

Chapter 1062

Is this how it's done? (2)

Quaaaaaaaa!

The heavens seemed to collapse from above. Demonic energy raining down, darkening the surroundings, felt like the advent of hell itself.

It was a verdict of destruction, a harbinger of the end. In the deep despair, a sword adorned with sunset moved. Like a ray of light, or perhaps an illusion. Just like in some distant past. The sword was simply a sword. It was no more than a cold, metal blade.

However, to the swordsman, the sword was more than just an emotionless blade. It contained everything about the one who wielded it at its tip.

Perhaps grandeur. Perhaps confidence.

And maybe... what had resided at the end of this sword, or rather, a flying dagger...

'Extend.'

The energy that had risen from his toes gathered into the sword at his fingertips.

A sense of unity as if the sword and the body became one in an instant. Sharpness that was forged to an extreme degree, creating clarity. And with it, a profound sense of fulfillment.

The sword, containing all of this, simply moved forward.

'Just once!'

Chung Myung's eyes emitted a fierce murderous intent. The sword could be swung again. Even if it cut through the air, it could be swung once more, and then a single thrust would suffice.

But a flying dagger was a one-strike kill.

Once the flying dagger left his fingertips, that was the end. The opportunity would never be given again. Amid the crushing pressure that words couldn't describe, Chung Myung's sword drew a single line. It felt as though everything had frozen, except for the sword slicing through the air.

A line, by nature, connects what should be connected in the space between the things that should not be touched.

The line drawn by Chung Myung's sword connected the present he stood in now with the faded colors of the distant past.

The intervals between moments split and split again. Accelerating thought to an unprecedented degree. In a world that seemed brutally slowed relative to this, Chung Myung felt a burning thirst.

'Not enough!'

It wasn't it.

'It's barely at this level!'

The flying dagger he remembered from Tang Bo was never such an indecisive strike. It was a dagger that seemed to carry the soul in a single release. Like a shooting star in the dawn, it split the moment and vanished, and that's why Tang Bo's flying daggers were more brilliant than anything else.

So, it had to be faster. More precise, and even more powerful! More and more!

Right at that moment, a phantom-like voice grazed Chung Myung's ears.

- Taoist hyeong, you're always in such a hurry.

A phrase Tang Bo had once casually tossed to him in the past.

— I want to contain everything, but there are too many things. However, if you try to contain everything, it only becomes heavier, just like your two shoulders, Taoist hyeong. Can you swing the sword properly with shoulders weighed down so heavily?

The voice sounded as clear as if it was whispering right next to him.

— If you want to throw the dagger properly, you don't fill it — you empty it. The tip of the dagger should be light. The more you want to contain, the more you empty it. Isn't that what the "path" [도(道)] in Taoism means? Of course, I don't know if a Taoist like you can understand it...

Even the laughter mixed with that voice tickled his ears. It truly felt like a moment from the past was continuing right now.

— If someday that becomes possible...

Everything that had bound Chung Myung was severed. What remained was just the sensation of the sword touching his fingertips. That sensation spread throughout Chung Myung's body. The external and internal united.

The sword and the body became one.

— I don't know. Perhaps hyeong's sword will truly reach that Heavenly Demon.

Chung Myung moved forward, parting the world shrouded in darkness. The tip of the dagger was aimed at the source of that darkness. And this strike was both Hwasan's sword that Chung Myung had launched and the dagger that Tang Bo had thrown in the distant past.

Chung Myung, who connected the unconnectable, aimed the dagger known as the Demon Slaying Dagger [비마수(滅魔匕)] at the heart of the demon.

'I am here!'

That was an undeniable fact. However, everything about him was undeniably connected to the past.

Completing the state of Honyeon [혼연(渾然) — perfect unity] and transcending Mua [무아(無我) — egolessness], the sword finally cut through the world just as it was originally intended.

And at that moment, Jang Ilso and Chung Myung, who turned their heads for a brief moment, met each others eyes.

Even in the frozen flow of time, it was clearly visible. Jang Ilso's charming smile.

Jang Ilso raised his arms. It was a gesture that looked feeble and helpless in the face of the massive darkness that covered everything above. However, in that instant, a searing cold flame erupted from Jang Ilso's entire body.

Waaaah!

With every last ounce of his strength, it soared towards the raining mass of demonic energy. In the empty space, the blue flame clashed with the black demonic energy. It was a flame too weak to repel the overwhelming onslaught of the oncoming darkness.

But even if it was just for a moment, that feeble flame pushed back the mountain-like demonic energy. It opened a subtle yet distinct gap in what seemed like an unbreakable iron wall. No, Jang Ilso had pried it open.

As their gazes met, Chung Myung's body passed right by Jang Ilso. And at that precise moment, Jang Ilso's hand made perfect contact with Chung Myung's completely defenseless back.

A voice that should never have reached Chung Myung's ears seemed to brush past him.

«Go.»

Paah!

The force of Jang Ilso pushing his back, combined with the sword that soared past its limits, reached the point of no return.

At that moment, clear light returned to Danjagang's eyes, which had been clouded as he surrendered himself to the surging demonic energy.

'Sunset?'

It was a vision akin to a fantasy. It was so breathtaking that it brought back Danjagang's consciousness, which had been entirely consumed by demonic energy.

A single faint red light bloomed in the world Danjagang had created, a world where not a single light was visible. That feeble red light pierced through the deep darkness and continued to spread.

It was like the dawn breaking from the eastern sky at the end of a long night.

It was the impending daybreak, the end of the night and the beginning of something new. In this spectacle where reality and fantasy intertwined, a white sword flew, cutting through the crimson dawn.

'What is this?'

It was a grim sensation of death that Danjagang had never experienced before. The sword, akin to the dawn, burning through the darkness, shattered everything within Danjagang, and plunged deeply into his throat.

Kwaddeuk!

In a moment that felt like the entire world had come to a standstill, a profound stillness settled upon them. Everyone present watched closely.

They witnessed the astounding sight of the Dark Plum Sword, a weapon that had pierced through Danjagang's seemingly invulnerable throat, emerging triumphantly.

All held their breath.

For a moment, it seemed as though all sounds in the world had been wiped away.

Even as the gale of their overwhelming auras continued to surge, everyone distinctly felt the silence. It was a brief yet intense tranquility.

Ttok-oh.

From the white blade that had pierced Danjagang's throat, a single drop of blood fell.

And in that moment, the dark indifferent gaze of Chung Myung, and the burning gaze of Danjagang intertwined at close range.

As Danjagang coughed up the regurgitated blood, he softly murmured words that only Chung Myung could understand.

«...the second...»

Danjagang lowered his raised arm forcefully, as if shaking it off.

The still remaining demonic sun descended upon them. It felt like a whole mountain was collapsing above their heads.

«Ah...!»

Everyone at the scene were left astonished.

«No, no, no, noooooo!»

Accompanied by a devastated scream, the plummeting demonic energy collided with the earth.

Kwaaah!

Demonic energy, embedded into the ground, began to tremble with such force that it threatened to shatter everything. And in no time, the storm of demonic energy overwhelmed the entire world.

«Aaaaah!»

Those swept up in the tempest-like eruption, including the disciples of Hwasan, were thrown helplessly like fallen leaves in a typhoon.

Not only the disciples of Hwasan but also the members of the Demonic Cult, who watched this fierce battle with mesmerized faces, were swept away by the irresistible force like autumn leaves in the wind.

Hwasan's disciples, after being thrown around and slammed into the ground repeatedly, groaned in pain.

Kwaaah!

Following one after another, thunderous explosions were like a sonic onslaught, overwhelming everyone as if the world itself was crumbling.

Kwah! Kwaaah! Kwah!

After the intense shock swept the ground in a furious manner, silence gradually returned. Shuddering.

Amidst the chaotic debris thrown into the air as the ground violently trembled, Baek Cheon's body quivered. The tips of his fingers twitched with spasms.

«Kkkugh....»

Uttering a groan, he lifted his head vigorously as he regained his senses.

«Chu... Chung Myung....»

His eyes began to redden.

Could anyone survive at the center of such an unbelievable explosion? Even he, caught in its aftermath, found it almost impossible to move.

«No, this can't be.... Not....»

Thud!

Baek Cheon shattered a piece of rock in his hand and exerted all his strength to lift his body, clawing at the ground as he urgently scanned his surroundings.

«Chu, Chung Myung! Chung Myung-aaaa!»

But Chung Myung was nowhere to be seen. Baek Cheon couldn't help but think of an outcome he didn't want to face.

«Chung Myung! This bastard!»

«Sahyeong!»

At that moment, Yu Iseol's urgent voice pierced through his ears.

«Over there!»

Baek Cheon anxiously turned to where she had pointed. A massive hole, torn-up ground that appeared as though the heavens had ripped it apart. Amidst the wreckage, he saw two spots, one red and the other black.

«Chu, Chung Myung!»

«Lord Ryeonju!»

Simultaneously, cries of concern erupted from Baek Cheon and Ho Gamyong. The two of them began to sprint with all their might towards Chung Myung and Jang Ilso, who had fallen down.

In that moment, Chung Myung's lips, which were half-buried in the ground, trembled faintly.

«Ugh....»

When his cracked lips managed to open, the wounds, which had clotted heavily, split again, and red blood began to trickle down.

«Ugh....»

Struggling to lift his leaden eyelids, he managed to turn his head slightly, witnessing the sight of Jang Ilso, whose body was partially buried in the ground, neck bent in an awkward angle

Silently, he gazed at him for a while, and after a long struggle, he managed to speak in a feeble voice.

«...Oi.»

There was no response.

«Oi.»

In that moment, Jang Ilso, who had been lying motionless, let out a voice as weak as a whisper.

«Yes?»

The moment Chung Myung heard that voice, he furrowed his brow.

«Are you still alive?»

A voice devoid of strength seeped from Jang Ilso's mouth, a voice that seemed impossible to emanate from him, a sound of weakness.

«...Maybe... I feel like I've died.»

«Is that so?»

Chung Myung struggled heavily to turn his body. After coercing his lifeless body to flip, he lay down and saw the sky. It was so blue to the point that his eyes hurt.

«That...»

The long night had finally ended, and morning had arrived.

«...It's a good thing to hear.»

The soft sound of Chung Myung's laughter permeated the tranquil world that had finally settled into the morning.