

Chapter 1056

Your words won't reach them. (1)

He wanted to ask. He wanted to show this scene to those who always spouted the obvious advice that you should give your best no matter the opponent.

He wanted to ask if they truly had the confidence to retain their fighting spirit after witnessing this.

Namgung Dowi stared entranced by the surging demonic energy, the red plum blossoms, and the rising blue flames.

'Is this really how humans fight each other?'

It would be more fitting to describe this spectacle as a scene from a myth rather than a contest of strength between mere mortals.

As a son of Namgung family, he could understand. He could only comprehend it in his mind. He had heard it countless times from his father since he was a child. Martial arts remain generally the same from start to finish, but when it surpasses a certain level, it transforms into something completely different.

However... now Namgung Dowi was certain. Even Namgung Hwang, the one who had made those statements, would likely react similarly to Namgung Dowi when witnessing this spectacle.

Kwaaaaaaaah!

The clash of energies, the explosion, assaulted their eardrums. Had they not protected their ears with their inner power, their eardrums would have surely ruptured.

He had the confidence, wielding Namgung Clan's sword, that in terms of «power,» he was second to none in the world of martial arts. However, the pride he had carried with him throughout his life shattered into pieces in an instant when faced with the scene unfolding before him.

And, most of all, what tormented Namgung Dowi was...

'How can they just rush into that?'

The actions of Chung Myung and Jang Ilso, who had fearlessly leaped into the abominable and dreadful storm of demonic energy. Since reaching Hangzhou, it had been a constant source of distress, following him.

Was it something anyone could do just because they were strong? The answer was a resounding no. The desire to survive is something everyone, strong or weak, possesses. It's an instinct that's with you from the day you're born. So rushing into that hellish maelstrom, where just looking at it makes your knees buckle and your mind reel, requires something beyond strength.

It was precisely in that moment.

Wheeeeing!

The demonic energy that had raged endlessly, growing in size, began to twist and distort as it collided with the red blossoms and blue flames. Eventually, it disappeared in an instant.

«Huh!»

And Namgung Dowi saw it.

The sight of Chung Myung charging at Danjagang with lightning speed.

Kaaaaaaah!

The sword, raised from below, collided head-on with Danjagang's hand.

Kagak! Kagagak!

Harsh and jarring sounds resounded continually, and fragments of demonic energy and crimson sword energies scattered in all directions like fireworks.

Danjagang's face contorted. Just as he attempted to grasp the sword that had touched his palm, Chung Myung's sword slipped backward, as if it was a mirage. Then, dozens of sword images poured like a torrent into Danjagang's entire body.

Danjagang's hand also split into dozens.

It's needless to contemplate which is easier, shaking only the tip of the sword to produce changes or directly swinging the sword. Even so, Danjagang's hand adhered effortlessly to the changes created by Chung Myung.

But that was short-lived.

Paaaah!

The split images of Chung Myung's sword trembled as if quaking, and then they split into thousands of petals, covering Danjagang.

Danjagang's eyes were filled with astonishment.

'Here?'

There was no way to stop it. What poured forth in such abundance was something no one could obstruct, especially not human hands.

Danjagang retracted his outstretched hand and unleashed a tremendous aura. Simultaneously, the demonic energy emanating from his body forcefully crushed and dislodged the swirling petals that had been circulating around him.

'None of them are strong enough!'

Danjagang poured more inner power to strengthen his demonic energy.

Paaaah!

But then, a white blade suddenly emerged through the rotating whirlpool of demonic energy.

'What's this?'

Even Danjagang, the Bishop, couldn't help but be frightened by this unexpected attack. He desperately raised his hand to barely block it, but that was it.

«Kuh!»

Danjagang was gradually pushed back.

Chung Myung didn't give him a moment to catch his breath. When Danjagang reflexively shot his demonic energy, Chung Myung lowered his body flat on the ground to evade it and soared straight above immediately after. He then clung closely to Danjagang.

«You!»

Kwaaaaaaaah!

The demonic energy that Danjagang had shot out in an instant once again fiercely shot toward Chung Myung. It was an attack filled with the certainty that someone who had rushed in at such a speed couldn't avoid it.

But then, Chung Myung drove the Dark Plum Sword into the ground.

The sword, which had appeared to bend as if it would snap, regained its resilience and Chung Myung used the recoil to lift himself high into the air.

Kwaaaaaaaah!

Danjagang's demonic energy mercilessly shattered only the barren ground. Before the echo of that roar had even faded, dozens of sword energies were emitted from the tip of Chung Myung's sword.

Like blood-red blades, they flew toward Danjagang with incredible speed, as if to obliterate his body entirely.

'Sloppy.'

A sardonic gleam appeared in Danjagang's eyes.

Did they think such an obvious attack would work?

But then, a massive booming sound came from behind him.

'What?'

Turning around hastily, Danjagang saw ten golden bracelets flying toward him at a terrifying speed.

Kwaaaaaaaah!

The ground was upturned and soared to great heights. The soil that had been forcibly lifted poured down like an avalanche a moment later.

Hwiiiiik.

The bracelets that returned to Jang Ilso produced a clear sound as they settled on his wrists.

«Hmm.»

Jang Ilso made a sound that seemed to express curiosity. However, his eyes were as dark as ever.

«At this point I wonder what that body is even made of.»

Between the falling debris, Danjagang revealed himself. Despite being caught in such a massive explosion, not a single injury was visible on him.

But his gaze was notably different from when the battle had begun.

'Is this the Central Plains?'

Danjagang's gaze was fixed on one side.

'Especially that swordsman.'

Chung Myung was observing him with rough breath, and the image of the sword he had just displayed was still vivid in Danjagang's mind.

To those with limited understanding of martial arts, it might have appeared as nothing more than a swift and overwhelming illusory attack. However, within it was hidden an incredible and mysterious process of elevation.

From Powerful (强) to Dynamic (变), from Dynamic to Illusionary (幻), and then to Quick (快).*

In the span of a single breath, he unleashed four different techniques.

For a practitioner of the Quick Sword to execute dozens of Quick Swords is not difficult. But for one to instantly transform their Quick Sword into a Powerful Sword, then once again create numerous variations is an almost impossible task.

Well, in the first place, many swordsmen spend their entire lives perfecting only one technique, and yet most never reach its highest level. However, this swordsman performs what would be considered impossible with apparent ease.

The sense of confusion when the opposing sword suddenly changes is something that someone who hasn't experienced it cannot even imagine.

And... this time, Danjagang's gaze was directed at Jang Ilso.

The sharp and venomous glare from Jang Ilso and his seemingly boundless and eerie power continued to disturb Danjagang's heart. Just facing it felt like having a deadly viper's fangs poised behind one's back.

The murderous energy that was more brutal than what he had ever encountered in the Demonic Sect had Danjagang tightly wound.

If one thinks about the meaning of 'threatening,' then the presence of this one disrupted Danjagang even more than the swordsman. Even the slightest opening would be exploited by his venomous fangs.

The one common trait between them was just one: 'proficiency'.

You can tell by the way they wield their weapons and the way they anticipate their opponent's openings. Both of them are clearly experts in combat.

Kwang!

In that moment, Chung Myung truly became a streak of light and rushed towards Danjagang. Not a single moment was lost, not even when Danjagang briefly shifted his attention to Jang Ilso.

Paaaaaaa!

Chung Myung's sword, glowing with a sunset hue, descended toward Danjagang's head. 'Too simple!'

Danjagang reached out with his hand enveloped in demonic energy to try and catch the sword mid-flight. But at that very moment.

Hwiiiig!

With a sound resembling blazing flames, Chung Myung's sword blurred, passing through Danjagang's hand.

Then, it regained its form right above Danjagang's head and, twisting like a viper, darted toward his neck.

Danjagang quickly turned his head to evade the sword.

«Kuk!»

It wasn't a technique. Chung Myung, in a split second, had managed to change the direction of his strike by deflecting Danjagang's arm, avoiding the attack effortlessly. It was so fast and fluid that it seemed as if the sword had disappeared for a moment.

It's easy to describe in words, but executing this swordsmanship is near impossible. This isn't merely a matter of skill — it's closer to the realm of divine techniques.

Paaaaaa!

The sword that had just narrowly grazed Danjagang's neck froze in mid-air as if it was a lie. Then it moved horizontally, intending to cut across Danjakang's neck.

Thrust, pause, bend.

While this could be broken down into three distinct motions, the entire process happened seamlessly and naturally, as if the actions from start to finish were one. Is there a better manual to explain the concept of hunting a pray?

Gaaaaaaak!

In that moment, Danjagang firmly gripped the sword that was flying toward his neck. It was clear he understood that allowing Chung Myung to run wild could spell disaster. His strong grip on the sword began to firmly squeeze it.

'You!'

With a firm grip on the sword, Danjagang exerted a great force, pulling it back. His face showed a determination to deliver a decisive blow directly onto Chung Myung.

But then, Chung Myung just released the sword. The abrupt loss of resistance caused Danjagang's body to wobble for a moment.

«No!»

At that moment, a sinister sound came from behind.

Jang Ilso's crimson robe fluttered like a flag.

Bang!

Jang Ilso advanced, unleashing his Chain Strikes [연환격(連環擊)] like a torrent onto Danjagang's back. In the air, Chung Myung's Chain Kicks [연환각(連環脚)] poured down like a waterfall towards Danjagang's head.

«Urgh!»

Sensing he couldn't handle it with one hand, Danjagang tossed away the sword he was holding and extended both hands. Demonic energy rose like thick smoke, blocking Jang Ilso's fists and Chung Myung's kicks.

Thud, thud, thud, thud, thud!

Chung Myung suddenly released the power from his striking leg, and used demonic energy as springboard, propelling himself into the air. He grabbed the suspended Dark Plum Sword like a hawk swooping for its prey.

Roaaar!

Twisting his body, Chung Myung shot towards Danjagang in mid-air, with a gaze full of determination.

Eventually, the Dark Plum Sword descended fiercely from above.

Whoosh!

The tip of the sword touched the ground.

A breath-stopping silence spread.

And then Danjagang's eyes shook dramatically for a moment.

Crack!

One of Danjagang's shoulders split open, blood spraying out like a fountain.

*Powerful (強) — the main meaning of hanja is “strong” but in terms of characterizing a sword it's more like “power” — as strength.

Dynamic (變) — the hanja means change, so it's constantly changing dynamic sword.

Illusionary(幻) — self explanatory for Hwasan's techniques.

Quick (快) — quick is not the main meaning of the hanja but it makes the most sense.