

Chapter 1106

It sends shivers down my spine sometimes. (1)

“Alright! That’s it for today!”

Thud!

Thud!

As Chung Myung’s explosive voice burst out, the disciples of Hwasan, including Hye Yeon, collapsed like a bunch of straw bales. The relaxed demeanor they had when they came out to the early morning training ground couldn’t be found even after washing one’s eyes.

“Already?”

“It’s almost midnight.”

“Hmm.”

Tang Gunak slowly retrieved the remaining daggers, looking quite regretful.

“I was just starting to loosen up. Back in my days, once I got into it, I could throw daggers for three days and nights... do I really have to stop at a moment like this?”

“Don’t worry. We’ll start again in exactly two hours.”

At those words, Hwasan’s disciples, who had been lying there like corpses, bolted up as if struck by lightning.

“Two... two hours?”

“It was supposed to be three hours, you idiot! Why did it change?”

“Oh, was it?”

Chung Myung clicked his tongue and scratched his head.

“But were your stomachs growling? It’s not like it’s anyone else, it’s His Lordship Tang Gunak personally training you. Tsk, instead of striving for even a tiny fraction of that precious time!”

“Uh...”

To be honest, that wasn’t a wrong statement. No, coming from that guy’s mouth, it was remarkably, incredibly rare to hear such a valid point.

It wasn’t just anyone — it was Tang Gunak. The Poison King Tang Gunak. He was one of the absolute masters reigning over the current Gangho.

Isn’t this situation about him, not engaged in mere exercises or sparring, but providing training akin to real combat all day long?

“If anyone else had heard this, they would have brought millions and begged to participate even just once! These bastards are incredibly ungrateful!”

“Mm...”

It’s right... but it’s right...

“...Regardless of millions or whatever, shouldn’t we survive first?”

“What’s the use if we survive but our skills don’t improve?”

“Please spare me.”

“Amitabha... I saw paradise...”

“That’s... it’s hell, monk. You can’t go to paradise.”

Ogeom squeezed out tears with a sad expression.

Was Tang Gunak’s hand truly merciless? No, not to that extent. If he genuinely wanted to attack and Ogeom had to block him all day, how many among them would survive?

Naturally, Tang Gunak was considering their abilities and showing some leniency. Moreover, they had been engaging in combat-like training for three years with Chung Myung, who was on par with Tang Gunak, if not more skilled.

‘Yeah, I know.’

Baek Cheon shivered all over. Despite knowing all these facts, the shivers creeping down his spine simply wouldn’t subside.

The problem lay in the difference between a sword and the throwing daggers.

They had absolute trust in Chung Myung’s sword. Even if he swung the sword towards their necks, they believed it would never truly pierce, no matter how close it seemed to come.

Without that belief, engaging in combat like exchanging lethal blows would be impossible.

They could attack and defend to their utmost because of their absolute faith in Chung Myung’s skill.

However, the issue lay in the fact that the daggers weren’t swords.

Even if Tang Gunak was the Poison King of the martial world and even if Chung Myung’s skills were believed to not surpass Tang Gunak’s abilities in handling hidden weapons, weren’t the daggers a type of weapons that, once released from one’s hand, meant it was over?

A single momentary mistake or a simple miscalculation could result in those daggers piercing through their heads, sealing their fate.

‘I never expected it to be this chilling.’

Whenever the intense energy-infused flying dagger swept past his face, it felt like his soul momentarily left his body and returned.

If someone ever wanted to experience a living hell, they could simply be placed in this situation.

But doing this from early morning until midnight, repeatedly throughout the entire day? Who in their right mind could endure that?

«Unfortunately.»

«...It’s better to just go with the flow.»

«As expected of Hwasan’s disciples. I can’t keep up with that.»

The extreme experience they were going through was evident not just from the surrounding silence but also from the reactions of the Nokrim and Tangga. Those who had once observed Hwasan training leisurely with bitter expressions now bit their tongues as if they had just

seen the most pitiful person in the world. Even if they encountered a starving beggar, who had nothing for three days, they wouldn't regard them with such eyes.

«How is it?»

Chung Myung asked.

Tang Gunak responded with a strange smile,

«Certainly different from just throwing the daggers alone. I felt something similar when I fought at the Maehwado before.»

«Really?»

«It was an attempt to offer help, yet it seems I've ended up receiving help instead. It feels like I might grasp something after practicing for just about fifteen days.»

«F-fifteen?»

«You mean this will take fifteen days or more?»

«Is this a joke?»

Ogeom grimaced.

Even now, their clothes are filled with holes all over, and their bodies are aching full of scratches... and he says it will take fifteen or more days? What?

«And... I think I've figured out what was lacking in the Tang clan. I even have a solution,»

Tang Gunak said, casting meaningful glances between Hwasan and his clan. With an unsettling gleam in his eyes, akin to discovering an amusing toy, both Hwasan's disciples and the Tangga's members shivered simultaneously.

'The combination is quite good.'

The most fatal weakness inherent in the clan begins with the essence of their martial arts.

While other sects improve their weaknesses by repeatedly wielding swords and sparring,

Tangga finds it impossible. Most of their hidden techniques are irreplaceable, like the wooden swords the swordsmen use during sparring, there are no suitable alternatives that can match their needles and daggers.

What happens if one carves a light, feather-like needle out of wood instead of iron? If made the same, it becomes too light to pierce with any force, yet increasing the weight to give it impact would nullify the properties of the technique.

Moreover, no matter how blunted the tip may be, a needle remains a needle. A slight mistake and the needle can pierce the eye and it's not just blinding but potentially life-threatening.

So, while the Tang clan can practice emitting and controlling their techniques alone, truly unleashing them against an opponent is an extremely rare experience. It was akin to an innate limitation.

However...

«Anyway, we blocked those flying daggers.»

«...Us?»

«We didn't do that.»

«I was just standing there.»

Tang Gunak smiled.

«Indeed, the disciples of Hwasan are humble. Is it because they resemble Hwasan Geomhyeop?»

«Isn't that going too far?»

«Lord, you've crossed the line. Please apologize.»

«This bastard is humble? Humble?»

Tang Gunak nodded approvingly, watching Hwasan's disciples, who were causing a commotion.

«They're still full of energy. Indeed, reliable,»

Although he said that jokingly, deep down, Tang Gunak was quite surprised.

'I have never expected it to be to this extent.'

Despite Chung Myung's training and prowess, there was a fixed perception about later-stage martial arts practitioners. So, Tang Gunak believed he wouldn't even use a third of his true abilities.

Yet, their abilities far surpassed Tang Gunak's expectations. Though he didn't show it outwardly, he was quite fatigued himself.

'I nearly had to resort to assassination techniques.'

Despite throwing the rain of daggers they managed to block and struck back in desperation.

Watching them advance was chilling. What kind of training had these young people undergone to reach such a level?

They weren't just reinforcing defense or enduring attacks — they moved forward without being fooled by the changes in the path of his flying daggers.

«In other words...»

«Yes?»

Tang Gunak's smile deepened.

'If they can block my daggers, the techniques our kids wield might not pose much of a threat.'

So, it might be possible.

Just as he evaluated himself by throwing daggers at them, Hwasan's disciples, despite being attacking fiercely, seemed to efficiently avoid injury. It was akin to finding a perfect target.

«Hwasan Geomhyeop.»

«Yes?»

«If their skills improve, it'll be beneficial in any situation, right?»

«...»

«Isn't that so?»

Under that subtle pressure, Chung Myung glanced briefly at Hwasan's disciples.

'I don't know what he is saying, but just please, it can't happen!' pleading eyes directed fervently towards Chung Myung. He nodded reassuringly, as if to dispel their worries.

Then, turning to Tang Tunak, Chung Myung spoke,

«That's obvious.»

«Hey, you bastard!»

«That damn traitor! Selling out your Sahyeongs?»

«We'll curse you even in hell! We'll make sure you die!»

Chung Myung sighed.

«A dog barks like this under the moonlit skies.»

Though Hwasan's disciples glared at Chung Myung with venomous eyes, it held little significance. Could they really kill someone with just their gaze?

«Well then, let's go.»

«Right.»

«How about it? You still seem energetic. A drink?»

«Hmm. It's hard to refuse when you invite me. But today, let's drink moderately. I'll pick the alcohol.»

«A bit disappointing, but alright.»

As the two conversed and moved away, Hwasan's disciples watched them in bewilderment, then shook their heads in dismay.

«Yoon Jong-ah.»

«Yes?»

«Mend that guy's mouth a bit.»

«Soso went to get a needle a little while ago.»

«I see. That was quick.»

Baek Cheon squirmed and struggled to sit up.

«I never knew throwing daggers could be this terrifying.»

«Absolutely. I'm feeling it painfully.»

«The fact that it's not in someone's hands is what's terrifying.»

«Exactly.»

Everyone they've encountered so far had either wielded weapons or thrown punches directly. In other words, as long as they didn't let the person get close, they could somehow deal with it.

But Tang Gunak was entirely different.

He simply stood there, yet the daggers he released from his hands swooped in at an incredible speed, dominating and toying them.

«There are no constraints.»

«Right, true.»

Baek Cheon nodded heavily.

No matter how much a swordsman might strive for freedom, they couldn't escape the limitation of holding a sword. Therefore, the transformations of a sword were often confined by the limits of the body.

However, the dagger, detached from a person's hand, had no such limits. Hence, it could create unimaginable changes.

This was another shock for them. Always living with a sword in hand, they had never once thought about how the sword might be limited by the body.

«There's so much to learn.»

«The progress is too rapid, Sasuk.»

«But... one thing's for sure...»

Baek Cheon looked at the now distant figure of Tang Gunak and continued,

«If we can fully grasp this, Hwasan will become even stronger. It's an opportunity we, as martial artists, can never afford to miss. I can't help but be pleased about it.»

A resolute determination shone in his decisive eyes, but the reactions of those who heard him were rather lackluster.

«That's just talk when you haven't given it a try yet,»

Jo Geol mumbled.

«Even if we postpone it till tomorrow, it wouldn't be strange... Opportunities come and go.»

«...Let's go get some rest. I'm exhausted.»

«Yeah, let's go.»

«I'm hungry.»

«We need to eat something.»

One by one, they got up, leaving Baek Cheon behind and heading towards their lodging.

«In any case, that's some kind of disease.»

«Let it be. That's Sasuk for you.»

«Sometimes Baek Cheon Siju attaches too much importance to things. That's also a kind of obsession.»

«It sends shivers down my spine sometimes. Ugh.»

Baek Cheon, left behind, watched their departing figures absentmindedly.

«Hey... guys?»

A cold breeze from the river swept over him, causing him to shiver as he slowly stood up.

«Ahem.»

He cleared his throat lightly, then followed after the others, his face showing a hint of awkwardness.

«Shall we go together, guys? Hey? Excuse me?»

Baek Ah, finishing his own training and observing the scene from behind, sighed deeply, lowering his head in disappointment.