

## Chapter 1087

In my past life, what sin did I commit? (2)

As Hyun Jong lifted his head, the disciples of Hwasan, who had been bowing deeply, slammed their heads onto the ground like a lightning.

‘If our eyes meet, we die.’

‘This isn’t a joke — you really die.’

‘What did I just witness?’

Cold sweat ran down the backs of the disciples of Hwasan. They had seen Hyun Jong angry several times before, but this anger felt different.

‘I’d rather deal with the Bishop.’

‘Please spare us!’

A sudden long sigh escaped from Hyun Jong’s mouth as he emitted a fierce gaze.

«In my past life, what sin did I commit?...»

Un Geom’s and Baek Cheon’s heads lowered even further.

Kkkeueung.

Hyun Jong scratched his head vigorously. Although his frustration made him want to completely overturn everything, it wasn’t easy to get angry anymore when considering how much these guys had suffered.

Frankly, are these kids really in a situation to be scolded? These are heroes who have achieved unimaginable feats that would cause entire cities to throw welcoming parties for them. But these heroes...

“...”

Trying their best to avoid making eye contact, the disciples kept their heads deeply bowed. Meanwhile, Chung Myung, who was still giving a look that said, ‘Is he really that upset?’ ...

«Kkkeuug...»

The back of his neck naturally stiffened. For a moment, Hyun Jong tried to find his decoction, but even Tang Soso, who should be preparing the remedy, sat in a corner with a sullen face. Hyun Jong sighed once again.

«It’s all my fault. Yes, it’s all my fault.»

«...»

«Everyone...»

Hyun Jong slightly bit his lips.

«But still, thankfully. Everyone returned safely.»

«No, please at least let me lower my arms, and then you can speak.....»

«Oh, shut up!»

«Soso! Where are your needles? Stick it in that guy’s big mouth!»

«You deserve to die!»

The disciples of Hwasan glared at Chung Myung, rolling their eyes. If that guy had just shut his mouth, there would have been half as much trouble.

Hyun Jong let out a deep sigh.

«All right, lower your hands.»

«Hehe.»

«You, keep yours up.»

«Why only me?»

«Just do it.»

Chung Myung's lips pouted again. He was clearly displeased with the act of raising the arms again.

Other disciples silently lowered their arms.

Watching them, Hyun Jong blamed himself inwardly.

'I am still lacking.'

His anger didn't stem from the wasted journey to Nanjing. The real anger surged when he saw the miserable state of those sitting here.

Their clothes were torn and tattered, stained with dried blood. The glimpses of bruises and wounds through the ripped garments hinted at the harsh battles they had endured.

Seeing this, a feeling of pity welled up in his chest.

Proud, of course. They knew very well why they went to Gangnam. The value of what they protected and the importance of the beliefs they preserved couldn't be ignored.

Yet, despite all that, he was angry.

No matter how just the cause, what parent would be pleased to see their child willingly head into a dangerous battlefield? Witnessing those who had experienced the harsh battlefield and returned laughing as if it was nothing, it was inevitable that anger would bubble up within him.

Hyun Jong quietly lowered his head.

«Thank you, everyone.»

At these words, everyone looked surprised with their mouths open.

«Now, Sect Leader!»

«Oh, no, why are you saying that! We were wrong.»

«Damn it, you guys! Hurry up and say thank you!»

Hyun Jong raised his head, facing his bewildered disciples who were scrambling in confusion.

«I'm not thanking you for what you did.»

«...»

«You resolved the crisis in the Central Plains, elevated the status of Hwasan, and made the world aware that there are still righteous people with Gangho. But I'm not thankful for those things.»

«Sect Leader...»

Hyun Jong looked at his disciples with sunken eyes.

«But I have only one thing to be thankful for.»

He bowed his head once again.

«Thank you for returning safely... I'm truly grateful.»

The disciples of Hwasan bowed their heads together.

They could keenly feel how much Sect Leader had worried about them, how much anguish he had gone through. In hindsight, they realized they had only been concerned about their safety in the midst of the battle, not considering the feelings of those left behind. That might explain why even the simple act of communication was forgotten.

A sense of guilt welled up in them. The disciples of Hwasan sighed collectively.

«We apologize, Sect Leader.»

«Sorry.»

«Can I lower my hands now?»

«No.»

«Ugh, really.»

Though Chung Myung grumbled, his voice didn't reach the ears of the others.

«Sigh.»

As Hyun Jong let out a deep sigh, Hyun Young, who was next to him, finally spoke up.

«Geez, the kids fought in such a chaos, mistakes can happen. Don't make a big deal out of it.»

«What, you?»

«Anyway, as you get older, you become more childish yourself.»

Observing the situation, Hyun Sang discreetly restrained Hyun Young.

«Maybe Sect Leader is worried because of that?»

«Who didn't worry here? If the kids returned safely, we should start with praising them.

That's what Sect Leader would do!»

«Ugh...»

Hyun Jong, finding no words to say, turned his head away. Hyun Young clicked his tongue and looked at the kids.

«Next time, consider the person waiting anxiously for you. I thought you guys were on your last breath.»

«We will keep that in mind, Elder.»

«We promise.»

Hyun Young nodded.

«All right. Now that Sect Leader seems to have calmed down a bit, let's talk. What happened?»

The group fell silent and turned their heads to look at Baek Cheon as if he was to be their representative.

«Firstly...»

Baek Cheon cleared his throat and began describing the events they faced in Gangnam.

«Um.»

The story, not a brief one, started flowing from Baek Cheon's mouth. As everyone listened, Hyun Jong couldn't help but emit a groan. All eyes turned toward him, curious about what he would say first.

«Un Geom.»

“Yes, Sect Leader.”

“Where are the woman and child who were rescued from Hangzhou?”

A smile naturally bloomed on the lips of Hwasan's disciples, who heard those words. This is because they felt that he was finally truly like Sect Leader Hyun Jong.

«The woman and the child are resting in a quiet room.»

Calmly responding, Un Geom explained further,

«Although there doesn't seem to be any physical harm, they are in a weakened state. While we may not feel this, but even crossing a waterway is not an easy task for an ordinary woman.»

«Indeed, indeed.»

«Therefore, we thought it best for them to rest in a comfortable place. I've asked the doctors at the residence to look after them, so there shouldn't be any issues.»

«That's good. And the child, is he unharmed?»

«Yes, Sect Leader. You need not worry.»

«Thank goodness.»

Only then did Hyun Jong let out a light sigh.

Magyo's revival and the unification of Sapaeryeon. Considering the chaos this events will cause in Gangho, the well-being of the two survivors might seem trivial.

However, by mentioning their safety first, Hyun Jong revealed his true character. Whether positively or negatively, it spoke volumes about what kind of person Hyun Jong was.

At that moment, Tang Soso spoke quietly,

«She seems burdened with worries. Forced to move to another region without any relatives nearby...»

«That's true. It must be challenging.»

Hyun Jong, as if there was nothing no ponder about, turned to Hyun Young.

«Hyun Young.»

“Yes, Sect Leader.»

«Take care of ensuring that the woman and child lack nothing in their current situation. Find a suitable place for them to settle down. Whether it's Hwaem or Sichuan, assist them in settling wherever they feel comfortable.»

«I will do so, Sect Leader.»

With a heavy heart, Hyun Jong nodded. While the news of survivors and their rescue was undoubtedly welcome, the fact that only two had survived on the vast land of Hangzhou meant profound losses.

Certainly, there might be others who fled to different places after the incident, but the sacrifices were substantial.

«Magyo...»

Magyo, as described by them, was a place beyond what Hyun Jong had imagined — frightening and dreadful. Considering that they might have toned down the description for Hyun Jong's sake, the reality could be even more daunting.

«Chung Myung.»

«...»

«Chung Myung.»

With no response to the repeated calls, Hyun Jong's eyebrows twitched. The piercing gaze from Chung Myung, who had been still pouting his lips, met Hyun Jong's in the empty air.

«Lower your arms.»

«Yes, Sect Leader. Please ask me anything.»

In response to the immediate and courteous reply, Hyun Jong closed his eyes tightly.

‘What's with him...’

In just a few days, it seemed like Chung Myung had undergone a personality transformation multiple times. How could a person remain so consistent in their behaviour during such a short period? Hyun Jong found himself questioning whether the issue was not with Chung Myung's bad personality, but rather with those attempting to change it.

«You...»

About to say something, Hyun Jong sighed deeply. After giving Chung Myung a brief, worried look, he mustered the strength to speak.

«I won't inquire about why you know Magyo so well.»

«Oh, about that? Well, that's...»

«It's okay.»

Cutting Chung Myung off as he seemed about to explain, Hyun Jong firmly put an end to it. Some conversations were better left unexplored.

«If you ever feel like it, tell me later.»

Hyun Jong didn't lack curiosity about Chung Myung's background. However, relationships didn't necessarily grow stronger by knowing more about each other, nor did lack of knowledge drive them apart.

No matter what story he has, to him, Chung Myung is just Chung Myung.

The child who had already connected with his heart must have reasons for not sharing his story. What Hyun Jong needed to do now was not to pry but to wait.

Hyun Jong subtly gazed at the others around him. It seemed he expected their attitudes to remain unchanged.

He furrowed his brow slightly and opened his mouth.

“More importantly, since you seem to know the most about the Demonic Cult among us, let me ask. According to Baek Cheon, the Demonic Cult revealed in this rebellion seems to be just a part of them. Do you agree?»

“Yes. I think so.”

“Well then... When you consider the strength of those who haven't appeared in the Central Plains this time, adding up the power of the demonic sect, what do you think their overall strength will be?”

Chung Myung subtly furrowed his eyebrows. After pondering while unfolding and folding his fist, he looked at Hyun Jong with a stern face.

”..Are you referring to the forces excluding the Heavenly Demon?”

“That's right.”

“In that case...”

He closed his mouth again. Chung Myung, seemingly contemplating something, finally spoke when the tension in the room had reached its peak.

“Even if we think less of them, it would be ten times, no... even more than that.”

In that moment, the air in the room froze.