

Chapter 1051

I must have been crazy too. (6)

He had never thought about it, never imagined it.

For them, who are called «Magyo» in the Central Plains, the people living in the Central Plains were nothing more than filthy unbelievers who should have already had their lives cut off. They were just insignificant beings, lucky to still have their lives, for it was not yet time, and the promised day from the Heavenly Demon had not arrived.

So, they were nothing more than the lowly ones who were permitted a worthless existence. That's why Jeogil had never even thought about it. He never imagined the day when he would feel 'fear' from these lowly and insignificant creatures.

Paaaain!

Chung Myung, his eyes filled with madness and malice, rushed in a straight line toward Jeogil.

For those who had to face this immense speed and momentum head-on, there was only one emotion allowed.

Thud!

Jeogil's feet struck the ground so forcefully that there was barely any time for thought. He was thrown backward, raising both hands high, almost like a madman. Fierce demonic energy burst forth continuously.

It was somewhat different from what had come before. It was an act more akin to pushing the approaching threat away than destroying the enemy of the faith.

It was more of an attempt to protect one's own life, opposite to existing to be offered to the faith.

The demonic energy was as dark as soot [흑연(黑煙)] rising above a roaring flame.

However, unlike smoke that scatters when waved away, this demonic energy, once it touched a person's body, tore through flesh and shattered bones, the embodiment of a demon [마(魔)]. This cruel demonic energy began to envelop Chung Myung.

Chung Myung, however, didn't slow down despite the approaching demonic energy. He extended his sword towards the lower left, and then swung it fiercely to the upper right.

A deafening sound, as if the eardrums would shatter, echoed.

Paaahhh!

A single strike [일검(一劍)] that seemed to tear through the very fabric of space.

A vivid red line appeared in the air, cutting through the center of the demonic energy released by Jeogil. Chung Myung dashed through the gap, his face adorned with a wicked smile.

Before Jeogil could even react, a chilling sensation crept around his ankle. It was the Dark Plum Sword, slashing horizontally across his it.

Swish!

The blade, which had cleanly severed the ankle in the front, leaped towards Jeogil's upper body like a soaring swallow.

Swish! Swish! Swish!

Jeogil, who had been sliced consecutively from his thigh to his abdomen, quickly opened his eyes when he saw the sword heading for his neck.

«Stop!»

At that moment, another enforcer descended upon Chung Myung at an astonishing speed, as if to split his head in two, with his hands cloaked in demonic claws.

Jeogil believed that he should prioritize blocking the attack heading for his head. However, Chung Myung surged forward at a speed faster than ever before.

‘What?’

Saaaahhh!

As the Dark Plum Sword continued to slice through the air and aimed for Jeogil's neck, Jeogil panicked and tried to block it with his hand.

Crack! Clang clang!

The demonic energy-covered palm, now harder than millennia cold steel, met the icy-cold blade of the sword, which was even colder than the winds of the frozen hell.

«Guhh...»

Jeogil was in a situation where his senses were extremely heightened due to the imminent threat to his life. Ironically, this was becoming a problem. His heightened senses transmitted pain directly to him. The blade tore through his skin, ripping apart flesh, and eventually wedged itself into his wrist bone, each step of the process vividly felt.

The sharp and relentless blade unraveled the resisting demonic energy, inflicting excruciating agony as it moved forward toward Jeogil's neck, like a slow saw cutting into flesh.

«Aaahhh!»

Jeogil screamed in pain, pushing the sword away with his hand, but in doing so, he only drove the blade deeper.

In no time, the Dark Plum Sword sliced through his wrist and up to his forearm.

«Kheh!»

Jeogil let go of the thin sword he was holding and grabbed Chung Myung's sword embedded in his left arm with his bare hand.

Quadddduk!

His left arm had already become useless. However, the Dark Plum Sword didn't seem to sway, as if it intended to cut off Jeogil's right hand as well. The situation was perilous even for his right hand, but Jeogil desperately clung to the sword.

His eyes noticed the enforcer's Demonic Hand [마수(魔手)] descending towards Chung Myung's head, and for a moment, he flinched.

'This fool! A mistake...'

But in that moment, Jeogil couldn't finish his thought. His enemy couldn't help but be aware of the immense demonic energy flying toward his head, but Chung Myung's face showed no signs of panic or fear.

He only stared at Jeogil with an icy and unwavering gaze.

«Die!»

Just as the enforcer's hand was about to descend upon Chung Myung's head.

Chaeaeaeaeeng!

A thunderous metallic sound resonated, and the enforcer's hand froze in mid-air right above Chung Myung's head.

Between the hand filled with boiling demonic energy and Chung Myung's head, there was a single white sword that suddenly emerged.

'When did this happen?'

Even a flush of color drained from Jeogil's face.

A young man who had been fighting behind, as if guarding Chung Myung, suddenly soared into action, intercepting the attack pouring down upon Chung Myung. It was as if he had known from the beginning that this would happen.

His contorted face and flushed complexion vividly revealed how much effort he had expended to narrow this gap.

«Kheh!»

Of course, the enforcer wouldn't easily give up after a single attack was thwarted. However, just as he was about to swing his hand again through the air, another shadow suddenly rose up behind Baek Cheon.

The enforcer hastily raised his head.

In that instant, he saw a female swordswoman soaring across the night sky. Her expression was terrifyingly cold.

«Samae!»

«Yes.»

Sweaaaack!

Yu Iseol's sword, slicing through the dark void, pierced through the enforcer's entire body with dozens of afterimages.

«Kraaaah!»

Under normal circumstances, he wouldn't allow an attack like this so easily, but the enforcer's attention was divided between Chung Myung and Baek Cheon. There was no way to effectively counter Yu Iseol, who had appeared at just the right moment.

The enforcer soon began to bleed profusely from all over his body and was thrown off. Red blood sprayed from the long sword wound on his face.

“Darned bastard!”

Baek Cheon cursed under his breath as he gritted his teeth.

There was no need for orders or instructions. It was clear what this madman aimed for when he lunged forward. So, as always, Baek Cheon should do what he had to do.

But... wasn't this going too far? If he had been just a bit slower, Chung Myung's head would have burst out like a ripe watermelon.

Whether you call it trust or recklessness, there was no time to question it. What he had to do now was abundantly clear.

«Haaah!»

Baek Cheon swiftly retrieved his sword and spun, sending the sword flying towards the tip of Dark Plum Sword's hilt that Chung Myung held.

Kagaaaah!

As his sword struck the Dark Plum Sword, Jeogil was thrown back, blood spraying from his wounds. Chung Myung, without hesitation, began to charge forward once again.

Before Baek Cheon could strike the ground, Yoon Jong and Jo Gol passed by him, sticking close behind Chung Myung.

Every disciple of Hwasan knew what to do. When the enemy outnumbered them and the situation was unfavorable, everyone knew what Chung Myung would do.

«Get back!»

«Yes, Sahyeong!»

Jo Geol's swift and keen blade poured forth ahead. Demonic cultists who had been rushing at Chung Myung, their faces twisted with confusion and hatred, were swept away in an instant. Simultaneously, Yoon Jong's sword, wielded with utmost finesse, intercepted all the attacks pouring in from all sides toward Chung Myung.

A sword that cleared a path through attacks.

A sword that protected and defended.

These two contrasting swords opened a path for Chung Myung and kept him safe.

Baek Cheon, who had swiftly caught up, shouted loudly,

«Make way! He's going to the Bishop!»

In the past, when facing demonic cultists of Magyo, Chung Myung would jump over regular cultists and defeat all the law enforcers. He had protected his own life and the lives of everyone.

But this time was different. The enemies were even stronger, and the Bishop was incomparably more formidable than before.

So, this time, it wasn't Chung Myung who would protect them. It was them who had to protect Chung Myung.

They needed to ensure that Chung Myung's sword remained undamaged all the way to the Bishop's neck, no matter the cost.

«Hye Yeon, I...»

«Excuse me.»

At that very moment, a man leaped over Baek Cheon's head. Seeing the red robe fluttering above him, Baek Cheon shouted reflexively.

«Jang Ilso!»

«I've understood roughly.»

Yang flames of vibrant blue [청염(靑炎)] spewed from Jang Ilso's palms as he calmly spoke. Like a fireball, the flames engulfed demonic cultists pouring towards Chung Myung. At the moment demonic cultists screamed in terror, Jang Ilso descended gracefully next to Chung Myung.

«Well then...»

He smiled with a friendly face, revealing his intent.

«Shall we go?»

Paaah!

Chung Myung and Jang Ilso both sprinted forward.

At the same time, Baek Cheon, Yu Iseol, Yoon Jong, and Jo Geol followed closely, providing them with cover.

Their appearance was like a fierce arrow being shot out, taut and ready. An arrow loses its meaning the moment it stops. Once they set their minds on breaking through the enemy's lines, there was only one destiny waiting for them.

But neither Chung Myung nor Jang Ilso, nor anyone following them, feared or hesitated about that fate. They simply smashed and cut through those who stood in their way, moving forward relentlessly.

«Ooooooh!»

Hye Yeon and Namgung Dowi jumped over and unleashed their respective inner strength and sword energy to clear a path. The torrent of energy swept aside demonic cultists who had not prepared in time.

As the front was cleared, demonic cultists who had been trying to approach from the sides were blocked by Tang Soso's sword energy and Im Sobyong's flaring fan qi.

«Kuugh!»

«These unbelievers!»

The group from Hwasan, united as one, plunged deep into the dense mass of demonic cultists.

The fangs of those who sought to lurk behind were thwarted by the calm swordsmanship of Un Geom, and the relentless pursuers faced the menacing Red Dogs that clung to them like hunting hounds.

With resolute determination, united forces of Hwasan, once they had gathered their momentum, swiftly moved forward, parting the sea of demonic cultists.

“Hold them back!”

Jeogil's cry, torn by the agony of escaping death by a hair's breadth, was desperate and heartfelt. It was much too urgent to be the shout of an Internal Law Enforcer.

But in this moment, there was no room for even the slightest distraction.

'I cannot, under any circumstances, allow that man to meet the Bishop!'

He was acutely aware that this was a blasphemous thought. No matter how formidable a Central Plains' Taoist might be, their insect-like power paled in comparison to the Bishop, whose power reached the skies. To fear that man's sword reaching the Bishop was a horrifying blasphemy.

Yet, despite this awareness, the fear that gripped his heart left him with no other choice.

"No! Stop them! Even if you have to sacrifice your life, you must stop them!"

In the dark night sky and the shadowed earth, a single red arrow cleaved through a world entirely painted in darkness.

An arrow as sharp as it could be, poised to pierce the heart of the descending demon.