901 Episode 50 The World After The End (4)

[The person is currently in an unreachable area.]

I blinked stupidly.

An unreachable area?

[There are unread messages left in 'Midday Tryst'.]

The fact that there are unread messages means that 'Midday Tryst' is still functioning normally.

In other words, Yoo Joonghyuk was paying coins to maintain this connection on my behalf.

This is a little touching, isn't it?

[There are ??? missed messages.]

[The usage fee for 'Midday Tryst' is currently partially overdue.]

Huh?

[The usage fee is currently overdue for 32 days.]

[To check the missed messages, pay the overdue usage fee.]

Hey, you bastard, you didn't pay everything, did you?

I thought about it for a moment and paid the fee. It's not even a few years, it's only 32 days overdue, so I can pay it. There might be an important message.

[Payment of overdue fee has been completed.]

I checked the message right away.

[The message is damaged and unreadable.]

I don't know why, but the message was seriously damaged.

Come to think of it, there was something similar in the main story. What did Kim Dokja do then?

[Exclusive skill, 'Fourth Wall', activates!]

That's right. Kim Dokja in the main story used the power of the [Fourth Wall] to decipher the damaged message. Then, should I do the same?

[Someone on the 'Fourth Wall' says that they can decipher the message.]

If it's someone on the [Fourth Wall], it must be the 'Demon King of Salvation'. Or the 'King of Fear'? Or maybe the kkoma Kim Dokjas?

It didn't matter which one. Right now, finding out the contents of the message was the priority.

'Decipher it.'

As soon as I answered, I felt the [Fourth Wall] wriggling. And after a while, the interpreted message appeared on the smartphone screen.

「I d i ot.」

This was the first message.

「I d i ot.」

Again?

Hmm, right. If it's Yoo Joonghyuk, then that's possible.

Since we broke up like that in the fear, he might be mad at me.

「I d i ot.」

I stared at the screen for a moment.

This seems like someone is interpreting it maliciously on purpose. Come to think of it, weren't the Kim Dokja clan the masters of 'misunderstanding Yoo Joonghyuk' for a long time?

I continued reading the interpreted message.

「Are you a li ve ? ?」

「나 는 ? 금 ? 원 의」

「네 ? 름? 은」

*(TL: Decided to leave these two sentences in Korean because it doesn’t mean anything/means even less in English. Basically, 구****원의*** *마왕 = 'Demon King of Salvation', and 이****름*** *= 'name', so he may be talking about this. 나는 = 'I' or 'I am', 네 = 'you', 'your' or 'yes', and 은 is usually a grammatical word. No idea about the 금 though.)*

Unfortunately, the recovered messages were impossible to properly confirm their contents.

The only one that was intact was...

「Ne bu la Batt le」

The nabulae waged war?

Is that what it means?

「? ? co in ? ?」

This seems to be something related to coins. Is it related to that 'D Coin'?

「Kim Dok ja, be ca re ful」

That was Yoo Joonghyuk's last message.

Kim Dokja, be careful.

I read the message over and over again. It didn't seem like there were any hidden clues like vertical reading or anagrams.

So, was it really telling me to be careful?

...That couldn't be true.

Above all, Yoo Joonghyuk wouldn't have used coins to leave such a simple message.

"Eungong, we've arrived."

While I was lost in thought, the entrance to the swirling portal quickly approached. If I go past that, I'll see the scenery of the 'First Murim'.

No, since the 'First Murim' has been destroyed, I wonder if I'll see a different scenery.

Namgung Myung, who had been watching me for a moment, asked.

"Can I ask you a few questions before we go through the portal?"

"Yes. Sure."

"Your Majesty, what stage of 'Transcendence' have you reached?"

I wondered why he suddenly asked that, but upon thinking about it, Namgung Myung knew that I belonged to the 'Transcendence Alliance'.

"Well, that's... Strictly speaking, I'm not a Transcendent. I failed to break through the first stage of Transcendence."

There are several conditions for achieving Transcendence in 'Ways of Survival'.

For example, reaching a total ability score of 100, or 'forgetting' a skill whose proficiency has reached its limit...

"You failed to achieve Transcendence?"

"Yes. It just so happened. That's why I was persecuted a lot."

In fact, when I first entered the 'Fear Realm', my goal was to achieve 'Transcendence'.

For example, integrating the Transcendence's incarnation and the constellation's soul into one being, just like Goryeo Swordsman Cheok Jungyeong did. In fact, my incarnation was precisely trained through the time fault, and I came pretty close to the first stage of transcendence.

However, that was it, and I was unable to achieve transcendence.

Towards me who could not achieve transcendence, Chungheo, the commander-in-chief of the Transcendence Alliance, said this.

「"Transcendence can only be achieved by forgetting what you have, but it seems like there is something you must not forget."」

Something I must not forget.

「"'Transcendence' may not be the only answer to reach 'after destruction'. Struggling to remember everything could also be another possibility for repair."」

When I relayed that story to Han Sooyoung in the 1,863rd round, Han Sooyoung said this.

「"You're Kim Dokja."」

Han Sooyoung clicked her tongue as if to ask why I was thinking so hard and added.

「"If you achieve 'transcendence' in your current state, you might actually be lowered in rank. Do you know that Transcendence is a state that is reached by studying and training for a long time on a 'single story'?"」

「"It is."」

「"If you do that, your understanding of a single story will deepen, but your overall worldview will narrow. You have to become stronger in a different way than other transcendents. In other words, readers have their own lives."」

All the way to the 1,863rd round, I was absorbed in that 'Kim Dokja's Way' with Han Sooyoung.

Of course, Namgung Myung, who couldn't know about this secret, had a somewhat dark expression.

"I see. You're not a Transcendent..."

"Are you disappointed?"

Namgung Myung thought for a moment, then shook his head and smiled faintly.

"No, I think it's fortunate."

In fact, fortunate?

"If you were really a transcendent, you would have been in a difficult position in the 'Divine Murim District'."

Divine Murim District.

It seemed to be the new name for the 'First Murim'.

"Because the Divine Murim District doesn't welcome transcendents."

It was a strange story.

Whether it was the 'New Murim' or the 'Old Murim', if it was a murim, there was no reason to treat transcendents coldly. If you just achieved the first stage of transcendentalism, you could compete with the lower-ranking constellations. That's what transcendents are.

As if he knew my doubts, Namgung Myung opened his mouth again.

"The transcendents who returned from the Fear Realm are a headache for companies. The transcendents who are familiar with the laws of the 'Old Murim' are trying to destroy the system instead of adapting to the 'New Murim'."

"I've been wanting to ask you this question since a while ago, but what exactly is this 'company'?"

"Do you know about the Old Murim Faction or the Five Great Sects?"

"Yes. I've heard of it."

The Old Murim Faction and the Five Great Sects.

The Namgung Sect that Namgung Myung was a part of was also one of the Five Great Sects.

"If the past Murim Faction was controlled by the Old Murim Faction and the Five Great Sects, the current New Murim Faction is controlled by 'companies'."

"It's a kind of 'sect'."

"It's similar, but a little different. You'll know when you see it for yourself..."

I thought I knew roughly how the 'New Murim Faction' came to be.

Seeing that they use the word 'company' instead of 'sect', it seems like a similar worldview to the 'Modern Murim Faction' that I used to write about.

"If possible, I recommend that you belong to a 'company'. When you enter the city, you will automatically go up to the examination table, and the examiner will explain the details later."

Just as I was about to ask what the examination table was, a portal opened and a desolate desert appeared. A huge moving walkway was installed in the center of the desert.

We got on the moving walkway.

"The city you see in the distance is the 'New Murim District'."

The exterior of the city was obscured by a white smog as if it had been hit by yellow dust, so I couldn't see it well.

Come to think of it, it was strange that there was a desert area here.

A dry and desolate land.

'Environmental pollution' in that Murim? If Breaking The Sky Sword Saint had seen it, she would have done the same.

As I clicked my tongue inwardly, people began to gather one by one through the other branch of the moving walkway.

I saw one of them waving their hand in this direction.

"Oh, Namgung Myung. This time, you came back safely."

"Hwang Minhyeok."

I looked at the man called Hwang Minhyeok.

He was wearing clothes that were completely different from Namgung Myung, and the words 'Tamra Middle School' were written on his chest.

Is that the name of the company?

When I looked again, there was something written on Namgung Myung's back as well. It was too dusty to read, but Hwang Minhyeok, who was observing Namgung Myung's expression, asked again.

"But where did your team go and are you coming alone?"

"We met waves."

"Waves? Could it be that the entire team was wiped out?"

"A total of thirty-two people, including Un Gisu and the supervisor, died."

"Un Gisu is fine, but the supervisor died? You, could it be—"

Namgung Myung waved his hand at Hwang Minhyeok, who was glaring.

"I didn't kill him. The supervisor died trying to enter the mid-region too hard and fell down."

"Huh, you don't need to make excuses to me. The audit team will find out the details. By the way, who is the incarnation behind you?"

"Oh, this person is…"

Before Namgung Myung could even introduce me, the moving walk began to slow down.

[You will soon enter the 'New Murim District'!]

[You have entered a new scenario area!]

At the same time, I saw my body turning translucent.

Namgung Myung shouted at me urgently.

"Eungong, I will see you later. And remember! You must choose a company at the judging table! If you don't…!"

Namgung Myung's figure disappeared, and I started to be transferred somewhere. Judging from the feeling, it seemed that I was about to be summoned to that 'examination board'.

Amid the dazzling scenery that was quickly passing by, a message appeared before my eyes like a subway advertisement.

[Tamra Junggong].

—Creating a new world with the bones of forgotten gods.

Tamra Junggong.

The name written on the back of that 'Hwang Minhyeok' earlier.

Was that a company name?

The advertisement kept coming to mind.

[Veda Biotech].

—Living scripture, rewriting humanity.

The company name in front seems to be the name of the company, and the one after seems to be a slogan.

[Baekyo Heritage (百妖遺產)].

—Technologization of the strange, armament of tradition.

I started to understand Namgung Myung's words about choosing a company to belong to.

Is it some kind of sponsor selection?

After all, this 'scenario region' seems to be a system where you enter a 'company' and progress.

In the end, it meant that in order to enter this region, you had to choose one of these companies.

[Olympus Technology], [Black Cloud Foundation].

…

But as I looked at the passing company names, they all seemed like evil companies.

Olympus Technology?

If I entered a place like that, I'd lose all my stories and live as a slave terminal incarnation for 200 years.

It seemed that each company had a different promotional time, so the companies in the back quickly passed by with only their names introduced.

That was it.

...Huh?

That company passed by 'very quickly'.

But I definitely saw it clearly. That 'company', without a doubt—

—only we, know the ending of this world.

It was a company I knew very well.