

## Chapter 1108

It sends shivers down my spine sometimes. (3)

Thud.

The knees that had held out until the very end finally buckled, hitting the ground. Blood trickled from the corner of the mouth, hands trembling. Eyes filled with venomous rage. Slowly, lips brimming with both hatred and resentment began to part.

«Why... are you...»

«Hehehe.»

In front of him, a handsome man dressed in white looked down at the man kneeling before him with an icy, expressionless face.

«Do not harbor too much resentment.»

«... You...»

«Are all of the strong like that?»

«You...»

Before the voice filled with frustration could fully emerge, a cunning-looking man with curly hair, standing next to the handsome man, twisted his smile and stepped forward.

From his eyes, disdain and mockery poured out.

«Why would someone who knows better behave like this?»

Someone they trusted.

Seeing the despicable face of the one they trusted, especially someone from the same background, felt like being stabbed in the chest with a sharp knife.

«Is there anything as useless as trust in this world? Hehehe. Consider it the price of foolishness.»

«You...»

The man gradually straightened up as he fell forward.

“Those bastards...”

Thud.

At the moment Tang Pae, who had persisted until the end, collapsed, disciples of Hwasan erupted into cheers like thunder.

“We’ve won!”

“I’m taking half a day off tomorrow!”

“Mom! I’ve won against Tang clan!”

Hwasan’s disciples, guaranteed half a day rest, embraced each other, jumping and cheering.

“Half a day! Unbelievable!”

“I’ve never taken a half-day break since that bastard Chung Myung arrived!”

“Tomorrow, I’ll sleep in! I swear I won’t wake up and sleep well!”

“Drinks! Tonight is for drinking!”

Their excitement bordered on madness.

Tang Pae observed the scene with a boiling expression.

Among the disciples of Hwasan, who jumped around like somersaulting swallows, a sparkling bald head was particularly noticeable.

‘Even that one is different.’

Of course, it’s not to say that other Taoist monks were faultless, but even so, a person considered a Buddhist monk, celebrating knocking people down and drinking, indicated where the world was heading.

Huh? Soso?

‘You shouldn’t be so thrilled. I am your brother...’

Why do you seem the happiest? Huh? Soso?

«Ha-hahaha! It’s break time! Rest! Hey, let’s go for a drink in the city tomorrow!»

«Even days like this come in life.»

«Rest. Recharge. Rest. It’s a good thing.»

Tears welled up in the eyes of the members of Tang clan watching the joyous jumping Hwasan’s disciples.

‘I trusted them, those bastards.’

What? Comrades? Fellowship? We shouldn’t have expected that from those who don’t even resemble such individuals.

‘It’s unfair. This is irrational.’

From the start, the fight was wrong.

No, is it reasonable for those who swing swords and those who throw daggers to start fighting right next to each other? Moreover, the courtyard was crowded, making it even more absurd!

Fundamentally, hidden weapon techniques require distance to be released. One needs to maintain a suitable distance to secure space to exert its full power.

A delicate weapon, vastly different from simply swinging a sword and attacking recklessly!

But they attacked their comrades, who believed in them, without even providing space and any time to mentally prepare?

‘So, this is how it’s going to be.’

The members of Tangga, completely wrecked and shattered, writhed in shame and anger.

“This... this is cowardly...”

“Huh? What’s happening over there?”

“Huh? What are they saying?”

“Cowardly?”

“This guy!”

Baek Cheon scolded Jo Geol loudly with a solemn face.

“Those are respected disciples from the Tang Clan. Are they going to act like some petty people, when taking a loss? Where do you get the audacity to make such foolish remarks?”

“Huh... Sasuk. I was short-sighted.”

The expression on Tang Pae’s face momentarily went blank.

He had just realized something: when someone is too angry, words don’t come out.

However, Tang Jan seemed less furious than him. Lifting his head abruptly with a stern gaze he shouted vehemently.

“No! That’s...!”

“Sasuk, I clearly heard it?”

“There’s no way you heard that!”

“Then what was that?”

“It must have been the sound of the wind blowing.”

“Oh.”

“...”

Those damn bastards...

Tang Jan ground his teeth and shouted.

“This joke has gone far enough, Baek Cheon Dojang! Even if it’s a sparring battle, it wasn’t an ambush! You should have given time for mental preparation at least!”

“Oh...”

For a moment, Baek Cheon’s gaze towards Tang Jan turned grim.

Unable to contain his anger, Tang Jan slammed the ground with his fist.

“Is attacking someone right beside you a dignified act befitting a righteous faction? Answer me!”

Baek Cheon’s face hardened.

At that moment, Tang Jan prepared himself to counter all of Baek Cheon’s forthcoming arguments. The fight was already settled, but he aimed to at least leave them feeling uncomfortable.

However, Baek Cheon’s subsequent words threw all of his enthusiasm into oblivion.

Scratching his head, Baek Cheon shrugged his shoulders.

«Well, if that’s not the way of righteousness, then I guess we’re not part of that.»

«...»

«Let’s go with Sapa.»

Baek Cheon openly shrugged his shoulders towards dumbfounded Tang Jan.

«If you’re going to prepare everything, fighting with courtesy... Well we might as well just be part of Sapa.»

«Huh. Today, of all days, your tongue is so smooth.»

«You’ve mastered Chung Myung Divine Arts to perfection.»

«Sasuk, then should we go join the Sapaeryeon?»

«Don’t cross the line!»

Jo Geol tumbled to the ground from Yoon Jong's punch. However, even as he was thrown back, Jo Geol's face was filled with happiness, unlike the Tang clan members trembling in anger.

«Ugh...»

«I-I...»

The Tangga's members' eyes reddened with anger.

The pain from being hit was bearable. What truly made Tangga's people suffering unbearable were those damn Hwasan's bastards who shamelessly rushed in for victory and proudly displayed joy on their faces, claiming to be the most happiest beings in the world.

'Even for a brief moment, I considered those people my comrades.'

'They're the type who would sell out their own kin for profit!'

'They're utterly without principle!'

As Tangga's people's gazes changed gradually from looking at Hwasan to searching for divine retribution, it was at that moment...

«The decision has been made.»

At the voice that echoed, everyone swiftly turned their heads. Tang Gunak smiled and nodded with satisfaction.

«For me, it's regrettable, but a promise is a promise. Let's have Hwasan skip tomorrow morning's training.»

«Hooray!»

«Yes! Your words are wise, Lord!»

Amidst the cheers of Hwasan's disciples, Chung Myung pursed his lips as if he was displeased. However, a promise is a promise. He knew breaking it would make it harder for him in the future.

«Are you sure? Take a rest too, Lord.»

«Do you mean me?»

«Yes. After all, without people to train, who else would it be?»

«Hahaha. You're saying something amusing. The one who should rest from training is not me, but you.»

“Me? Are you sure?”

“Indeed. Aren't you part of Hwasan? Surely, this was a match where the victor gets to rest?”

“... Well, that's true, but I'm an exception...”

“It's fine. Take a rest tomorrow morning.”

“No, I'm alright...”

“Take a break.”

“No...”

“I said, rest.”

As Tang Gunak's voice hardened, Chung Myung closed his mouth and glanced subtly at him. His usually solemn and composed eyes displayed a subtle twitch in the corner.

‘...He’s really ticked off.’

If that guy couldn’t control his facial muscles, it wasn’t simply expressed as anger. In Hwasan’s terms, isn’t this situation described as ‘eyes rolled back’?

‘Still...’

Still, his disciples, his clan members, whom we trusted, were destroyed without even being able to fight back. It would have been even weirder if the head of the family, Tang Gunak, wasn’t upset.

While for others, excuses about not being in a situation to showcase their skills might mean something, but is Tang Gunak a type of a person who would buy into such justifications?

“Phew.”

Tang Gunak took a deep breath. Then, he smiled faintly.

“I might have been a bit lax, after all.”

At that moment, a chill ran down Chung Myung’s spine. How long has it been since he felt such a sensation from a person?

«The victor deserves their reward. You’ll rest well with the rest of Hwasan tomorrow. As long as possible.»

«No, just the morning...»

«Rest for a while. It’s not good for anyone to run without rest. Didn’t I clearly mention that?»

«No... That’s already over...»

«Listen.»

«Yes.»

Tang Gunak nodded contentedly and spoke a bit louder.

«Now, the members of tHwasan, please leave the place.»

«But. Lord, we’re winning...»

Thunk!

Baek Cheon quickly covered Jo Geol’s mouth, and Yoon Jong struck Jo Geol’s abdomen abruptly.

«Ugh...»

Swiftly gathering collapsed and foaming Jo Geol, Baek Cheon courteously bowed his head towards Tang Gunak.

«Then, we shall take our leave.»

«Rest well.»

«Let’s go, quickly!»

«Yes!»

«Run, everyone!»

The pale face of Tang Soso urged others to move quickly.

Except for Jo Geol, the perceptive Hwasan's disciples dashed off swiftly, disappearing from the training grounds. Even Baek Ah hurriedly followed the disciples, as if his soles were on fire.

«Hmm...»

Tang Gunak, who had leisurely observed Hwasan's disciples running as if they'd seen a devil, turned his gaze towards the Tang clan.

«L-Lord...»

«I hope there's no misunderstanding.»

«Yes?»

Tang Gunak nodded quietly.

«Losing isn't something to be ashamed of. If your skills aren't enough, you might lose. I, too, haven't only won throughout my life.»

«Ah...»

«So, there's no need for such expressions. What's important isn't avoiding defeat but learning from it.»

The Lord, who seemed prepared to issue a stern reprimand, spoke in a gentle tone, bringing warm tears to the eyes of his clan members. It was a mix of indignation and injustice flowing simultaneously.

«Lord...»

«Young Lord.»

«Yes!»

«What have you learned?»

Tang Gunak asked firmly, and Tang Pae responded with determination.

“The fact that there's no one to trust in this world.”

“And?”

“Also, never let your guard down, anytime, anywhere.”

“Good.”

Tang Gunak nodded silently. His thick eyebrows moved slightly, expressing his satisfaction.

“However...”

“... Yes?”

“That might not be everything.”

Suddenly, this expression vanished from his face.

“No matter how sudden the attack was, if you're under the Sichuan Tang Clan's banner, you should never crumble so easily. Your biggest problem is that the moment your formation collapsed, you gave up on the fight.”

Emotion drained from the voice.

“And ultimately, it's because of the lack of determination. Do you know why?”

“T-That's...”

“It’s because you have nothing to lose. Even if you lose, you won’t die, and even if you lose, you won’t suffer any loss.”

“...”

«Today, watching you face off against Hwasan, I’ve realized my own mistakes.»

«W-What...»

At that moment, the hand that had been concealed within his sleeve slowly emerged.

«I hadn’t considered the fact that using hidden weapons wasn’t necessary to train you.»

«...»

«Indeed, this is my failing. So, I should reflect first...»

Thud.

The emerged hand slowly clenched. Veins started bulging across the back of the hand.

«Never again... to avoid such a miserable sight, I’ll do my best to assist you.»

As Tang Gunak approached them with a clenched fist, Tang Pae, gazing bewilderedly, suddenly cast his eyes towards the distant sky.

‘Ah... darn it.’

Upon reflection, it was fated to end poorly from the start with those Hwasan’s punks.

Comrades? Rubbish. They were nothing but scoundrels to be kicked out.