

Chapter 1248

That's it. (3)

«Oh, no. Um...»

At that moment, other members of Cheonumaeng's group also appeared through the open door, looking somewhat disheveled.

«Hmm, seems like the hangover was worse than expected.»

«Hyeong, you seem too frail. You must have had all the good stuff at Tang clan.»

«Don't talk nonsense. You probably grew up in Namgung and had all the elixirs you wanted. There may be poisons aplenty in Tang clan, but there's no elixirs. You'll only know once you've tasted poison.»

«Weren't people from Tangga known for using poison like medicine?»

«...Where on earth did such baseless rumors come from? Saying Tang's people have poison flowing instead of blood? If we ingest poison, we'll die too! Are you saying that just because Namgung swings a sword, he won't die even if he gets hit by it?»

«After hearing that...»

Watching those casually conversing as they walked, Gwak Hwanso blinked his eyes blankly.

«Why didn't they serve any food?»

«Tsk tsk. How long do you plan on sitting around waiting for handouts? Once time passes, naturally, you should go to the dining hall and eat yourself.»

«They gave us food until yesterday.»

«But now it's a new day. Yesterday is gone.»

«Wow, sharp as a knife.»

Why on earth are they still here?

«Well... What are you doing here?»

Gwak Hwanso's voice sounded dazed.

«Huh?»

«Didn't we prepare a boat for you to leave once the typhoon subsided?»

«You did?»

Chung Myung, who stopped scratching his stomach, looked puzzled as he glanced inside.

«Sasuk, did they prepare a boat for us?»

«Hmm? Oh, I heard about it. They prepared a boat on the coast for us to use when leaving the island.»

Baek Cheon walked out from inside.

Unlike others whose clothes were disheveled, Baek Cheon's attire remained immaculate.

Gwak Hwanso frowned as he gazed at the pristine white robes shining brightly in the sunlight.

«Are you in your right mind?»

The answer to his question came from elsewhere.

«You are the one who's out of his mind, you bastard.»

«Huh?»

«If a guest has come, they should be fed! Even at Hwasan, where being thrown from the edge of the cliff as a symbol of etiquette, guests are not starved to death!»

«Chung Myung-ah, you shouldn't criticize and insult other sects while being a guest.»

«These morons aren't even as hospitable as Hwasan!»

«You shouldn't swear at people either.»

Gwak Hwanso massaged his throbbing temples. In a situation where they didn't know when Sapaeryeon might attack, these people were casually preparing for breakfast. It's not like their nerves weren't already on edge, but these bastards, what on earth...

«Jayang.»

«Yes, Sahyeong?»

«Escort the guests to the dining hall. Inform the kitchen to prepare the meal.»

«But, Sahyeong, this is...»

«Do as I say.»

«Yes...»

Lee Jayang shot a glare filled with discontent towards Chung Myung and his companions. 'They really are going too far.'

In general, there was nothing wrong with their words. Sending off guests who had come from afar without even offering them breakfast clearly went against etiquette. At another time, there would have been loud complaints about how to handle such matters properly. But isn't the current situation far from typical? The disciples of Haenam must face Sapaeryeon now. Those remaining will fight and most likely die, while those who escape must now accept Sapaeryeon's dominance.

Everyone here already knows their fate. Watching Cheonumaeng leave Haenam so casually after completing their tasks, what could they possibly be thinking? No matter how strong their willpower, morale is bound to plummet.

'I thought they would understand if it was explained reasonably.'

Lee Jayang's gaze fixated on Baek Cheon's face. Though not stupid, it seemed that this oblivious bastard didn't understand the significance of their words.

«...Please follow me.»

Despite the boiling frustration within, with the other disciples having already seen them, there was no other choice but to treat them appropriately and see them off.

As soon as Lee Jayang bit his lip and turned away, Chung Myung posed a question.

«But why have all of you gathered in group here since early morning? Are you quarreling or something?»

Lee Jayang's head snapped back at Chung Myung's question. Unable to contain himself any longer, he erupted like a thunder.

«But this guy is really!»

«Jayang!»

«No, Daesahyeong! Isn't this going too far? Isn't this open mockery?»

«Enough!»

When Gwak Hwanso sternly reprimanded him, Lee Jayang clenched his lips tightly.

«Bang Hong [방홍(房鴻)], you guide them.»

«M-Me, Sahyeong?»

«Why? Can't you do it?»

«No, Sahyeong. I'll do it.»

Lee Jayang turned away abruptly. From behind, Gwak Hwanso's voice, attempting to sound composed, could be heard.

«I... I apologize. We thought the guests had left, so we came to clean the rooms. We didn't realize you were still here.»

«Hmm?»

«We'll take care of the luggage and tidy up. Please, go ahead and have your meal. We'll have everything ready for your departure when you return.»

Lee Jayang knew that Gwak Hwanso's patience was even thinner than his own. Therefore, he couldn't help but understand the significance of his calm response at this moment.

Before Gwak Hwanso's composed reaction, Lee Jayang felt ashamed of his impulsive behavior.

Then, it happened.

«Sasuk, what are these guys saying?»

Chung Myung's voice, seemingly disregarding Gwak Hwanso's words, rang out bluntly.

That was the last straw for Lee Jayang's remaining sanity.

‘Enough!’

Lee Jayang's eyes blazed as he turned around. It was supposed to be the last sight and sound of Haenam, and he intended to correct the annoying habits of that impudent bad-haired bastard.

However, when he heard Chung Myung and Baek Cheon talking, he was so shocked that all strength drained from his body.

«Why clean a place that someone else is already using?»

«Chung Myung-ah, in fine inns, they clean the rooms even when people are staying.»

«But this isn't an inn, is it?»

«That's true.»

«So it's just rudeness. Why rummage through someone else's belongings?»

«Hmm... That's a question to ponder. The customs on the Southern Sea's island and in Shaanxi may not necessarily be the same.»

Lee Jayang lost even the will to get angry and burst into laughter. Gwak Hwanso added with gritted teeth.

«Actually, we're packing the belongings of those who are leaving. If they want to leave the island before Sapaeryeon arrives, they need to hurry. There's no time to waste, right?»

Gwak Hwanso couldn't bear it any longer, but Chung Myung just laughed again.

«That's a story for when I leave.»

«So, about the luggage... What?»

Gwak Hwanso, who was about to burst out, blinked in disbelief.

«Who's leaving?»

«...»

«These guys are hilarious. Is this how the islanders treat their guests? I have never said I was leaving, so why are they chasing guests away as they please?»

«It does cost a lot to feed the guests.»

«We've been eating too much guilt-free.»

«That's all thanks to Young Lord Namgung.»

«M-me? Me? Why me?»

The reactions from Cheonumaeng's group remained nonchalant. Gwak Hwanso was momentarily speechless, staring blankly at them. Chung Myung snapped his fingers and said,

«Hey, you.»

«... Yes?»

«Don't talk nonsense and guide us to the dining hall. Don't touch my belongings. Anyway, these days, kids have no manners, none! Ugh!»

«...»

«Lead the way!»

«Yes?»

«What are you doing?»

«Oh... Yes.»

Gwak Hwanso began to lead them towards the dining hall as if he was possessed.

The disciples of Haenam just stared blankly at their backs.

«Um... Sahyeong.»

«Hm?»

«What about us? Should we continue cleaning? Or...»

The expression on Lee Jayang's face twisted horribly.

«Are you... not going?»

Gwak Hwanso asked, trying his best not to show too much bewilderment. Unfortunately, there was no one here to give a proper answer to his question.

«No... Am I eating raw fish?»

«This is a precious ingredient.»

«But it's not cooked! Who eats raw fish?»

«It's traditionally eaten this way.»

«Even fishermen on the Yangtze River didn't eat it like this! And there's Dongjeong Lake nearby, but they still cooked their fish!»

«They eat it in the Northern Sea, don't they?»

«No, they didn't originally. That's why we introduced it.»

«Anyway, you ate it, right? And you're fine, so it's okay.»

«It seems they eat like this here.»

«Oh, no...»

Trying to rebut somehow, Namgung Dowi's face contorted in frustration as Chung Myung started to scream.

«Just eat it, you useless jerk! Where's all this fuss coming from? This is all because of noble bastards like you! You should just throw them all in a corner and feed them mud to be proper humans!»

«What does being noble have to do with this?»

«Shut up, you darn rich brat!»

Namgung Dowi tried to seek agreement from others, trembling with cultural shock.

But...

«Oh, it's chewy.»

«It sticks to your teeth.»

«It's delicious, isn't it?»

Hwasan's guys were already stuffing the raw fish into their mouths.

«Delicious!»

Even Tang Pae was munching on the fish flesh.

'If they can eat it raw, they'd even eat someone else's flesh.'

Are they even human? Those are the real monsters. Namgung Dowi pounded his chest with frustration.

But there was someone here even more frustrated than Namgung Dowi.

"No! Please listen!"

«Ah, I am eating...»

«You don't even touch a dog while it's eating.»

«The Southern Sea seems to have a different culture.»

Gwak Hwansoo clenched his hands around his head. He wanted to commend his patience for not swinging his sword at those snouts.

"Oh my..."

«Uh, yes?»

After swallowing what he was chewing, Chung Myung expressed his frustration.

«Why do you keep urging us to leave? Are you worried about wasting your food?»

«Well, it's not... I mean, the discussion is already over, and it was decided that

Cheonumaeng and Haenam would each go their own way, right?»

Baek Cheon nodded firmly.

«That's correct.»

«In that case, there's no reason for you to stay here anymore. Vice Sect Leader also mentioned that he would convey Haenam's position as a special envoy of Cheonumaeng.»

«That's also true.»

Once again, Baek Cheon nodded in agreement. So, it was only Gwak Hwanso who felt more stifled than ever.

«But why are you suddenly not leaving? What does that mean?»

Chung Myung interjected, pounding his chest.

«That's one thing, but hey!»

«Yes?»

«But why can't this guy understand what I'm saying? Is he a bit stupid?»

Chung Myung scrunched up his face in annoyance.

«Okay, okay. Let me explain. Negotiations with Cheonumaeng fell through, right?»

«That's right.»

«So, our job is to convey your situation to the orthodox sects properly, isn't it?»

«That's right!»

«In that case, our role is done, isn't it?»

«Isn't that what I said?!»

Chung Myung shouted in frustration.

«So, since we've completed our mission, we can do whatever we want, right? Cheonumaeng is leaving, but I'm not! Is that so difficult to understand? Can't you grasp it?»

Gwak Hwanso was momentarily speechless... Would he understand? Why should it be like that?

Watching him, Chung Myung clicked his tongue.

«Why are you making such a fuss over not understanding something so simple? It's mind-boggling, really.»

Gwak Hwanso was lost in thought. What more could he say to this lunatic? Just then, Baek Cheon, who had been listening, smiled and spoke up.

«After the meal, we should return to our seats.»

«Yes?»

«Not as the Vice Sect Leader of Hwasan representing Cheonumaeng's position, but as... a lone martial artist who came upon hearing that a comrade was in trouble.»

Baek Cheon's gaze suddenly became deeper and more solemn.

At that moment, shivers ran down Gwak Hwanso's spine.