919 Episode 52 Light Sword Emperor (4)

【No…】

The 'Unchanging One' stared at me for a moment, as if in a daze.

【Why?】

【It's nothing.】

【Speak.】

The 'Unchanging One' glanced at me and began to speak.

【I'm saying this because the tone of your mantra is so good.】

【What?】

【T-That's what I mean. Usually, the tone of your mantra is influenced by the stories the recorder has written. So it's a bit strange. What stories have you recorded to give it such a tone...】

So, you're saying my voice is pleasant to hear?

Judging by the fact that he's offering such blatant praise, it seems he's quite desperate.

【I don't intend to spare you just for saying that.】

【T-That's not what I meant!】

The man bit his lip, then opened his mouth again, taking note of the situation.

【Are you perhaps a 'True Recorder'?】

【True Recorder?】

【This refers to cases where one becomes a 'Recorder' on one's own, without making a contract with the 'Hunchback'.】

According to Bihyung, there are two ways to become a Recorder.

One is to achieve the feat of a 'Recorder' on one's own.

The other is to become a Recorder through a contract with the 'Hunchback'.

When I nodded, the 'Unchangeable One' nodded in admiration.

【I see. I don't know how a True Recorder came to this city, but...】

When he heard that I was a 'True Recorder,' he rolled his eyes again, prostrating himself before me and shouting,

【Please hire me!】

It was a funny word.

He wasn't just asking me to be his subordinate, he was asking me to 'hire him'?

【I will be your 'assistant recorder'.】

【Assistant recorder?】

【As you know, no matter how great a recorder is, there's a limit to what they can accomplish alone. Especially if you're trying to use a powerful 'record'...】

I got what he was saying. Even just the previous fight was a testament to that.

The pressure felt different when facing one recorder than when facing three at once.

Surely, the more numerous the recorders are, the more powerful their coercive power can be.

【I know. That's probably why you granted me [Fate].】

The 'Unchanging One' took a deep breath.

【That... was really not my intention! I only interfered a little without even knowing who you were!】

【After all, you were involved in that [Fate], weren't you?】

The 'Unchanging One' responded hastily, perhaps sensing the murderous intent emanating from my body.

【I simply did as I was told. I've fallen short of the task of adding strength to the newly written [Fate], so I just added a little bit of penmanship to the final [Fate]...】

As if he realized the situation was getting worse as he continued, the Unchanging One banged his head and spoke.

【I-I was wrong! I committed a mortal sin! It will never happen again!】

【That's a truly sincere apology.】

【Those bastards! I'll tell you who all the bastards were involved in that fate!】

【Hmm.】

I pretended to ponder for a moment, looking down at him.

【I know you're lying. You were just wasting time, begging for you life, and then you ran off here.】

【This time, it's really not happening! How could I dare deceive the Recorder, whose penmanship is far superior to mine? There's nowhere to run now!】

I hadn't explicitly told him, but I'd been hearing his inner thoughts here and there.

「There aren't many opportunities to face a true recorder.」

「I don't know what level of recorder this person is, but he's skilled enough to easily take on at least three lower-level recorders.」

「There's only one way to survive.」

As someone who's just become a 'recorder', it would be convenient to have a guide.

【In that case, prove it by signing a 'recording contract'.】

【A recording contract?】

The guy's eyes widened, and he feigned indifference.

【I'm not an incarnation or a constellation, so I can't sign a 'recording contract' with you...】

【I'm sure there are similar contracts among recorders, too?】

The guy, who had been furtively licking his lips as if he knew that, cautiously confessed.

【If you're referring to the 'recording oath'...】

After a moment, the contents of the 'recording oath' flashed before my eyes.

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The Recorder of Fear, 'Unchanging One', swears the following:

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As I was reading the oath, the man asked,

【Can I use 'Demon King of Salvation' as your modifier?】

Strictly speaking, the Demon King of Salvation was a modifier that no longer existed.

To be clear, I need to write my name here...

A pounding headache suddenly struck me. It was the kind that would come whenever I tried to recall my real name.

I bit my lip and thought for a moment.

【Write that you are making a contract with the owner of the story 'Demon King of Salvation'.】

The revised oath then came to mind.

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First, the Recorder of Fear, 'Unchanging One', swears to become the 'assistant recorder' of the owner of the story 'Demon King of Salvation'.

Second, the Recorder of Fear, 'Unchanging One', will not record anything that would harm the owner of the story 'Demon King of Salvation'.

Third, the Recorder of Fear, the 'Unchanging One', swears the above oath on the 'Final Wall'.

Fourth, as long as the Recorder of Fear, 'Unchanging One', does not violate the above oath, the owner of the story 'Demon King of Salvation' will not harm the 'Unchanging One's' contracted entity.

\* This oath lasts for 10 years immediately following the oath.

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The oath exudes a unique sense of spirituality. The sentences felt just like a 'scenario' orchestrated by the Management Bureau.

Perhaps these Recorders are also the ones narrating the contents of the Management Bureau's 'scenario'.

【But what does 10 years mean?】

【Well, I need at least some insurance...】

【I'm sure you're just going to be stuck in a Time Fault for 10 years, killing time.】

【No, absolutely not!】

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\* The contracted party cannot enter a 'Time Fault' and arbitrarily accelerate the contract time.

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As the boy, though he'd been crying, finished writing the special terms, the oath was sealed in a bright ray of light.

[The Recording Oath is activated.]

[The Recorder of Fear, Unchanging One, has become your 'Assistant Recorder'.]

Indeed, my writing skills felt even more vivid than before. I can't quite put it into words, but it felt like I had a small, auxiliary battery.

At this point, I'd say the safety net was in place.

I slowly looked around the 'Recording Archives', asking.

【First of all... where is this place?】

Perhaps because he had become my 'Assistant Recorder', he answered with the energy of a new employee.

【Yes. This is the 'Recording Archives'. Each scenario area has a record archive, a place granted to the recorders of the 'New Murim District'.】

【What do you do here?】

【Recorders gather here to declare [Fate] and share their own 'interpretations'.】

So, to summarize, this is like a banquet hall for recorders.

【Actually, 'Authentic Recorders' rarely use this space. I heard that 'Authentic Recorders' exchange information in a special way related to the 'Final Wall'.】

A special way related to the 'Final Wall'...

【However, low-level recorders like me have almost no 'interpretations', so if we want to share even a little, we have to use this place.】

The 'Unchanging One' pointed to the 'doors' lined up at the front of the waiting room.

【These are the so-called 'Rooms of Narrative'. When you enter, you can interact with other recorders, and sometimes even plot or interfere with [Fate] to change the scenario.】

The 'Unchangeable One' spoke somewhat cautiously when speaking about [Fate].

【Oh, and you must wear a 'Mask' before entering. That's the rule.】

Actually, as I approached the 'Room of Narratives', a message appeared above me as if it had been waiting.

[Please select the 'Mask' you will use after entering.]

[The list of masks will be randomly selected based on the 'stories' you recorded.]

1. Fox Mask.

2. Wolf Mask.

3. Rat Mask.

4. Maskless Mask.

5. Dumpling Mask.

…

The 'Recycling Center' came to mind.

Back then, I chose the maskless mask. There are more options here... After much deliberation, I decided to go with a more ordinary choice this time.

[You chose the 'Fox Mask'.]

When I put on the mask, a ray of light shone through the mask surrounding my face, changing color.

But the expression on the face of the 'Unchangeable One''s face as he examined my mask was strange.

【Why?】

【Usually, the color of a recorder's mask is determined by their rank, which is one of seven colors.】

According to his explanation, the color of the mask given was determined by one of the following: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet.

Higher rank recorders wore masks closer to red, while lower ranks wore masks closer to purple.

In reality, the 'Unchanging One' was wearing a 'Blue Hamster' mask.

This probably meant heI was the third lowest rank.

The problem was the color of my mask.

【But your mask—】

The 'Unchangeable One' glared, as if searching for even the slightest trace of color in my mask.

【It's white.】

【Didn't you say the mask's color was red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet?】

【I don't know. Are the 'Authentic Recorders' somehow different? Actually, this is my first time seeing an 'Authentic Recorder' myself.】

Are there fewer 'Authentic Recorders' like me than I thought?

【However, it's quite interesting that you chose the fox mask.】

Interesting?

【I heard that the creator of this 'Record Archive' also wore a 'Fox Mask'.】

That was unexpected information.

This 'Record Archive' is a subspace that doesn't even appear in the original 'Ways of Survival'.

I wonder what being created this place.

【Who created this place?】

【The 'Record Archive' is a place created by the great Recorder, the 'Fox Who Commands the Heavens', out of consideration for the lowly, lower-level Recorders.】

【The Fox Who Commands the Heavens? Are you talking about Bicheonhori?】

【Do you know him?】

【I do. Bicheonhori Wang Weilong.】

So far, I've encountered Bicheonhori three times.

The last time was probably in the Fear Realm.

【Is he also a 'Authentic Recorder'?】

If you think about it carefully, it wasn't strange.

The '100 Strongest' he wrote was a famous work within the 'Ways of Survival'.

Since Bicheonhori had been so obsessed with 'recording' in every round of Yoo Joonghyuk's series, perhaps no one could be more deserving of the title of 'Authentic Recorder'.

But...

【Hey.】

The 'Unchanging One' was acting a little strange. He looked at me with anxious eyes, hiding his trembling voice, and asked.

【Excuse me... Whose name is that king...?】

【Wang Weilong?】

【Yes.】

【That's Bicheonhori's true name.】

【Bi, bi, Bicheon... The fox that commands the sky... Is...?】

【Right.】

【Oooooh!】

I hurried over and shook the guy's shoulder, but he was so unconscious he showed no signs of waking up. Judging by the bloody tears leaking from his eyes, it didn't seem to be an act.

【Hey. I told you to get up?】

Sentences poured out ceaselessly from the guy's head.

「Thetruenameofthegreatrecorder,thetruenameofthegreatrecorder,thetruenameofthegreatrecorder,thetruenameofthegreatrecorder,thetruenameofthegreatrecorder,thetruenameofthegreatrecorder...」

...Is this all I've got to do after hearing the true name of 'Bicheonhori'?

I left the fallen guy alone and slowly stood up.

If this were true...

I had a new card to use in my dealings with the recorders.

[Would you like to enter the 'Room of Narration'?]

I checked the available rooms in the waiting room one by one.

The name of the largest room was as follows:

—Room of Fate [43/100]

This is likely the room where the [Fate] he spoke of is pronounced.

The number [43/100] likely refers to the total number of people in the room and the number of people who have entered.

I wish I could just enter, but unfortunately, a message popped up saying I had no access.

I looked around the other rooms, feeling disappointed.

Most were empty, but some were occupied.

—Main Scenario Agenda Exchange Meeting [3/10]

This was a major scenario agenda,

and judging by the number 3, there were three visitors. Interestingly, there were small hashtags posted next to the room.

# Transcendence

# Scenario 80

It seemed to be a place to exchange information about something like this.

# New Murim District

# Light Sword Emperor

After checking the last hashtag, I pressed the enter button without hesitation.

# The Oldest Dream