.

“Ants do not like mint. The Ants are no exception. Of course, they probably will have more endurance against it, but they do not like it the same. We specially put a high concentration, so it will be effective. Look.”

Lucia pointed to the castle walls, where the battle was taking place.

“Eat this!”

“Here, drink some mint tea!”

“How dare you crawl up here!”

Kang Chul-In’s soldiers shouted and poured the mint infused water on the ants who were climbing the walls.

When about a hundred pails of mint infused water were poured, a strong mint scent filled the battleground. It was so heavily concentrated that Timothy, who had been watching the battle from the watchtower, felt as if his nose was paralyzed.

The reaction was instant.

The ants that were crawling up the walls with dangerous speed, could not use any of

their power and began to fall from the walls, one by one. There were also ants who were shaking and convulsing amongst the fallen.

“How can this be...!”

Timothy mumbled to himself, full of grief.

“With... just this simple strategy...”

“It is simple but clever. Well, we have used all our mint in our inventory but...”

Lucia beamed with pride.

“Timothy, you said? The Sovereign you serve will not win. Our Sovereign had previously already figured out your land’s main military forces and came up with a solution. This battle will end with Laputa’s overwhelming victory.”

“But...!”

“Of course, with only mint-infused water, it is not enough. But!”

Timothy began to protest, but Lucia shook her head as if to tell him that it was not the end.

“Do you think this is it? My Sovereign is much greater than what you believe. Observe with your eyes wide open—and see how great He is!”

Lucia said proudly. And Kang Chul-In had to tightly shut his mouth of embarrassment.

‘c.r.a.p, I don’t know why she is making such a big fuss about nothing. How can I live off embarrassment?’

Ants were powerful organisms, but most Sovereigns would know that they had a clear weakness. Of course, there would still be a few who could think of these things in situations like these.

And while this was happening, the tide of the war was turning towards the favor of Laputa.

“Aha! You ants! Try and climb!”

“How does mint tea taste?”

“Come, try and come! I’ll kill you all!”

As the ants fell one by one, Laputa’s soldiers who were pumped with adrenaline showed amazing skill as they protected the castle.

Boom! Boom!

The musket soldiers pulled the triggers...

Swoosh!+

And the soldiers with long spears threw them towards the bottom of the castle walls.

“Ah, ah!”

“Aah!”

The ants yelled.

The ants who lost their energy from the mint scent crumbled like dried leaves, and were all falling from the castle walls.

“This... this!!”

Kimura, watching this, was grinding his teeth.

“Hey, you incompetent idiots! Climb the walls! Get over, I said!”

Kimura yelled from the top of his lungs, demanding the ants to move. His tone seemed like he did not care at all whether the ants died or not.

However, what was not, could not be.

No matter how much Kimura yelled, cursed, and roared, Laputa’s castle walls held solid.

As more and more time passed, only more and more ants were dying.

“Go! Go fast and kill all of those!”

And Kimura finally pulled out the giant centipedes that he had been saving.

Shhhh!

As the order fell from Kimura, four giant centipedes that were standing ready began to charge towards the castle walls.

“It’s coming!”

“Tell it to come! Nasty centipedes!”

“Let’s kill all of them!”

Giant centipedes were almost 10m long and were powerful enough to chew on a couple of Orcs, but Kang Chul-In’s soldiers shouted without fear, fired up for battle.

It was because the certainty of their victory had hindered them from fear.

It was then.

As the four giant centipedes were just about to climb the castle walls, Kang Chul-In picked up the megaphone.

-Hey, monkey.

After j.a.p, it was monkey this time.

-This is your last warning. Surrender now, if you don’t want to be taught a lesson.

It was a final warning of sorts, but Kimura completely ignored Kang Chul-In’s offer.

“You arrogant Joseon bug! You surrender! Say something that makes sense!”

Kimura was far from surrendering, and was going to send in more troops. The giant centipedes were just about to join in on the battle. He had no intentions of surrendering in the first place, but in a moment like this, there was no way he could.

“You go too! Go now, and bring that arrogant b.a.s.t.a.r.d to me!”

And finally, Kimura sent the leftover 50 troops that were guarding him. It was a display of how determined he was to win over Kang Chul-In.

And that decision acted as a signal to Kimura's fall.

Kang Chul-In called to James.

"Yes, Sovereign!"

James who had been leading the troops as Commander roared, answering Kang Chul-In.

-Teach him a lesson.

"Yes, I will show him what we have got! Did you all hear that! The Sovereign has ordered us to teach them a lesson!"

As James repeated Kang Chul-In's order, Laputa's soldiers all chimed in and brought out the secret weapon.

"He said to show them all we have got!"

"Let's grill them!"

"Let's make them nice and brown!"

In the hands of the soldiers, there were not pails with mint infused water, but with something different.

"Mint infused again...!"

"No."

Lucia disagreed with Timothy.

"Then..."

"It's oil. Extremely high in combustibility."

Timothy then finally realized the outcome of this battle.

Attack with fire.

Ants or giant centipedes, both were in essence, insects. Anyone knew that insects' weakness was fire. The Burrow land's main power was most susceptible to an attack with fire. And if they were all dangling on the castle wall like they were now... it was obvious that the fire would spread in a flash. The effectiveness of fire was going to amplify.

"Ah, Shogun!"

Timothy, overcome with grief, called out to Kimura and helplessly fell to the ground.

And as this was happening, the soldiers of Laputa were busy pouring buckets filled to the brim with oil.

"Light the fire!"

James ordered, and the soldiers all grabbed the torches hanging on the castle walls, and threw it towards the soldiers of the Burrow.

Woos.h.!.+ Woos.h.!.+

The flames caught in an instant.

"Ahh!"

"Help... help me!"

The ants who were engulfed in flames unexpectedly began to scream as they caught fire.

Keek!

The giant centipedes were no exception. All those who had absorbed large amounts of oil were all engulfed in giant flames.

A battle with fire began to show greater effectiveness as time pa.s.sed. Because they were all tangled up right below the castle walls, the fire spread extremely quickly. Before Kimura could order his troops to retreat, over half were consumed in flames.

“My... my soldiers!”

Kimura could not hide his horror as he witnessed his soldiers becoming roasted in an instant. He had been so confident... and the result was a brutal defeat, complete annihilation.

‘I must run away!’

Kimura who realized that he had lost, finally accepted reality and decided to run away to save his foolish life. It was obvious that he would experience horrendous things the moment he was captured.

“Run, run away! Now! Let’s go!”

Kimura urged the flame toad that he was on.

But... Kang Chul-In was not nice enough, nor dumb enough to allow Kimura to run away.

Clip clop, clip clop!

10 hors.e.m.e.n appeared from nowhere and roared towards Kimura.

“You stop right there!”

“You! Where are you going?”

“The Sovereign is waiting for you! Hahaha!”

“Where are you running to! You will die when you are caught!”

The hors.e.m.e.n were set aside by Kang Chul-In to capture Kimura in advance. They had been waiting quietly and watching the situation and appeared when they had seen the opportunity to capture Kimura.

“At... attack!”

Kimura ordered the flame toad. Because he had poured all his troops towards the battle, he had only the toad to protect him now.

The toad opened its mouth and let out a huge flame.

“Fire!”

“Spread out!”

The cavalry did not sit still and watch.

“The flame toad has strong fire power, but the distance is short and has slow movements. You will be able to overpower it easily if you spread out.”

The cavalry was already informed of the traits of the flame toad by Kang Chul-In prior.

Clip clop, clip clop!

The cavalry that had spread out according to orders avoided the flames of the toad and made their way to Kimura’s blind spots.

Swis.h.!.+

A couple of the cavalry fastened snares to the toad.

“Ah!”

Kimura, who was taken aback, swayed and fell to the ground.

“Go, go away! Go away!”

Kimura who was now alone screamed, afraid, but Kang Chul-In’s soldiers had no mercy.

“Get lost, get lost now... ah!”

Kimura clenched his neck and screamed. His neck had gotten caught in the snare thrown by one of the men. The soldier who had caught Kimura laughed and roared in delight. That cavalryman was named Podorski.

“Got you, little thing!”

# Chapter 21

## Initiated mental training

“Victory! We won!”

“Yeah!!”

Laputa’s soldiers who had been watching Kimura being caught atop the castle walls roared.

They had won.

It was not just a victory, but it was a grand victory in a situation where they were in an extreme disadvantage. It was a complete victory.

It was an inspiring achievement.

“Are any injured, or dead? Report!”

Commander James as soon as the battle ended, sought to quickly check the status of his soldiers.

“Platoon 1, None, sir!”

“Platoon 2, two injured!”

“Platoon 3, None, sir!”

Amazingly, there were no casualties.

Two soldiers who had suffered minor injuries were all the setbacks that Laputa suffered in the battle.

‘My Lord, did you predict this would happen?’

James looked towards the watchtower that Kang Chul-In would have been in, and

could not hide his awe.

“With the combination of troops that the enemy has, they will not win against us, no matter what they do.”

Kang Chul-In, who had gained intel on the Burrow’s troops, assured them. That they cannot lose, and that they will make an overwhelming victory.

And that had come true, right in front of his eyes.

“Walk faster!”

Meanwhile, Podorski and the other cavalymen bound Kimura tightly with rope and returned to Laputa.

“Ugh...!”

Kimura was dragged along by the soldier named Podorski.

But... he looked a bit strange.

‘What, what is that bounding method?’

‘Scary...’

‘how in the world did he tie it like that?’

In the minds of those looking, lots of questions arose.

Kimura was tightly bound in a very complicated and strange rope-tie, and it was tied so well that it did not allow for any movement from the head to the toes. It was enough to make everyone surprised.

Kang Chul-In too, was taken aback.

‘Ha... this is driving me crazy.’

Kang Chul-In hid his face in his hands, as if he was tired.

Where Podorski learned this was unknown, but the rope-tie that was used on Kimura

was a technique similar to the tortoise sh.e.l.l tie, commonly found in j.a.panese AVs.

A j.a.panese Sovereign bound with a tie found in j.a.panese p.o.r.nography... it was ironic.

“Sovereign, it is a complete victory. But why do you seem...”

“No, nothing.”

Kang Chul-In swatted his hand at Lucia’s worried question.

“I probably did not sleep well last night.”

Kang Chul-In who could not say that the tie method was lewd, just avoided the question saying that he was tired and moved his eyes towards Timothy.

“Timothy.”

“Yes... Sovereign...”

Timothy looked as if he had lost his country. In reality, he did lose a country. From today, the Burrows would fall to Kang Chul-In’s leaders.h.i.+p.

“Your Sovereign is incompetent and foolish.”

Timothy did not answer.

Although Kimura was incompetent and foolish, he was, up until a moment ago, still Timothy’s owner who he had pledged all of his loyalty. He could not turn his back the moment Kimura had lost.

“And he abandoned you. If you still have loyalty to pledge to a leader like him, pledge it to me.”

Timothy opened his eyes wide.

“So... sovereign...!”

“I don’t know how it looks in your perspective, but I value men of talent. I don’t know your capacity, but I like your loyalty. What do you think, would you grow this land

together with me?”

It was an unforeseen proposal, but it was also an attractive proposal.

‘Me, me... does he want this Timothy?’

Timothy could not speak, confused and jumbled at the sudden conciliation.

“You must need time. There, the sun sets.”

Kang Chul-In pointed at the mountains.

“Decide before the sun sets and darkness comes. I am not that laid-back. Then, I will go see that arrogant monkey.”

Kang Chul-In left, giving Timothy less than an hour to make a choice.

“Timothy.”

Lucia called to Timothy, who was staring blankly.

“What are you contemplating?”

“What do you mean...”

“You have hit the jackpot right now. You have the opportunity of a lifetime right in front of you, but why are you not taking it?”

Lucia spoke in a serious tone. It was not the tone of treating a loser’s advisor, but an advisor to an advisor.

“Us advisors, all of the land’s service people have waited an infinite amount of time between the dimensions. For our Sovereign to come and lead us!”

“But we cannot choose Sovereigns. Only the Sovereigns make a choice. Only G.o.d knows what Sovereign will lead us. Am I wrong?”

“You... you are right...”

“And a chance has been given to you to choose your Sovereign. Are you going to choose

that incompetent Sovereign..."

Lucia raised her arm and pointed at the doors of Laputa. There was Kimura, who was being dragged and humiliated all tied up with the rope tie of Podorski.

"or choose an extraordinary Sovereign like mine. This time, the choice is entirely yours. However, the Sovereign's right hand is my spot so do not dare!"

Lucia's eyes burned.

"Anyways, the Sovereign has given you time, so think wisely. Also... the Sovereign has already granted you a pardon once."

"That... is true."

It was true.

If it was any other sovereign, they would have had Timothy's head at the start of dawn.

"Do not disappoint him. Although he has shown mercy, he is blood and iron at the core. This... is probably the last chance you will be given."

Lucia was saying, "there is no second chance". Timothy's choice was either to serve Kang Chul-In, or die.

"Then, I hope you make a wise decision."

Lucia with those words, quickly left the watchtower.

"Ah... G.o.ds... what is this Timothy to do?"

Timothy who was now left alone, thought again and again.

Was he to remain loyal as an advisor to the end, or was he going to serve a new master? It was hard to decide. It was a problem too difficult to solve before the sunset.

When everyone was celebrating the victory, one person, Kang Chul-In was not rejoicing.

No, he was happy, but the material of his happiness differed.

If the others were purely celebrating the victory, Kang Chul-In was celebrating the rewards of the victory. He had won in the battle, and he had captured the leader of the enemy, Kimura. From today, the gold and surviving troops of the Burrows would fall into Kang Chul-In's hands. And...

'Timothy, he will prove useful.'

The old goblin was the biggest harvest.

Kang Chul-In wanted Timothy to pledge his loyalty to him. Because Timothy was too, an advisor. Like the 300 Sovereigns, there were also 300 advisors. Therefore, for each advisor, there was a [specialty]. A specialty usually for internal affairs. Maybe she was a special case, but he could not see Lucia's specialty.

However, Timothy was different.

Timothy in the eyes of Kang Chul-In had the skill of [Administration Master]. The capabilities of that skill were as follows:

-[Administration Master]

Level: 1 (Maximum Level 5)

Effect: Administration work performed, Efficiency +20%

Effect: Night s.h.i.+ft performed, efficiency +70%

Effect: Administration work performed, stamina +30%

It was a skill perfect to put to work on a desk. For Kang Chul-In, who's head spun just hearing the A in administration, Timothy was an extremely needed a.s.set. If Timothy pledged himself to Kang Chul-In, he would for the rest of his life, until his death, be in front of a desk with papers. Kang Chul-In, thinking of this and that, arrived at the Sovereign hall where his throne was. In the Sovereign Hall, there were Commander James and ten soldiers, the cavalryman Podorski, and Kimura waiting for him.

"My Lord, my congratulations on the victory."

"Congratulations, my Lord!"

His soldiers sent awestruck congratulations, but Kang Chul-In was not satisfied with this boring win, so he did not show happiness.

It was an easy win.

Kimura was an idiot too stupid to even call Sovereign, and trash not worthy of dealing with. Kang Chul-In was not a man who would be satisfied with a victory over an incompetent leader.

Think about it.

Would a professional boxer be happy that he had won against an elementary school child? Would a strong, fit man celebrate a victory after twisting a chicken's neck?

If there was one who was happy, that person would be the true trash that laughed after stepping on the weak. It would not be an overstatement to say all those who enjoyed ma.s.sacres of innocent people, were crazy.

"Enough congratulating. Now, I will teach this one a lesson so if you have a club that's suitable, bring it."

"Yes, Sovereign!"

At Kang Chul-In's orders, a soldier quickly went to fetch for a club.

"Are you Podorski?"

Kang Chul-In called for the cavalryman who had captured Kimura.

"Yes, my Lord. I am Podorski."

"...do you like handcuffs, by chance?"

"Huh? That... Handcuffs are a wonderful catalyst that makes boring s.e.x life more interesting..."

Poldorski was about to explain something, a little embarra.s.sed, but Kang Chul-In waved his hand and cut him off.

"Stop! Do not speak further."

“Yes. How do you know, my Lord, that I like handcuffs?”

“...don't try to know anything.”

Kang Chul-In turned away.

The reason why Kang Chul-In asked such a question... was that Podorski looked just like the mascot of a public safety organization of a certain country. The round eyes, short haircut, the M shaped forehead like a monkey, the excessively large ears, and the brown hair. If he had worn the uniform, no one could deny that it was that mascot.

‘A guy like that, used that crude rope-tie? You have to live long to see certain things.’

Kang Chul-In pressed his aching head tenderly and shook his head.

“...Anyways, you captured the enemy's leader, so you have done well. I will appoint you to Laputa's Director General.”

“Thank you, my Lord!”

Podorski bowed to Kang Chul-In in grat.i.tude of his unexpected raise in position.

“I, always wanted to be a cop ever since I was young!”

“...Seemed like it.”

“How, how do you know that, my Lord!”

“Just... don't ask. You'll get hurt.”

“Yes, Sovereign!”

Anyways, Podorski who said he wanted to be a cop since he was little, was given a position of determining Laputa's safety. Kang Chul-In looked at Podorski and thought that maybe a person's destiny was predetermined.

“James.”

“Yes, my Lord.”

“You did a good job as well. I will reward five gold.”

“Oh, thank you my Lord!”

Five gold was about 2,000 dollars. James’ smile reached his ears.

“I will postpone detailed rewards to a later time.”

Kang Chul-In looked down at Kimura and spoke.

“Uh... Uh! Mmm...”

Kimura bound with Poldorski’s rope and with a gag in his mouth was trying to say something. Although he could not understand it, he was almost a 100% sure Kimura was begging for him to spare his life.

“Young.”

Kang Chul-In who had seen Kimura’s face grimaced, as if to say the little boy was nothing.

“About a high-schooler? Well, I have no intentions of going easy anyway.”

Kang Chul-In was not someone to go easy because the other was young.

“Uh... Uh! Mmm!!”

Kimura, overcome with horror yelled. He must have felt his life in danger looking at Kang Chul-In’s eyes. It was that moment when the soldier who was looking for a club ran into the Sovereign Hall and handed Kang Chul-In an iron club.

“My Lord, here it is.”

Coincidentally, the iron club resembled the shape of a baseball bat, making it perfect to hit someone. There was not a club better to teach someone a lesson.

“Undo that idiot’s rope and make him lay in front of me.”

Kang Chul-In ordered

It was time to train the monkey.

# Chapter 22

## The Weight of War, the Weight of Order

Kang Chul-In silently swung the metal bat.

He did not swing it with everything he had. If he did, Kimura's hip bones would break after two or three hits, and he would die after ten blows. He controlled his strength as well as he could and hit as much as Kimura would be able to endure. However, even that was too much for Kimura.

"Ugh... Mmmm...!"

Every time the metal club swung, Kimura screamed, but the gag in his mouth m.u.f.fled the sound.

Crack, crack-!

Kang Chul-In hit like a machine. He looked so emotionless that, for those who were watching, the hairs on their backs rose.

And this lasted for about 30 minutes.

When Kimura had received about 50 blows, Kang Chul-In spoke.

"Untie him."

"Yes, Sovereign."

One of the soldiers quickly did as he ordered.

"Please... spare, spare me!!"

Kimura, who had been untied from Podorski's rope-tie and gag, begged and pleaded until his hands became his feet. He was crying and making a big commotion. Kimura looked like a young boy who just had gotten in serious trouble by his father.

“I... I will never do that again!! Please, please spare me my life! Don’t kill me!”

Kimura, who was begging on his knees, had lost any last sense of dignity he had as a Sovereign. He was so servile and desolate that even those looking clicked their tongues.

“What have you done wrong?”

Kang Chul-In asked.

“I am sorry for causing the war. I am sorry. I’m sorry for cursing.”

“Wrong.”

Kang Chul-In shook his head.

“Put the gag back on him.”

The gag went back on Kimura’s mouth.

“Mmmm... Mmmmm!!!”

The metal club swung again.

“Speak. What did you do wrong?”

Kang Chul-In who had delivered the second blow, asked Kimura again.

“I did wrong... I’m sorry...”

“So, what did you do wrong?”

“I don’t know, but I’m sorry for everything... Please just spare my life...”

“Put it back.”

Kang Chul-In seemed unsatisfied, as if the answer was again not what he was looking for.

Crack!

After the blows landed again for the third time and Kimura was almost unconscious, the iron club finally stopped.

“Ugh...”

“Do you still not know what you did wrong?”

“Please... if you tell, if you tell me...”

Kimura seemed like he did not even have the strength to beg anymore. Indeed, since although Kang Chul-In controlled his strength, he had been hit almost a hundred times.

“Sovereign, why don't you just take his head instead...”

James came forward, unable to watch further. Kimura was in so much pain that James had asked for a comfortable death.

“No, I am not going to kill him.”

Kang Chul-In shook his head.

“Feed him the potion.”

When the order fell, Kang Chul-In's subordinates shook in terror. It had sounded like he would heal him, then hit Kimura some more.

“The person who you should be begging to is not me but over there.”

Kang Chul-In went against everyone's predictions and put down his iron club.

“Since you ask to be taught, I will teach you.”

Kang Chul-In's finger pointed outside.

“The one you should apologize to is not me but your soldiers. Those who died for nothing because of the orders you gave with your incompetence.”

“You have the authority to give orders, no matter how incompetent of a Sovereign you are, but have you ever thought of the weight of those orders? Have you ever thought

of the things that were going to happen because of your orders?”

At Kang Chul-In’s criticism, Kimura could not say anything. It was even more so because they were all true.

“Of course, you are extremely young and you probably were not able to completely figure out the Grand Calling that suddenly happened. This situation may have felt like it was a dream, or a game. It’s not that I cannot understand. But...”

Kimura flinched at his loud voice.

“No matter how ignorant and incompetent you were, what you did is not easily forgivable. Giant centipedes, sure, but ants are a kind that has emotion and intelligence. And over two hundred of those ants are dead. Because of your orders.”

The Sovereign Hall fell silent at Kang Chul-In’s words.

“If you are in a high position, you need to be able to carry responsibility. How could you not, for the lives of your soldiers depend on your decision?”

It was not for Kang Chul-In to say, since he was the prime example of a conquest sovereign, but it was also something that only Kang Chul-In could say. How many had their life or death dependent on his orders? Kang Chul-In was once, a man who controlled thousands of lives. There were probably few who knew better than him, the weight of a Sovereign, and the weight of a war.

“If even one of my soldiers died, I would have killed you without hesitation. But I guess you are quite lucky, seeing that not one of my soldiers died in this battle. But... even if I forgive you, who will listen to the cries of your soldiers who died today? How about the emotional state of your loyal Timothy who you abandoned?”

“Ah, ah...!”

It seemed like Kimura finally understood Kang Chul-In.

“Beg for forgiveness, to those who died because of your foolishness.”

“I am sorry... I’m so sorry...”

Kimura knelt towards the front and bowed his head.

“I am sorry... I’m so sorry...”

The apology lasted for a long while.

‘I changed a lot too.’

Kang Chul-In silently looked at Kimura and realized he too, had changed. If it was him before, he would have cut the throats of every man and woman, as well as the lives of the people of the enemy Sovereign. Although it was not often, there were a couple of times when he had.

However, after his return, he himself could feel that he was different from before. Maybe it was because of that day’s defeat that he had changed.

‘Well, let’s just call it an extenuating circ.u.mstance.’

Underage, foolishness, lack of realization that it is reality, etc... it was okay to show mercy once considering it was shortly after the Grand Calling.

Of course, as previously mentioned, it was also because there were no casualties on his side. As time pa.s.sed and Kimura apologized again and again to a point where he was almost unconscious, Kang Chul-In spoke.

“That is enough apologizing in front of me. I don’t know if the apology that you showed right now is sincere or a sly trick to save yourself from this situation. I don’t have a way of knowing nor do I care. But, if you truly feel sorry, then you must never forget what you did today. That is dependent on your humanistic qualities, and I will not intervene.”

Kang Chul-In paused briefly, and then continued.

“My lecturing stops here. Like I said, I will spare you, so return home as soon as your throat gets better. Ah, before that, we must finish what we were doing. Lucia!”

Lucia who had come into the Sovereign Hall and was watching the event unfold, answered when she heard her name be called.

“Yes, Sovereign. What do you need?”

“Bring the Soul Core.”

“Yes, my Lord!”

Lucia disappeared somewhere, and then reappeared with a fancy sword that she held with two hands.

Soul Core.

It was a sword that had no use as an actual weapon and was purely for ceremonial purposes, but it was a key controller that symbolized the Sovereign and controlled the land. Therefore, the Soul Core was something that only the Sovereign and his advisor could touch. Kang Chul-In was able to control Laputa’s facilities and the magic engineered satellite in s.p.a.ce only with the Soul Core. The Soul Core for a Sovereign was like a royal seal, or a G.o.d-Given gift.

“You do not have the right to be a Sovereign. Also, the responsibility of defeat falls solely on the Sovereign. Therefore, I will take away your position here as Sovereign.”

“How...”

Kimura answered with a quivering voice.

“The thing you are wearing on your waist, that is the Soul Core. You need to make a vow to me holding it.”

Kimura took out the Burrow’s Soul Core at Kang Chul-In’s orders.

“Get on your knees and touch your sword to mine. Repeat after me. I”

“I.”

“Pledge my troops and my land”

“Pledge my troops and my land”

“to the one who was victorious over me,”

“to the one who was victorious over me,”

“Laputa’s Sovereign, Kang Chul-In.”

“Laputa’s Sovereign, Kang Chul-In.”

“Leaving nothing,”

“Leaving nothing,”

As the vow continued, the Soul Cores of Laputa and the Burrow began to radiate an energy.

“and give up my status as Sovereign.”

“and give up my status as Sovereign.”

As soon as Kimura finished reciting the vow, the Burrow land’s Soul Core burned bright red. And...

Crack!

Broke into a million pieces.

In the remains of the broken Soul Core of the Burrow lands, magic energy flowed into Kang Chul-In’s Soul Core.

And messages popped up in front of Kang Chul-In.

[You have gained control of the Burrow lands.] [You have gained 5 levels with the conquest of an enemy Sovereign.] [You have gained 50 Sovereign Points with the conquest of an enemy Sovereign.] [Level 14 Reached!] [Tutorial 1 Quest Complete!] [Reward in Quest Completion: Experience +500/ 20 Gold/ Warp Gate unlocked (unlimited)]

Because it was brief information it was not in detail, it was definite that the owners.h.i.+p of the Burrows fell to Kang Chul-In. The ants who survived as well as the gold that Kimura had would have also transferred to Kang Chul-In. Aside from the advisor Timothy of course.

Also, because he cleared the Tutorial 1 Quest, the reward that followed was also given. Even if it was a boring win, the reward was clear.

“Is, is it... over now?”

Kimura spoke weakly.

“Yes, it is over.”

“I, I am sorry... I am sorry to everyone... I apologize...”

And Kimura fainted, falling to the ground. He could not finish.

“Take him and tend to him.”

As soon as Kang Chul-In ordered, two soldiers took Kimura and disappeared to somewhere.

‘Now, would I have some time to return to Earth?’

Compared to the three or four days he had predicted in the beginning, he was in Pangaea for two weeks, so he had postponed for an extremely long time.

However, he could not go right away.

He needed to take care of the ants who survived, the fire toad that he took from Kimura, reward for his troops, as well as dealing with what to do with the Burrow land. In order for him to return to Earth, he needed at least two or three more days.

‘Also, was it time for me to pay the interest?’

Kang Chul-In remembered the borrowed money and smiled a bitter smile. He probably had to tell Lucia from the privy purse. But, there probably would be quite a bit of gold from Kimura, so there would be plenty after the debt was paid. If there was a bit more, he maybe would be able to give his mother some allowance and find her a good apartment for rent.

It was true.

The Sovereign Kang Chul-In, too, could not escape worrying about debt and apartment rent. Of course, if more time passed, he would claw in heaps of money in the millions instead of the thousands, but that would be at least a year later.

# Chapter 23

## Timothy's loyalty, and Kimura's disappearance

Kang Chul-In dove straight to post-war management. But... as soon as he started, the vessels in Kang Chul-In's forehead bulged. It had happened after he checked the amount of gold.

'...what is this idiot?'

Unfortunately, the gold that he had taken from Kimura was only 2 thousand gold.

Two thousand gold.

If you had estimated 1 gold to be about 400 dollars, two thousand gold would be about 800,000. It was a lot of money.

However, that was not enough. It was incomparable to the amount that Kang Chul-In had imagined previously.

'Control yourself, calm down... Urg!'

Kang Chul-In had to fight the urge to run to Kimura and grab him by the collar and mustered up all his patience to calm himself.

It was too little.

The price of the Burrow land would be at most 4,000 gold, but aside from the two thousand that he had acquired, where had the remaining four thousand gone?

"Sovereign."

Lucia, who was holding Laputa's Soul Core gingerly, asked carefully when she noticed Kang Chul-In shaking in anger.

"Is there something wrong?"

“There is too little.”

“What? What do you mean...”

“The gold that we took from him... it’s too little. There is only 2 thousand gold.”

Lucia was also surprised at what Kang Chul-In said.

“Two thousand? There is no way! There needs to be at least four thousand!”

“...I think he spent a lot. He probably spent excessively seeing the money.”

“Oh my G.o.d!”

“There is nothing we can do. We can’t tell him to return gold he has already spent.”

“That is true.”

“Lucia.”

“Yes, Sovereign.”

“That’s why...”

“Please speak.”

“Can you give me 500 gold from my private pocket?”

Kang Chul-In said, a little embarrassed.

Private pocket.

It was personal money only for a Sovereign. More simply put, it was an allowance of sorts for the Sovereign. It was usually decided after consulting the advisor, but Kang Chul-In was embarrassed because the financial state of Laputa was quite bad. They were very close to being in financial trouble, but as soon as some money came in, he had asked for personal money.

“Sigh...”

Lucia sighed.

Kang Chul-In, a bit embarrassed, pretended to do something else.

“Sovereign.”

“...Speak.”

“I would have given you a thousand gold, if you have asked without hesitation.”

“There is a saying, a man is able to be proud if his wallet is full.”

“Yes.”

“If you were to maintain your dignity, you would need at least a thousand gold. I will give you a thousand.”

Lucia had big hands.

“This Lucia, even if we have to save and go without, will give you enough allowance! Even if all the people have to eat boiled cattle feed instead of bread!”

But she must also have known how to apply pressure.

“...Give me only 500 gold.”

“Is that enough?”

“...it is more than enough.”

Kang Chul-In succeeded in getting 500 gold in allowance.

It was then.

From far away, Timothy ran with his short legs towards him and kneeled in front of Kang Chul-In.

“Sov, Sovereign...!”

“This Timothy, after much thought has decided to serve you, Sovereign! Although I am

an unfaithful body that has changed Sovereigns, I will give all I have to serve you!  
Please take me...!"

"Stand, Timothy."

Kang Chul-In smiled widely and stood Timothy up.

"You are an important asset that will take care of my land's administrative duties and distributions."

"I will appoint you the land's executive official. Also, I will also entrust you with the military distributions. Your title..."

Kang Chul-In who was in thought for a moment turned his head and smirked widely.

"is administrative supply officer."

"Administrative supply officer!"

"Yes."

"Entrusting such an important task to me... I am grateful!"

Timothy was crying as he thanked Kang Chul-In again and again. However, Kang Chul-In's intentions were black and evil.

'Heh, heh... I will bury you in papers.'

Timothy had the skill of being more and more effective the more and more he was overworked. In order to make him the most productive, night shifts were a must.

"I will go attend to post-war management, so you rest well for the time being."

"Yes, Sovereign!"

Kang Chul-In, who had sent Timothy away, went immediately to his Royal Guard to reward them for their contributions.

"Hooray! Hooray!"

“Glory to the Sovereign!”

“Congratulations for the win!”

Laputa’s soldiers congratulated Kang Chul-In and celebrated their victory.

“Tonight, I will send beer and sausages, so everyone eat and drink to your heart’s content!”

Kang Chul-In suggested a meal to comfort the soldiers and reward them for their hard work.

“Woah—!!!”

“This is the best!”

Like young, energetic men, the soldiers were extremely happy at the news of beer.

He met the people of the land as well.

A couple of the women of the land, gifted Kang Chul-In bouquets of flowers or necklaces made from flowers. Amongst them was Lana, Rustler’s daughter as well.

“My Lord...”

Lana who was not yet of age, blushed and looked embarrassed.

‘What the. What’s wrong with her?’

Kang Chul-In was taken aback by Lana, who was twisting her body, but he did not show it.

“Sovereign... Lana is...”

Rustler’s only daughter spoke and lowered her eyes to the ground. Her ears were so red that it seemed like it would explode at any moment.

It was then.

Commander James ran to him quickly and yelled to Kang Chul-In, covering Lana’s

voice.

“Sovereign! Sovereign!”

“What is it, James?”

“I have gathered the surviving Ants and the fire toad in the drill grounds!”

“Right. I will go now.”

Kang Chul-In turned towards the drill grounds right away. It was important to deal with the enemy troops.

Lana, who could not finish her sentence, blew air in her cheeks and glared at James, but no one noticed.

Kang Chul-In, who arrived in the drill grounds, looked at the enemy troops from the reviewing stand. They looked horrible, all of them horribly burned.

“Lucia!”

“Yes, my Lord.”

“Bring all the honey from storage and feed it to them.”

“Yes, Sovereign!”

Honey for ants were the best health food, and the medicine that cures all. For them who were insects, sugar was the most nutritious.

“James!”

“Yes, my Lord.”

“Give them potions. Take care of them so their wounds will heal well.”

“Yes, my Lord!”

After giving the orders, Kang Chul-In left the stand and headed towards the leader of the Ants.

“You are probably hurting a lot, and also very sad.”

Verna, the leader of the Ants, opened her eyes wide at Kang Chul-In’s comforting words.

“I feel sorry.”

“No... its nothing...”

“But what can we do? War is all like this. If I did not want to die, I had to kill you instead.”

“I know...”

Verna lowered her head.

“You must hate me and despise me... but what can we do. The Burrows are under my leaders.h.i.+p now.”

“Yes, Sovereign.”

“I wish to entrust you with the architecture of this land.”

In the surprising offer, Verna opened her eyes wide.

“I will not send you to battle. Building, I will only ask you to build. Would you help me and build grand buildings in this land?”

“Do you mean that, Sovereign?”

“I know that your happiness is work, and only work. I do not need anything else. I want only work, and not fighting power from you.”

“Then...!”

“Will you do it?”

“Yes, Sovereign! No, my Lord! I will serve you!”

Verna bent her six legs as best as she could and bowed as best as she could.

“I will serve you to the best of my ability!”

“I will serve you to the best of my ability!”

“I will serve you to the best of my ability!”

All the ants all vowed their loyalty to Kang Chul-In.

‘Simpletons.’

Kang Chul-In smiled in the inside.

Honestly, this kind of show was not needed, for he was able to control them, but there was a big difference in doing it and not. There was a difference in loyalty.

[Gained +30 Favorability from the Ants] [Loyalty of the Ants from 60 to 75]

It was effective, as expected.

‘Ants are great manpower.’

Kang Chul-In wanted the ants vigorously.

There were dwarves who specialized in architecture, but dwarves were more useful in craftsmans.h.i.+p or as blacksmiths. For simply building architecture, ants were the best in construction sites. They were manual laborers down to the bone... and were a great labor force, so they would be extremely helpful in internal affairs.

Also, they enjoyed doing manual labor, so he did not need to feel guilty in putting them to work. They would not complain no matter how hard he worked them.

“James.”

“Yes, Sovereign.”

“Follow me with the flame toad.”

Kang Chul-In, who had left the drill grounds, finally went to the place where the land’s blacksmith worked.

“Oh, welcome, my Lord!”

The old man who worked as the blacksmith of the land was called Vulkanos.

“This guy, can you raise him well?”

Kang Chul-In handed the flame toad’s leash to the old man.

“This guy!”

“This place is the foundation that determines our land’s military force. The blacksmith’s workshop needs to be well stocked so good weapons can be made.”

“Thank, thank you my Lord! Gifting me with such a good monster!”

The old man Vulkanos kneeled and bowed.

For a blacksmith who worked with metal, a fire toad would be extremely helpful. A flame toad would be a great a.s.set and friend.

“I will support you well from now on.”

Kang Chul-In was a conquest Sovereign. There was no way he would be cheap with his support in a place where weapons were made.

“This old man, will pay back with twice, no ten times more than what you have supported me with!”

With that, post-war administration was finished. Night had fallen and torches were hung all over the land.

‘I’ll finally go home.’

Kang Chul-In was planning to return to Earth as soon as the sun rose tomorrow. He would visit his mother and also check on the status of finding Kwak Jung.

The next morning, Kang Chul-In stood in the magic square that lied in the center of the Sovereign Hall. However... he could not see the person that he was supposed to see.

“This idiot, where did he go?”

Kang Chul-In asked, and James’ face hardened.

“It’s... that...”

“Speak.”

“It seems, like he hid somewhere.”

“What?”

The person that Kang Chul-In was looking for was no other than Kimura. He was going to take him along when he was returning to earth.

“It’s that... there were a couple people who heard him whining that he did not want to go home.”

“He doesn’t want to go home?”

“That he is scared of his house... he said he would much rather stay here.”

“...what is he?”

Kang Chul-In put his face in his hands, as if he was annoyed. He had spared Kimura’s life, yet he didn’t want to go home. He could not understand what kind of a messed up situation this was.

“Find him, before I get back.”

Kang Chul-In ordered. Then, a man who seemed like he would be handy with a pair of handcuffs answered.

“Yes, my Lord.”

Podorski smiled widely and answered. On his waist were a pair of silver handcuffs, gleaming in the light.

“Leave it to me, my Lord!”

Was it just him that felt assured that it would get done when Podorski answered?

Kang Chul-In shook his head and activated the magic square. Returning to Earth was priority.

# Chapter 24

## Making a deal (1)

[The UN has launched an investigation on the posts of light that has been appearing on the landmarks around the world, meanwhile from witness accounts and first-hand accounts, there have been official reports that these posts are Gates that lead to a different world.] [There have been supernatural beings found around the world.] [From the reports of those who are traveling through the gate, the other world has all sorts of monsters...] [While mysterious medicines and items are one by one emerging, the United States has announced that they will actively recruit American dimension travelers in order to gain intel on this other world.]

The news was noisy.

There were some who had gained special abilities from Pangaea who then went on an American talk show (although it was simple magic), and videos of healing serious wounds with a red liquid in a glass jar was all over YouTube...

And articles of an animal that looked like a mixture of a squirrel and rabbit that was able to resist a 5.56 NATO flooded the mass media. January of 2021 was noisy and filled with news of findings of a new world.

“Sigh...”

Kang Chul-In, who had almost been watching the news for three hours, turned off the TV while letting out a sigh.

‘Habit...’

A bitter smile formed on his lips.

The reason for watching the news was simple.

It was a way of sorts to lessen the gap between Pangaea and Earth.

Different from Earth, where the supernatural did not exist and only pure science

existed, Pangaea was a world where advanced magic, martial arts, and monsters existed simultaneously. If you lived in such a place for a while, one's mind to the way one speaks were p.r.o.n.e to becoming like that of Pangaea. In order to lessen this, watching TV for long periods of time helped. Then, at least in reality, one would not use corny things like 'Shakespeare tone' and diction. Of course, when one returned to Pangaea, it would all become useless.

"Should I slowly get moving?"

Kang Chul-In mumbled and left his house.

In the hands of Kang Chul-In who was stepping out the door, there was a full bag, and in it was the 500 gold that Lucia had given him. Kang Chul-In was planning to sell this gold and get some money.

Broom—!

The mustang let out a heavy sound as it left the parking lot. The destination was Yongsan, in old terms called 'Bookgando'—the 21st street of an old business district. With the boom of online shopping from the 2000s and the opening of the 2016 HDC s.h.i.+nra Duty Free, there were almost no natives in Yongsan, and were almost all Chinese tourists. The glory of the electronic district long ago had become ancient history.

"We are not in business."

The 40-year-old man who was playing a card game on his computer with a cigarette in his mouth, said that when Kang Chul-In entered the old, shabby store filled with old, dusty computer parts.

"We don't buy things here."

He seemed like he got some cigarette smoke in his eyes, because he did not even look at Kang Chul-In and just crinkled his brow.

"I didn't come here to sell, I came here to buy. Don't pretend to do other things, and open the shutters."

Kang Chul-In spoke.

Then, the man turned his head slowly and looked at Kang Chul-In up and down.

‘What is this, young little boy?’

The man’s eyebrows came together. In his memory, Kang Chul-In’s face did not exist. It was a face he had never seen before.

‘Open the shutter? That means he does know something... cop? Oh c.r.a.p!’

The man was wary of Kang Chul-In and was put in a difficult place. For those who made a living dealing illegally, strange faces were always a dangerous factor. To make a deal with a stranger was always risky.

“I don’t know what you are talking about, but we don’t sell or buy. Okay? So, don’t be annoying and go do your business somewhere else. Huh? I screwed up... c.r.a.p...”

The man glared and said in a threatening tone. It seemed like he would throw a punch if he did not leave nicely.

“I came to see the old man Kwon so open the shutter.”

“I’m not police, nor do I work for the government. I came to sell this.”

With a thud, the bag with the gold fell on top of the laptop which the man was playing his card games.

“Ha... this b.a.s.t.a.r.d.”

The man with an annoyed face stood up suddenly. And he stepped close towards Kang Chul-In and put on a threatening face.

“Hey, what are you? What do you think this place is...”

“What do you mean, what is this place? It’s the old man Kwon’s store. Korea’s greatest money bug, old man Kwon.”

Kang Chul-In spoke.

“You rude little b.a.s.t.a.r.d...!”

In that moment, the man swung a fist towards Kang Chul-In.

The result was unfortunate.

“Blech, blech!”

The man grabbed his stomach and groaned, and threw up his lunch that he had eaten about an hour ago.

“Boss!”

“What is that!”

“Get him!”

Just in time, the other gangsters who had stepped outside for a smoke came back inside and lunged towards Kang Chul-In.

The result was the same.

There was not one who was able to touch even Kang Chul-In’s clothes. With one blow, all of them fell to the ground.

Kang Chul-In was a man whose fighting power surpassed that of a professional boxer with no skill. If he was Level 14... even if it was a lower level, these gangsters were elementary schoolers at most.

“You... you b.a.s.t.a.r.d... you... who sent... you... talk... before... I make a hole... in your head...”

The man who fell first spoke menacingly. Before anyone noticed, his hand was in the inside pocket of his jacket.

‘This little idiot?’

Kang Chul-In knew what was in that inside pocket.

Old man Kwon was a money thirsty man who would deal anything that would bring in money, like drugs, guns, or stolen goods. And for a gangster protecting old man Kwon’s store (although this was just one of the many), they would carry at least one

gun. However, Kang Chul-In did not seem at all scared even when he knew his opponent was carrying a gun. Of course, if he was... h.i.t with a bullet now, in nine cases out of ten, he would die, but he was confident he would not be hit in the first place, so there was no reason to be afraid.

'I'll break your neck.'

It was when Kang Chul-In smiled a bitter smile and decided to lunge at the man.

[Put the toy away. Nothing good comes of making a commotion.]

An old voice flowed out of the speakers that hung at the corner of the ceiling.

[I don't know where you are from... but you got some fists.]

It was the voice of old man Kwon.

'He's still the same.'

Kang Chul-In smiled quickly at the familiar voice of old man Kwon.

Kwon had often made deals with Kang Chul-In in the past.

Kang Chul-In had sold items that were difficult to distribute for him with a fee or purchased items as well—it was quite a nice business partners.h.i.+p.

[Open the shutter and bring him downstairs. I want to see his face.]

Kang Chul-In was able to meet old man Kwon, who was surrounded by eight bodyguards, when he pa.s.sed the shutter and went down a secret tunnel leading to a bottom floor.

"You are not a familiar face, who introduced you?"

Old man Kwon formed a sort of approachable smile and asked.

"No comment."

Kang Chul-In answered.

“That won’t do. Although it may seem that in this line of work, you just do whatever, but there is no after-trouble if both sides are clean.”

The old man seemed reluctant.

“You won’t get an upset stomach even if you eat this, so let’s just deal.”

“Let’s just deal?”

In old man Kwon’s bald forehead, the veins bulged.

“Haha! Hey, young man. Have you never heard of respecting your elders? You will go with one blow like that.”

“The old man Kwon that I know likes money more than talking about petty formalities.”

Kang Chul-In responded back.

“...?”

“First, this.”

Kang Chul-In put the bag with 500 gold on Kwon’s table.

“500 gold that are 10g each. 97.8% purity. Market price is about 200,000? 10% commission is enough?”

“Ho... work talk right away... Fine, money over formality. So, origin? Stolen? Illegal mining?”

“The noisy place these days.”

Old man Kwon’s face hardened.

“You must know that in any business, it is beneficial to start in the early stages, yes?”

Kang Chul-In slyly threw bait.

“Very, beneficial. The early bird catches the worm. Yes, of course. However, entering a

new market has also big risks.”

Old man Kwon said pretending not to pay attention. He was an experienced old man, so he did not go for the bait right away.

‘It is appealing, but he means that there is no reason to jump into it if the money is good right now.’

Kang Chul-In could understand what old man Kwon was intending.

‘However, old man, you are going to decide to work with me.’

There was a critical weakness in what old man Kwon said, and old man Kwon too would be played by Kang Chul-In’s speech.

“Seems like the risk is big enough, even now?”

“Hm?”

“Guns, drugs, fake IDs, money laundering, etc. If you get caught with one, 20 years is minimum. That’s your lifeline, and talking about risk, it doesn’t make sense.”

“Kmmm...!”

An uncomfortable dry cough came from the old man’s mouth.

To speak the truth, old man Kwon was a criminal.

No matter how powerful Kwon was in the dark world, it would be complete annihilation once he got caught by the authorities. The old man had come this far with luck and good resources, but it was still like walking on eggshells.

Like a man dancing on the edge of a sword, it was not strange if the old man went to prison suddenly.

“Hey, young friend. What you say isn’t false, but if you push me like this, nothing will be beneficial to your life. If I put my mind to it...”

“You think you can do something to me with those gangsters?”

Kang Chul-In snorted and pointed to the the old man's guards with his chin.

"No matter how strong your fist is, there is no use in front of a bullet."

The old man spoke coldly. It meant he will kill him if he fooled around further.

"I'm disappointed old man."

"Disappointed?"

"I thought you wanted to come out to the bright side."

Upon hearing those words, old man Kwon's wrinkled eyes opened wide.

"Old man, your money is like a prize beyond your reach. You can't even buy a building under your name, and how long do you think you can live under an a.s.sumed one? What are you saying, that you don't have too long to live anyways?"

"Of course you deal in cash, so profit must be large... but considering how much it costs to silence mouths and risks, isn't living that kind of life not that great either? There isn't a country like Korea that is sensitive to guns and drugs either. But I guess to change businesses now, you are probably afraid of all the negative responses from all sorts of places. It's obvious you can't fold your business because you cannot do this or that. Am I wrong?"

Kang Chul-In's speech was sharp and painful, enough to rip the old man's heart to shreds, but not one part of it was untrue.

"Old man, this is a chance. A chance for you to leave the dark side and come up to the light."

"I'll give you a bit of information. Of course, it will spread everywhere... but it is quite a good piece of information right now."

"Ta... talk."

It seemed like the old man agreed with what Kang Chul-In was saying.

"The other world, more precisely, in Pangaea, you cannot take items from this world. You can only bring things. Think about it well, what this means."

The old man slowly thought of the information that Kang Chul-In gave him.

‘Cannot take in... can only bring out... Pangaea? Those who go back and forth are the select few... can only bring out... wait, it seems like he is saying there is no need to invest a big amount of money... ’

In that moment, the old man’s eyes sparkled.

‘Distribution!’

Although it was illegal, he had lived doing business for tens of years. Even with a bit of source, his head spun fast, and a way to profit had come to him.

“Still smart.”

Kang Chul-In smiled a satisfied smile, as if he knew what the old man had thought of.

“You need to just secure a distribution network. Just sit still and wait until the travelers of Pangaea bring the items for you to distribute, and all you need to do is profit off the commission.”

That was the key.

“But, but what? What do I know what they can bring from there? In detail, what kind of items?”

Old man Kwon asked.

“For example...”

Kang Chul-In answered.

# Chapter 25

## Making a deal (2)

“Something like this?” The thing that he handed towards the old man was a plain looking ring.

“What is this?”

Meanwhile, old man Kwon’s tone was quite different.

It was a green light.

It meant that he would treat Kang Chul-In as a business partner, instead of some little kid of unknown origin.

“A ring of strength.”

“A ring of strength?”

“It will increase the strength of the one wearing it of about 10kg. It is cheap, but the effect is apparent.”

“Are you telling me to believe...” “Old man.”

Kang Chul-In cut him off.

“You think I came to sell drugs?”

The cold question, and the colder eyes. Old man Kwon had to fight the urge to want to faint.

‘What kind of a guy’s eyes look like that...!’

It was a horrifying glare that he had never seen in his many years of life.

Can this be?

Due to his business, Kwon was to meet all sorts of criminals, and amongst them were guns for hire or gangsters who had killed many. However, amongst those cruel gangsters, there was none who made his hairs stand on edge like this young man. He did not know where this guy had come from.

“I... I am sorry... I made a mistake.”

Finally, old man Kwon lowered his tail.

Kwon, himself, could not believe it either.

His pride as a man was hurt, for he had gotten scared with eight bulky bodyguards behind him who were all armed.

He thought that there were all sorts of people in this world.

“Well, it’s okay.”

Kang Chul-In who had scared him without intending to, swatted his hand.

“There is a saying , ‘seeing is believing.’ It would be easier for you to understand when you use it once than me saying it a thousand times.”

“Could I?”

“Of course.”

Kang Chul-In nodded, and carefully extended his hand to put the two rings on his finger.

“Hmm... hm...”

The old man coughed softly, as if he was embarrassed.

“This...”

“has no special feeling?”

“Yes, it’s that.”

“It’s not an expensive item, and it is just a commonplace object. Expect plausible things, old man.”

“...how do you use it?”

“Just lift anything. It would be better if it was something you usually could not carry because you did not have enough strength.”

“Hm...”

At Kang Chul-In’s words, the old man stroked his white beard and picked up a 20kg barbell that was at the corner of the office. It was a barbell that one of his bodyguards used often to work out.

“...!”

The old man’s eyes opened wide.

“What, what is this?”

Of course, the old man would have been surprised, seeing that he lifted the barbell (which he could have not picked up with two hands) with one hand.

“You wore two at once so you can lift up 20kg more than usual. It would be possible for you to swing it too.”

Kang Chul-In kindly explained.

“Is that true?”

“Of course.”

“Can I try?” “Of course.”

As the approval fell, old man Kwon as if he had become young again spread out his shoulders, prepared, and swung the barbells.

Swish!

The 20kg barbells swam in the old man’s hand.

Able bodied men would have strained their joints... for a man who was almost 80, it was surprise worthy. It was as if he had gone back in time.

"...!" &l

dquo;That...!"

"No way!"

The body guards who had been watching silently also let out awed remarks.

"Amazing... hey, in that Pangaea or whatever it was, are there lots of things like this?"

"I called it cheap."

Kang Chul-In spoke.

"That ring is an extremely small part of the things that one can bring from Pangaea. Some things... are strong enough to bring down entire cities."

"Then... that means..."

"Whether you believe or not, is not important. As time passes, you will come to believe it." "Hm... that is true too."

"First, I want to start o our deal with selling off the gold that I brought today. What do you think, would you do it?"

"Well, no reason I couldn't. If what you say is true, I will jump into the business that you suggested, and not this one. This business is a goose that lays golden eggs!"

"Of course. Then you can have a fresh start and be honest to your family. Didn't the daughter you had late hate your job?"

"...!"

"I say this again, but this is an opportunity."

"...seems like there is nothing you do not know about me."

"Do you think I would have come not knowing?" Kang Chul-In knew very well of old

man Kwon's desires.

They were desires and hunger that all criminals could not help but have.

Humans, the moment they commit a crime, become engulfed in the law's grasp and suffer. The more and more they avoid capture, they needed to live in fear until the day they stand trial in a court of law. Therefore, of course they would want to escape the criminal status and live as a clean member of society. The gangsters did not escape law and become a corporation for nothing.

That mentality and desire was also the same for the old man, no, even greater, seeing that he was such a powerful

figure in the dark world.

It was a last wish for someone who had lived his entire life as a criminal. For Kang Chul-In who knew that better than anyone, he could control the old man.

"Your wish, I can make it come true."

"Real... really?"

The old man's voice shook.

"Just wait and see. The world will change after one or two months."

"Sigh... who would have guessed I would hear something like this when I was 80 years old?"

"That's why living is so fun. Who knew? That a gate to a different world would open?"

"You are right. The world is funny. You have to live long and see."

In no time, there was a large smile plastered on the old man's face.

"Hey, Chief Oh."

"Yes, chairman."

"Take a couple of the kids and take 300,000 out of the safe."

“Yes, sir.”

It was a 100,000 more than the actual price of the gold.

“I will not take commission. The 200,000 of the gold and the 100,000 is for the price of the ring.”

“It is not worth that much. Two or three thousand at most.”

“Really?”

“You can just have it, old man.”

“This, you are just giving this for free?”

“Let’s just call it a reception expense for our future deals. I have no use for it even if I carry it around anyways.”

“...you go big. But I cannot take it for free. Take the extra. I need to show at least that much appreciation for my future possible partner.”

“Well, if you insist, I will take it.”

And like that, the first deal between Kang Chul-In and old man Kwon was sealed.

It was a deal that both sides would have been satisfied with.

Kang Chul-In was happy that he could get cash, and old man Kwon was happy because he had gained items for business and that he was able to rekindle his old dreams. It was a win-win situation for both sides.

“I will contact you in a month. Be careful with your deals for a while. Even better if you close business for a while. It would be unfortunate if it falls apart before you ride the flower train. It’s annoying for me to find a new business too.”

Kang Chul-In who checked that the mounds of money were in the trunk, did not forget a request to be careful as he left the office. It would be difficult if old man Kwon had to go to prison even before he had started the new business.

“Of course, I will.”

The old man nodded.

“If you are to do some big jobs, you need to watch your safety. Don’t worry, I did not live my life in vain, so prepare well for our next deal.”

“Of course.”

With those final words, Kang Chul-In got in his now heavy mustang and headed to Park Du-Sik’s office.

“Chairman.”

Chief Oh called to old man Kwon who was watching the back of Kang Chul-In’s car that was speeding away.

“Ah, Chief Oh.”

“Even so, don’t you think a 100,000 was too much? What part of him do you trust?”

“Intuition.”

“Intuition?”

At the strange response, Chief Oh’s face fell into a grimace.

Intuition.

Also, a business was an evil that should never be done on intuition, but should only be dealt with by secure information and cold reason. Business was something that would put a person in debt with one wrong step, but the old man had given away a 100,000 on pure intuition. It was not something that the great old man Kwon would have done.

“Chairman, are you by any chance...”

“I haven’t gone senile, so don’t question me!”

Old man Kwon, who saw right through Chief Oh’s thoughts, screamed.

“Oh, Chief Oh... you stupid idiot! Because you have a head like that on your shoulders, I don’t nance your business!”

“..”

“This business, you don’t need to do anything at all. You know? He said, you cannot take anything from this world into the other one, so in the businessman’s perspective, there is no expenditures if you take out labor costs! It means that if you secure the ones who can move from this world to that, you will get filthy rich!”

“Oh, is that true...?”

“And this ring.”

Old man Kwon mumbled looking at the cheap strength ring that was on his finger.

“Science and technology aside, I have never seen or heard of something like this. What would happen if I give a professional baseball player something like this, huh?”

“Well, well... a crazy play.”

“And what if that professional baseball player played in the major league?”

“...the yearly pay would be about millions?”

“An idiot who knows that complains about a 100,000?”

“Oh!”

Chief Oh clenched the back of his head and looked as if he was going to pass out.

It was not the strength of an old man. The ring of strength had increased his powers, and he was as strong as a fit man.

“From now on, when that friend comes, be good to him. Although I don’t know for sure, he isn’t ordinary. Huh, where did someone like that come from? Like he said, you need to live long and see! Hahaha!”

Old man Kwon laughed loudly and smiled.

It was really a chance that had come after a long time... an opportunity of a lifetime that came at the age of 80.

\*\*\*

Kang Chul-In who came to the office of Park Du-Sik was treated like a king and sat on Park Du-Sik's "Chairman Chair".

"Report."

"It's... it's that..."

"Seems like there isn't too much advancement?"

"..." Park Du-Sik had no excuses.

"I understand."

"...!" "I did not think you could find him with a couple days anyways. It would take at least a couple months."

Kang Chul-In thought of Yubi, who waited for a long time to gain Jaegalyang and reminded himself to remain calm.

'You bastard, born with a golden spoon in your mouth and you eat up Lee Gong-Myung too?'

On the other hand, his anger towards Rothschild bubbled. Rothschild was the prime example of being born with a golden spoon and handed things left and right in his life.

Lee Gong-Myung, a Chinese immigrant residing in Korea had been able to study at Harvard because of his smart brain, and Rothschild who too, was studying at Harvard as the student body president and had kept a keen eye on Lee Gong- Myung for his intelligence.

In Kang Chul-In's perspective, imagining the man and woman, no the two jerks who he wanted to curse the most hitting their friendship o at Harvard made his blood ow backwards.

"This, in your language, do you say buy a suit?"

Kang Chul-In tried to calm his anger and placed four stacks of money on the table each with a hundred 50 dollar bills.

“Aigoo, oh, big boss! Why do you give us something like this?”

“You know what it means?”

“Of course. I will send out three or four of them and nd him.”

Park Du-Sik clenched his fists tightly, as if to tell Kang Chul-In to trust him.

“But... aren’t you using too much? Two is more than enough...”

“Don’t pretend to care for my nances.”

“...yes, big boss.”

Kwak Jung was the key if he wanted to teach Rothschild and Lee Gong-Myung a real lesson. A bit of money was not valuable to him at all. If he could have Kwak Jung, he would try three, no ten more times.

“I’m leaving. I’ll come again soon.”

Kang Chul-In who was finished with his business left Park Du-Sik’s office right away and headed to Bu-chun. It was to visit his mother.

‘I am such an unfilial child...’

If he thought back to the last 10 years, aside from the early 2,3 years, he had almost never seen his mother. To that extent, Kang Chul-In was crazed over Pangaea, and so he had committed the sin of turning his back on his only family. No matter how much money he gave her, he did not massage her shoulders once. As her son, he felt sorry.

‘I can’t even take care of my own family, so how can I rule Pangaea...’

Kang Chul-In thought and he pledged to be dutiful to his mother.

It was then.

The silent phone vibrated. It was from...

“Agent Lee?”

It was the Sovereign that he didn't know about, Lee Chae-Lin.



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