

Chapter 1150

I've done everything I needed to, but you know. (5)

«Young Lord, where are you going?»

«Hmm.»

Namgung Dowi hesitated for a moment, carefully choosing his words.

'What should I call this? Council meeting? Administration Meeting? Faction Leaders' Meeting?'

Amidst the process to gather the leaders of various sects by Hwasan Geomhyeop, he couldn't come up with a suitable explanation to give to others.

'Upon reflection, it's quite chaotic.'

The general hierarchy within the sects is very strict. While it's easy to collectively refer to the leaders of each sect as 'Sect Leader' or 'Lord' as it's difficult to allocate positions separately for these leaders, elders, or middle-ranking members who work separately within the sects usually have designated seats.

However, strangely, Cheonumaeng didn't have such positions. Its inherent nature of freedom and the fact that the current leader didn't enforce such structures played a role in this.

'Is it because the sect that leads the Alliance is a Taoist sect?'

If Namgung Hwang was the leader of Cheonumaeng, he would have likely begun by establishing a system for the Alliance. He would have created positions to oversee every task that the Alliance needed to accomplish and appointed suitable people to those positions.

'Anyway, the more I see, the more unique it appears.'

«Young Lord?»

«Oh, um... Yes. Hwasan Geomhyeop called for me.»

«Ah, going to the bosses' meeting, I see.»

«... What meeting?»

The person casually responded, and the one standing next to them lightly jabbed their side with an elbow. The speaker immediately stopped, closing their mouth.

«Oh, it's nothing. Have a safe trip.»

«...»

«Please, take care.»

«Uh, yeah...»

As Namgung's swordsmen bowed respectfully, Namgung Dowi turned around as if pushed on his back.

'Bosses' meeting?'

That, how should I put it...

'No, even if it's us...'

Responsible for overseeing the affairs of a sect, it didn't seem fitting to assign words to those overseeing such matters.

'Just a moment.'

Namgung Dowi paused, mid-step.

Well... although there are many people, the precise positions are somewhat vague, and everyone just does what they're capable of... Usually, it's a group where the one with the sharpest mind among the leaders roughly determines the direction and the rest follow without much thought...

«...Bandits.»

No wonder it felt strangely familiar yet unfamiliar! These are bandits, aren't they?

Of course, Namgung's swordsmen didn't refer to them as the 'bosses' meeting' considering these aspects, but perhaps they sensed something along those lines?

'I can't let this go on like this!'

Namgung Dowi's eyes ignited with determination as he swiftly moved towards Hyun Jong's quarters, where the meeting was being held.

'I have to change this!'

He carved this resolute vow into his heart.

«Has everyone arrived?»

Namgung Dowi, having regained his composure and attained some sort of enlightenment, surveyed the surroundings with a cool gaze.

'Come to think of it, the people gathered here seem rather peculiar.'

In all matters of the world, there needs to be a proper form. If this structure isn't properly established, people tend to confuse right and wrong. The source of all evil that arises in any group often emerges from this confusion between right and wrong.

But look at this assembly now. Doesn't the collective demeanor of the gathered seem too disorganized?

«It seems like everyone is roughly here?»

«...»

That particular person is the issue. That person. Namgung Dowi, who usually regarded Ogeom and Chung Myung with affectionate eyes, today had a somewhat piercing gaze.

'Let's assume it is unavoidable, if it's Chung Myung Dojang, but honestly, isn't it clear that others have significant issues?'

Misunderstandings are to be avoided. Namgung Dowi isn't harboring ill feelings towards them. He deems Ogeom sufficiently qualified to offer opinions on Alliance's matters. However, the problem lies in the fact that people come and go without any designated positions or regulations.

So...

"Yes, Sahyeong. I think everyone is here."

Tang Soso is here too. Tang Soso! No, wait, wasn't that person not from Ogeom to begin with?

'No, lately, wasn't she being referred to as a part of Ogeom?'

While there were talks of such things in the past, Chung Myung is simply not someone who can be grouped together and referred to as one of Ogeom.

Certainly, even they are currently somewhat embarrassed to be called «Rising stars.» Among those in that age group, the only ones who can compare their skills with them would be Hye Yeon and Namnung Dowi.

The ones formerly known as Oryong[Five Dragons] now could be dealt with by Yoon Jong or Jo Geol, without Baek Cheon even needed to step up. Or, to put it more simply, they might even be categorized under Tang Soso. Thus, everyone in Ogeom are undoubtedly exceptional individuals.

However, in the case of Hwasan Geomhyeop Chung Myung, there isn't anyone within that league to rival him. To discuss someone capable of challenging Chung Myung one-on-one, one would need to bring forth the top experts from any sect.

'Frankly, that seems difficult too.'

For anyone who has observed Chung Myung fighting the Bishop alongside Jang Ilso, it would be hard to deny that Chung Myung's capabilities are significantly underrated in discussions within Gangho.

Perhaps there might be fewer than ten experts in the world capable of challenging Chung Myung. But how could one bundle such person under the name of rising stars?

Consequently, people have gradually excluded Chung Myung from Ogeom. Instead of referring to them as four swords, they've subtly positioned Tang Soso, who frequently collaborates with them on joint missions, and gained some reputation at Maehwado.

However, none of this is officially recognized.

'Right. Let's leave Hwasan aside.'

«No, Nokrim King hasn't arrived yet.»

'Why is that guy even here!'

Namnung Dowi glanced at Tang Pae with a slightly distorted expression.

Originally, this was a meeting for sect leaders! So why was Tang Pae, who was the young lord, acting as if it was natural for him to take a seat? Tang Gunak is already here!

«Oh! I'm a bit late.»

«Ahem. Hello.»

Namnung Dowi's cheek twitched.

His gaze now fixed on Beon Chung, who was following Nokrim King. Until now he had been admiring the Alliance, but once he started to find fault, all sorts of things began to bother him.

'That person isn't even an elder!'

If they had to bring a high-ranking figure, there should have been someone like an elder or someone of that stature. Why drag that guy into the meeting when he clearly isn't someone required for the kind of thoughtful discussions needed?

«Why are you looking at me like that?»

«...It's nothing.»

A deep sigh escaped Namgung Dowi as he turned his head away. His gaze now directed towards the root of all evil.

«Is everyone here?»

That person, yes, that person! The cause of all problems!

As Chung Myung began to speak in his pitiful tone, Namgung Dowi looked at him with an attentive glare.

In every event, there's a cause. And the reason behind all this mess was none other than that person, who absurdly led the meeting without an appropriate position, with a ridiculous status of Hwasan's third generation disciple.

Tang Pae, Ogeom, and even Beon Chung!

Even if one were to point out the absurdity of their presence, wouldn't it all be refuted with a single sentence: «If the third generation disciple of Hwasan is leading the meeting, why are you singling me out?»

'Something's wrong here.'

Cheonumaeng will have to face more challenges ahead. So, at this point, there's a need to establish a solid system, especially for the future of the Alliance.

«The reason we've all gathered today is to discuss matters regarding our future as Cheonumaeng.»

Chung Myung spoke, surveying everyone.

«Now that it seems like we've roughly resolved the major issues, it might be a good idea to discuss what our focus should be moving forward.»

«Hmm.»

Tang Gunak nodded.

«Do you think the issue concerning the sects' training is primarily resolved?»

«Yes.»

«...This day has finally come.»

At that statement, everyone sighed simultaneously. It felt like discovering light at the end of an indefinitely long cave.

«However, when you say 'discussion'?»

«Just as it is.»

Chung Myung shrugged.

«Until now, we've naturally done what needed to be done. It was a bit urgent, too.»

«That's right.»

Even those who had once watched suspiciously as Chung Myung vigorously propelled the tasks forward now empathized with the necessity of those actions.

Originally, wouldn't the bandits from Nokrim and swordsmen from Namgung, along with all Central Plains and Outer Palaces, never have been able to coexist peacefully? Haven't they recently been treating each other without formality?

'The lack of formalities is problematic, but still...'

In any case, the consolidation was undoubtedly something to be grateful for. Imagine leading them into battle without undergoing such a process.

'It would have been dreadful.'

Tang Gunak shook his head. He had witnessed the destructive power that different sects could unleash when united at Maehwado. If, at that time, Tangga hadn't properly supported Hwasan from behind or if Hwasan hadn't protected Tangga while leading from the front, the course of battle would have been entirely different.

The numerous training sessions weren't just about harmonizing in the current situation they were in — they were essential for the future tasks Cheonumaeng would have to go through. Even if the process seemed hellish, it was necessary.

«Now that the urgent fire is extinguished, we need to think about what's next.»

«Yeah, indeed.»

The reactions of those who heard this divided into two groups.

The first group marveled, «So, Cheonumaneg actually discusses the matters and goes forward like these.» They were mostly people like the Ice Palace or the Beast Palace who hadn't experienced much of Hwasan yet.

The second...

“Why even have a meeting? You'll end up doing whatever you want in the end!”

These were people, like some among Ogeom, who held suspicion towards Chung Myung's conduct of the meeting itself.

“When did I?”

“When? When? When did I say that just now?”

“Tsk, this is why people with short memory- I've been gathering everyone's opinions through meetings without bias until now!”

“Sasuk.”

“Hmm?”

“Is the bias I know the same as the bias that guy is talking about?”

“What nonsense. Among what Chung Myung says, the only thing that holds the same meaning for us is ‘I'm going to smash that guy's head.’”

“Oh, now I get it.”

“But seriously, these guys?”

When Chung Myung got angry, Hyun Jong reached out, grabbing and suppressing him by the back of his neck.

“I also share the same opinion.”

As Hyun Jong spoke, those who were simmering at Chung Myung’s words instantly settled their expressions when Hyun Jong’s voice emerged.

«Speak up, Sect Leader!»

«No! Look at your attitude! Are you discriminating against me right now?»

«...Is that something we shouldn’t do?»

«Huh? Uh... right, yeah. We should.»

Even if that’s the case, he shouldn’t be treated the same way as the Sect Leader. Ah, whatever.

Everyone sighed in unison, nodding in instant agreement upon seeing Chung Myung, who had suddenly understood the situation. When will that guy grow up?

Hyun Jong smiled warmly and spoke,

«You’ve all worked hard so far.»

«No, Alliance Leader!»

«The truth is, due to everyone rushing here without a clear mind, we haven’t properly handled what Cheonumaeng should have done. Let’s take this opportunity to bring out the issues we’ve all been thinking about and talk about them together. Let’s discuss what the Alliance should improve on in the future.»

«As for things to improve...»

«It seems like just fixing one person would be enough, right?»

«What about that Sapa bastard?»

«I didn’t mention anyone specifically. Why are you mentioning him?!»

«Come out!»

In the midst of the rapidly unfolding chaos, Namgung Dowi confidently raised his hand. Hyun Jong nodded in acknowledgment.

«Please speak, Young Lord.»

«Firstly!»

Namgung Dowi spoke in a powerful tone,

«I believe there’s a need to reorganize the haphazard structure of Cheonumaneg and establish proper positions!»

He glanced around at those nearby, emphasizing,

«It’s to sort out this chaotic situation we’re in right now, even if it means setting things straight.»

His words pricked the conscience of a few, causing them to subtly avert their gaze.