

Prologue

5th June, 2022

Gun Choi went to the local council light-heartedly.

Today is finally the last day

The last day of the 24-month public military service.

Beep. Beep.

Lowering his head to check his smartphone, he found a message from his colleague.

Dont forget! after work were having your discharge celebratory get-together!

The colleague whod been assigned to the civil service department due to his obesity had been counting down days for this gathering.

However, Gun himself wasnt even the slightest bit interested in the upcoming event.

There was only one thing in his mind right now.

THE MAJOR LEAGUE

The day had finally come after a long wait of nearly 3 years since his last attempt at the league. He was finally re-entering. to prove those who doubted and abandoned him wrong.

This time Finally

As he was walking across the street, he witnessed a pram racing down a hill uncontrollably. Within moments Gun had taken off to save the pram from crashing to save the baby that may be lying there innocently.

NO!!!

THUMP

With screams of terror and shock echoing his surroundings, he slowly lost consciousness.

An Angels Life on Chance -1-

When Gun had regained consciousness, the situation had already been settled.

He woke up startled, to find a young girl looking down on him.

What happened?

The girl responded indifferently.

You're dead

What?

Gun hastily pushed himself up. Then he raised his voice in anger.

Look, I can move so freely, and you say that I'm dead? You don't joke about those things little girl

The girl remained calm and indifferent, and simply pointed her finger behind him.

When Gun turned his head around to look, he found his body lying in the middle of the road.

Your life was ended when you saved a baby in a pram and was hit by a truck as a result. But do not worry, you sacrificed your life for the baby, so you will be sent to Heaven.

Gun wavered his arms as he responded in shock.

Wait, what do you mean Heaven?! I'm not yet

The girl cold-heartedly cut him off and continued speaking.

Eliminate any secular desires you may have for the things you failed to achieve in this world. Those will all disappear once you reach Heaven.

As soon as she finished, a beam of light came down from the skies and pulled Gun upwards.

Dammit my life ends here without ever standing on the Major League mound. What were all those countless hours of practice and rehabilitation training for?

As she watched Gun float to the skies, the young girl thought to herself.

Hmph not bad for my first mission. I had perfect control of my facial expressions too.

As of this mission, she was graduating from being a trainee angel.

Gun is approximately half way up to the skies

Someone had sent a message to her mind.

Ell, didn't you forget something?

Ell responded to the high angel, Veness's question.

This mission was on an accident occurred at local time 08:21:23, on the 5th of June, 2022, in the A-12 region of Seoul, South Korea, which resulted in a death. The target is Jang Geun Cho, a person with enough pure and good deeds to be admitted to Heaven entry. During the procedures, he seemed to have no forgotten memories.

Veness sighed as Ell responded.

Ell, as an Appointed Angel, it is one of the most fundamental principles to check the target's name

Appointed Angels, aka AAs, were those that lead the dead spirits to Heaven.

Ell froze in shock and horror as she heard Veness's comment.

No way

YES way

Ell hastily shot up to the skies and grabbed Gun, who was about to disappear into the clouds.

Wait a moment

Gun looked down at Ell in wonder.

Yes?

Tell me your name

Gun Choi is there a problem?

As Ell heard his answer, she pulled him down with all her strength.

Unfortunately, the beam of light from Heaven was too strong, and had pulled both Gun and Ell above the clouds, into Heaven instead.

NOOO

An Angels Life On Chance -2-

What are you going to do now?

Ell dropped her head at Venesss question.

Im sorry

Thats not the problem. Their distorted destinies are too great, That man

Ell continuously dropped her head and bowed to Veness.

Im sorry. Im sorry. Im sorry.

Veness led the truck driver Jang Geun Cho to Heaven. The correct target Ell should have led to Heaven.

However, despite Venesss quick response to the mistake, the destiny had been too greatly distorted to be recovered fully.

Your trainee graduation will have to be postponed for now

Veness turned her attention to Gun.

Was Ell simply unlucky?

Her mistake wasnt entirely her fault

The given situation could have easily led to an incorrect assumption.

The truck driver Jang Geun Cho saw the pram racing down the road and quickly turned the wheel. His quick response avoided the truck from running over the pram.

However, that wasnt it. The truck soon ran uncontrollably, straight into a 5-metre high wall.

The destined task to sacrifice ones life to save the baby in the pram was Jang Geuns task, NOT Guns.

Gun bolted for the pram and pushed it out of harms way, and in the process had simply lost consciousness.

Ell asked Veness in a greatly troubled tone.

Wha What do we do now? The spirit already reached all the way here, his physical body down there will hardly be recoverable. Even if we send his soul back down, I doubt his body will be able to accept it and revive

The situation has gotten serious. I mean, we cant even use the Angels Miracle for an incident like this

An Angels Miracle was the angels ability to bring a dead person back into life, in itself being a miracle to overcome death.

However, to have this ability, you had to have the consent of those in the High Angel or Chief Angel ranks.

Gun had reached the entry of Heaven but could not enter.

He was troubled between the two angels who were holding a discussion regarding the situation.

Hmm Im sure theres something wrong. But I cant see what it is. Surely not a problem as stupid as bringing the wrong person. Nah, no way.

Veness lectured Ell once more and turned her head to Gun.

Seems like this is the only way

Veness, please, not Angels Miracle. You must first acquire the Chief Angels consent for that.

Dont worry, Im not using the Angels Miracle.

Then wha

Im going to utilise the trainee angel mission program. Theres a revival program included in it.

Do you think that will work?

Lets just hope his mental durability and will power is sufficient to withstand it

Veness approached Gun after she finished the conversation.

Gun grew slightly nervous about Venesss approach.

Maybe they found a solution

As Veness got closer, Gun could feel his consciousness becoming weaker and harder to grasp a hold of.

The presence of the High Angel and her spiritual power was overwhelming for a normal human being to handle.

Gun stayed conscious with all his might. Then he asked her.

Whats happening? My minds becoming weaker

After seeing Gun still standing, Veness thought.

With mental power this strong, it should be sufficient for him to withstand the program

Veness asked him with a typically bright angels smile.

We have decided to return you to the secular world. As it seems, that is what you desire as well

Youre sending me back? Is that even possible?

Guns consciousness grew weaker and weaker.

Of course, Its not that simple. However, we are going to repay you for your good deeds sufficiently.

Wh..What?

Gun wanted to ask what the repayment was going to be, but had lost his consciousness.

An Angels Life on Chance -2-

5,311 hours?! Thats 220? 221 days?! And lets see Thats over 7 months!

Dammit, 7 months from now itll be early next year. I need to recover before this year passes

Next year hed be turning 26. Including rehabilitation time, hed be well over 27 before he could start pitching properly.

Isnt there a way to recover faster?

As if the program was responding to his thoughts, new messages were displayed.

recovery time using mental enhancement: 1,244 hours

may I commence the mental enhancement?

1,244 hours was equivalent to approximately 2 months.

Full recovery in 2 months, then I may be able to finish the rehab program by early next year

This was Guns final chance.

Without hesitation, he responded in his mind.

I dont know what mental enhancement is, but desperate times call for desperate measures. Hurry and commence the enhancement

initialising mental enhancement

Within moments, Gun could feel his body rapidly heat up. He wanted to groan and scream in pain, but no sound, nor words could escape his mouth.

12 days after the accident

Gun was recovering at an unbelievable rate, surprising all the doctors and nurses.

I have never seen a patient recover this quickly

Perhaps its because hes an athlete that his recovery is outstanding!

Hm maybe he was born with unique genes. His muscle density and recovery rate is no match for an ordinary human being

You mean to say, he was blessed with special gifts or powers?

Hm as reluctant as I am, Id have to assume so

Gun was lying down on his nursing bed, looking at the texts that were displayed.

Health: D

Strength: E

Agility: E

Responsiveness: D

Trust: C

Luck: B

Mental Power: A

As the recovery processes progressed, the mere Fs on his stats were beginning to slowly rise.

Hm I guess theres no point telling other people about these stats, they wouldnt believe me What a shame.

Gun also knew that even if he could somehow prove that he could magically quantify and produce an accurate table of his stats, the people would only take him to a hidden laboratory for cruel experiments in an attempt to extract the power from him.

According to the messages, there were approximately 40 days left until all stats were to return to normal.

I wonder how long the rehab would take. Id have to start from rock bottom again right

He let out a deep sigh.

The minor league life was dooming.

Here comes the bread and strawberry jam again

4thof January 2020 -2 years and 6 months ago-

Gun let out a breath of relief as the doctor notified him that the operation was successful.

Only thing you need is some good rest now

Gun delivered his words of gratefulness on his nursing bed.

Thank you very much

2 months ago, with the help of his minor league team, he was drafted into the top 40 list of the Major League and was aiming to be drafted officially into a team.

The major league, which he dreamt of for years.

However, due to a critical elbow injury, he ended up undergoing a surgery.

There were 2 things pointed out as the cause for his injury.

Firstly, his incorrect pitching form.

Gun held the Inverted W pitching form.

Numerous major league pitchers from the past with high speed balls fell with the Inverted W form.

Gun also knew very well of the dangers and risks of adopting this form.

However, this form was also the best form to produce top speed fast balls. Gun was unable to resist the temptations of immediate quality performance for taking the risks of injuries, much like other pitchers from the past.

Secondly, he often overworked his body.

Gun was known for his significantly large amount of training. He trained even after games, typically working on mastering his Breaking Balls.

It didnt come to a surprise that Gun faced such injury, for he was overworking his body with an incorrect form.

It s a miracle that your body endured for 4 years

After he was discharged, the draft team officials visited his cabin.

Gun regarded it as a necessary visit of manners and courtesy to check up on a players conditions after an operation.

However, their purpose for the visit was different to what Gun had expected.

Mr. Choi, you are now an unrestricted free agent, able to establish contracts with other teams

Gun hadnt even entered the major league yet, but they were talking about free agency.

It took Gun several moments to figure out the deeper meaning of their notice.

Are you saying that Im no longer part of the team?

Mr. Choi, the team can no longer wait for you

Guns age had already reached the end of that of a super rookie. He knew that very well. Which was exactly why he had spent so much time and effort training harder than others.

Is it okay for a team to abandon their injured player like this? Without pre arranged meetings or negotiations?

Gun yelled in a tone filled dense with emotions.

The teams draft officials had experienced these types of abandonments numerous times, so they had grown accustomed to the players outrages.

Mr. Choi, your talent is sensational. However, you are slightly different to the rest of the players. You own an absolute Achilles heel.

Im different to other players? Is it the injury?

The official replied as he shook his head.

Its not the injury, Mr. Choi. Its the military service.

It was true. Gun hadnt yet served in the compulsory South Korean military service unlike many other players in his age.

Had he entered the Major League he wouldnt have these worries. If you enter the Major League, and ultimately the Olympics and win a medal, you are able to apply for an exemption.

However, all such hopes were blown away by the injury.

Mr. Choi, I hope you are able to respect the teams decision.

The official used the excuse of the military service, but in fact he wasnt regarding Guns abilities that highly at all.

Had he seen true potential in Guns abilities, then despite the military service issues, the team would have waited 2 years or so.

However, that wasnt the teams decision.

They regarded Guns talents as quite ordinary.

Gun asked.

Is there no other way?

The official shook his head firmly.

It was Thompsons final call. It would be impossible to oppose it. Mr. Choi, please respect his decision

A.Thompson was Boston Red Soxs new GM. As soon as he was newly appointed, he used his very first opportunity to eliminate ordinary or hopeless rookies, and Gun was his first target.

Pardon me, but I will be on my way, I have a lot to take care of today

Thump

The door closed, and the draft official disappeared.

Gun murmured, filled with rage.

Damn it To be abandoned like this. I will show those bastards what Im capable of. I will become the second Bambino. Legendary home run king, Babe Ruths nickname. After Boston traded away Babe Ruth at an incredibly low price, they failed to win a World Series for 86 years until 2004. They often referred to this as the Bambinos Curse.

Mr. Gun Choi, Are you okay?

Gun nodded to the doctors question.

I dont feel any pain at all. Thank you very much, Doctor

The doctor let out a smile of relief.

I think your determination to overcome this injury allowed such a quick recovery to occur

However, Gun knew that it wasnt the doctor, nor his determination that allowed this.

trainee angel mission program

Veness had implanted an Angel Mission Program which had a quick body recovery system incorporated into Guns body, and Gun knew that it was this program that led to his miraculous recovery.

After the doctor had gone, Gun called out his stats on the program.

displaying users general stats

Health: C

Strength: C

Agility: C

Responsiveness: B

Trust: C

Luck: B

Mental Strength: A+

Gun was relieved to see every category of his stats higher or equal to a C.

I dont know what my ordinary stats are meant to be, but Id assume this is very close to full recovery

In reality, he had no sore or aching parts anymore.

Transform

At the command he whispered in his mind, the systems stats list immediately disappeared. His vision was clear again.

Gun shifted his attention to a table that was placed next to his bed. On it, there were fresh flowers and presents that were given by his fans.

After the day he saved the baby on the pram, numerous news reports had been made.

A Minor League baseball superstar unconscious after saving a baby

Gun Choi, sets an examples of a baseball player

Gun Choi, one of most anticipated Minor League superstars, unconscious after saving a baby, recovery yet to be made

Honourable player, Honourable citizen Gun Choi, Company L declares full coverage for his medical fees!

Gun wondered if all these were gifts sent from the angel. He didnt have to worry about his medical fees, and had received a significant amount of donations from all around the nation for his honourable deed.

I guess the only thing left to do is succeed as a baseball player

A few days later, Gun walked out of the hospital with his mother.

It was his first time entering the society since the accident.

Despite sending no commands, a message popped up before his eyes.

The message contained the information that from now on, all his injuries will be recovered 22% faster than before.

Gun headed home with a big smile.

After de-hospitalisation, Gun was contacted by numerous places.

Professional baseball managers, journalists from various places, a number of community service organisations and finally governmental bodies.

He was starting to feel overwhelmed at the attention he was receiving for his single deed.

hm, lets not worry too much, it must be a gift from the angel

Gun contacted all the national baseball teams that had contacted him after his return.

Hello?

Hey, this is Mun Cheol Kim from AT telecom, how are you today?

Hey, Im fine thanks.

Mun asked in a bright tone.

Player Gun Choi, have you decided yet?

Yes, I want to play with the AT Telecom players

AT Telecoms contract offer was a rehabilitation program with the organisations B team.

This was a win-win situation on both parts.

AT Telecom would acquire a player that was nationally popular with a honourable citizen image, and Gun had found a place which he could comfortably begin his rehab.

Tomorrow we will send one of our guys to pick you up

Could we start today?

Today? Yeah, there is nothing wrong with that. We will send a person within the next 2 hours

Thank you

After he hung up the phone, Gun prepared his gear for training.

Suddenly, a message popped up before his eyes.

Beep.

starting rehabilitation. Utilise Acceleration?

The trainee angels mission program didnt merely stop at Guns recovery. The program inside Guns body had progressed in an entirely different direction as that of which was anticipated by Angel Veness.

Gun hesitated at the word acceleration.

Does that mean I need to exchange pain and time like last time?

He let down a dry gulp.

The pain he had endured on his nursing bed was none like he had experienced before.

Do I have to endure that kind of pain even during the rehabilitation trainings? This pain is too overwhelming to be classified as a gift from angel

Gun had anticipated something more grand, luxurious and warm when he first heard of a gift from an angel.

Is this what the angels endure to train themselves? To be success?

After a long sigh, he asked the system.

How long can I reduce the time?

calculating time required for full rehab

time required for full rehab: 2,751 hours

time reduced from acceleration: 1,288 hours

Gun was slightly frustrated at everything displayed in hours.

Cant you show that in days?

days required for full rehab: 114 days

days reduced from acceleration: 53 days

With the acceleration, he could potentially save close to 2 months.

Sigh yeah, lets do this. Pain is temporary

Gun recalled a quote that was written on a table at his previous training facility.

If you cant avoid it, enjoy it

Gun decided to try his best to enjoy the pain.

Start the accelerated rehab

System responded quickly.

initiating acceleration

Rehabilitation Day 8

Guns body was improving at an incredible speed.

However, his face was not so bright.

Training Acceleration.

It wasnt as simple as enduring pain like last time.

As soon as he started the acceleration, his body became instantly heavier, as if the force of gravity applied to his body had multiplied.

He could not grow accustomed to this sensation even after a week.

No pain, No gain

I mean, yeah I can accept the whole enduring part and the pain part. But wouldnt this much pressure on the body incur another injury?

As if the system was conversing with his thoughts, it responded.

it is impossible to attain any injuries during training acceleration

Gun had previously gained injuries due to excess training. The systems assurance of his freedom from injuries during rehab delighted him.

Okay, so I can train as hard as I want and I still wont get any injuries right? Then Ill be able to lift up a gear in my training. This, I like.

He began his training routine. Even the most basic stretching and warm-up lifting routines had left him in exhaustion.

pants

Gun was breathing heavily after his pre-training warm up routine.

Damn it, I will overcome all this and enter the Major League. And I will show that bastard Thompson who kicked me out that his decision was wrong. Thats all I need to think about right now

As Gun was resting after his warm up, the ATcoms agency trainer approached him.

Mr. Gun, lets work on your form

Sure thing, Gun replied rigidly, as if he was nervous.

Why am I all frozen up?

The trainer began the training, completely unaware of what Gun and his body was going through due to the accelerated rehab program.

Mr. Gun, please follow my lead

Gun carefully observed the trainers form and tried his best to copy it. As Gun embraced the form, the trainer supported Guns legs with his hands.

Very good

How long do you want me to hold this position?

Just for a few more seconds

Gun stood up from the position after he was signalled to stop by the trainer. And he repeated this process over and over.

A repeated process of perfecting his pitching form was enough exercise for him to experience tremendous physical fatigue.

If this acceleration program doesnt have a clear impact on my rehab, I dont care whether angel or demon, I will destroy them

Chapter 4 Rehab -2-

When you watch baseball commentaries, you often hear comments about pitchers pitching with only their shoulders. Pitching with their shoulders mean that they are unable to utilise the rotational force from their bodies.

The weight shift training that Gun was undergoing now was to ensure that he could utilise and maximise his rotational force.

Amateurs typically referred to this as being able to use the hips to pitch faster.

Gun and his trainer took a hiatus after a half an hour of weight shift training.

lets end it here for today

Gun dropped to the floor as soon as he heard his trainers voice.

phew

Trainer was surprised to see Gun struggling to keep up with what is supposed to be a simple training course.

Gun, are you sure your body is fully recovered? There is nothing more lethal than overtraining your body. You should seriously re-examine the state of your body

Gun shook his head.

No, thats not it. Its due to the long break from physical activity that I am struggling. Nothing wrong with my health.

Trainer nodded and commenced the next training course.

THUD. THUD.

The sound of the ball hit the gloves echoed the room.

Gun checked the state of his shoulders as he pitched light short tosses.

Apart from the unusual heaviness of the body, everything else feels fine

He kept pitching.

How does it feel?

Gun replied in a delighted tone.

It feels perfect!

Thats good

The trainer took his gloves off as he nodded at Guns response.

well end the short tosses here

For the state of Guns yet weak shoulders, he ended the short tosses early.

It was lunch time after morning training.

Lunch time for the second division was far from luxurious.

Despite the poor quality of the food, Gun was able to gratefully enjoy his food.

Compared to the dried bread served in the Minor League, this is fabulous

Seeing Gun enjoy his food, a rookie player approached and asked him.

Gun, is this really delicious? Is it that enjoyable?

Gun replied with a grin.

Theres no way this isnt enjoyable! In the minor league, you only get bread and jam

Whoa, really? A friend of mine that recently went to the US told me that the food wasnt THAT bad

Gun explained further to the clueless rookie before him.

If its recent that Id assume he is still in the Rookie league. There are many teams in that league that are run directly by major league teams. Food that is served from any major league team is decent. But from A-level onwards, that food only gets worse.

He stood up as he finished his food.

Afternoon training was to enhance his overall balance.

One of the main reasons why pitchers fail to recover fully is because the focus too much on their shoulders

are you saying that because they focus too much on their shoulders, they neglect other parts that also need slow and steady recovery?

thats right. Pitching isnt all about the shoulders. As you would probably already know, you need a good balance amongst all parts of your body including the thighs, the hips, the lower back and so on, to be able to pitch effectively.

Trainer commenced long stride training to work on Guns legs.

Gun, you are aware that many players actually pitch faster after they undergo the Tommy John Surgery? -operation in which a ligament in the medial elbow is replaced with a tendon from elsewhere in the body-

Of course I am aware. Gun stretched his legs as he replied.

He could feel the rigidity and the heaviness on his legs as he performed the training.

Legs have definitely gone weaker. I also cannot predict when his heaviness will go away. If the program was to enhance my body, shouldnt I feel lighter? This is the exact opposite

the reason their pitching got faster is not because their tendon got stronger said the trainer as he fixed the positioning of Guns feet.

Gun replied as he was puzzled at his trainers comment.

you mean to say that its not their fully recovered tendon that they are able to pitch faster?

thats right

Trainer replied as he took a short glimpse at the second division players training from afar.

Its because they trained their legs meticulously and diligently whilst they werent able to move their shoulders that their pitching eventually got faster. They dedicated their upper body training time entirely into training their lower body.

Trainers comments werent scientifically certified, but were advocated by many.

No successful fast pitcher has unstable, weak lower body. It is the strength that stems from the lower body that allows fast pitching

Gun nodded and focused on his training even harder.

The tedious and dragging rehab training continued for nearly 2 months.

In that period, Gun met up with journalists a couple of times. Gun was aware that those photos would be used as the cover images for AT telecoms image making in the media sphere.

Its troublesome, but Ive got nothing to lose. Take a few pictures and I get a personal trainer with a rehab training program so Its a gain for me actually Gun thought to himself.

Gun bumped into other injured players during his rehab at AT telecom.

The faces of those enrolled in the first division were bright, whilst those that were bouncing back and forth between first and second vision had chronic distress.

Mr. Gun, are you returning back to the US?

Gun shook his head at Sang Jungs question; a pitcher in his second year.

Sang Jung was one of those that had chronic pressure, bouncing between 1st and 2nd division.

well I need to find a team first. Im undrafted at the moment

But werent you in the top 40 Major League roster? With that kind of resume, wouldnt you be able to find a team straight away?

Gun shook his head once more.

That was more than 2 years ago. People in the team then probably dont even remember my name anymore. Plus, that top 40 roster isnt even anything special. You need to make it to the top 25 to be globally recognised as a major leaguer

Gun let out a sigh as he stood up.

Sang Jung asked another question as he followed.

But you still have an agent right?

Agent it was a word that was long forgotten in Guns life.

Well, I do. But they probably forgot about me.

Guns contract was until 2022. However, both Gun and the agent completely forgot about this fact.

Should I contact them again? actually no, its too early. Its better to recover fully before contacting them again

Training recommenced. The heaviness was still there.

Sang Jung joined Gun in the lower body training.

Gun, can I call you my brother?

No.

Sang Jungs faced dimmed at Guns immediate and emphatic rejection.

Gun let out a sigh after looking at Sang Jungs face full of disappointment.

Im just a minor leaguer, why do you want me as your brother? Theres no gain!

Just in case! You never know. If you become a major league star, then you will be our juniors pride!

Gun replied as he took another stride.

Fine. You can call me your brother. But dont think or expect to have me as something to brag about in the future.

With that kind of soft mentality, youll never succeed amongst the professionals

I, too, wanted to become a major leaguer you know Sang Jung replied.

Gun replied as a droplet of sweat fell off his face. Its still not too late. If you become the best in the nation, then you can get promoted and drafted into the US

Yeah, well I know that

If you know the path, then simply shut up and walk it

Gun took another stride with clenched teeth.

hmpf this is incredibly heavy

Sang Jung wanted to get some helpful advice from Gun. However, Gun wasnt interested in giving advice to other people nor did he have many circumstances to do so. He always thought he was in no position to advise others on their lives.

Im not even a successful major leaguer, Im in no position to give advice

Rehab -3-
 Break for 10!
 Gun once again dropped to the floor at the Trainers call for a break.
 This is bloody hard
 He let out a deep sigh and thought to himself.
 can you show me a comparison of my stats before and after the rehab program?
 displaying Users general stats
 Health: C - B
 Strength: C - B
 Agility: C - C
 Responsiveness: B - B
 Trust: C - C-
 Luck: B - B
 Mental Strength: A+ - A+
 Health and Strength showed signs of improvement, but his trust had deteriorated.
 What, what did I do wrong? Is this because I didnt reply to the second division rookies questions properly?
 He shrugged his shoulders and moved on.
 show me pitcher stats
 displaying pitcher stats
 Pitch Speed: C - B+
 Pitch Control: C - B+
 Movement: D- - C
 Pitch Type 1 Fastball: E - C
 Pitch Type 2 Slider: E - C
 Pitch Type 3 Change Up: E- - D
 Pitch Type 4 Knuckle Ball: E - E
 O Skills: Level 1 Beasts Blood
 Gun shifted his attention to the stagnant growth of his knuckle ball.
 Rank E? its exactly the same as prior to the rehab program I wont be able to use knuckle balls at all in actual matches
 Prior to his return flight to Korea from the US, he met up with the retired Knuckle Baller Tim Wakefield. Tim Wakefield saw the bandage around Guns arms and commented.
 Do you know how many players in the likes of you approach me every year?
 Gun replied, About a 100 people?
 no, its actually not as many as youd think. The number sits closer to 10. What that means is that not many players want to compete by mastering the Knuckle Ball.
 oh I see
 Gun Choi, right? Would you be interested in vesting your life on your knuckle ball?
 Gun replied with intensity, if I can return to the major league and avenge Thompson for what he did to me, Id do anything
 Tim Wakefield let out a smirk.
 You mean to say Thompson from Boston? Who do you think I am?
 Gun soon realised that he had made a big mistake.
 oh, no. Wakefield is one of Bostons legends
 The sole reason why he was able to get in touch with Tim Wakefield was because Guns prior team was Boston.
 You dont have to be too concerned, Ill teach you everything I know about the Knuckle Ball. But promise me that after you become a knuckler baller, if someone approaches you just like you are approaching me, seeking to master the knuckle ball, youd teach them regardless of the circumstances. The responsibilities of a knuckle baller dont end at throwing good knuckle balls, the spreading of the crafts knowledge is also included.
 Gun replied with certainty, that, I give you my word
 Alright, then from today I shall teach you all about the knuckle ball
 Thank you very much
 Tim Wakefield replied as he spun the ball in the air.
 gratitude should probably come after youve made the knuckle ball part of your arsenal. There are more than 100 players who Ive taught, but only one was able to throw the knuckle ball on the major leagues mound.
 The knuckle ball. It is a killer pitch type which even some of the most skilled and experienced veteran Major League batters have a hard time dealing with.
 But reaching the maximum level of fluency and being able to pitch a knuckle ball perfectly as desired was one of the most challenging obstacles for pitchers.
 But Gun could not give up the knuckle ball. For if his elbow was to not heal to its 100%, then he would lose his main pitch type, the fastball forever. He needed a back up plan, and a plan that would carry him to the top.
 lets begin

Tim Wakefield taught all the fundamentals about the knuckle ball during the first few days. On the last day, he added.

I hope you discover, learn and adopt the rest on your own. The rest of the journey cannot be taught, but only discovered

okay, thank you so much

Gun told Tim Wakefield that he would do whatever it takes to stand on the Major Leagues mound eventually and returned to Korea.

And 2 years had past.

Gun continued practising the knuckle ball and had reached a recognisable standard. However, the 2 years of practice was thrown down the drain as he received an E rank after the accident.

Gun could not stop the wave of disappointment overwhelming him.

Is it the way I throw? Or perhaps Im putting the spin on the ball incorrectly?

Whatever the problem may be, they both werent easy obstacles to overcome.

Lets begin!

And with that, his break ended, and the rehab training recommenced.

Rehab Training had entered its final stages, and based on the Systems estimated time, it was practically finished.

Gun picked up his phone and called a number nervously.

The basic phone ringing sound filled the room

Soon, a mans voice in an uplifted tone responded on the other end of the call.

Mr. Choi! Its been a while, how have you been

Davids voice over the Pacific was bright. He was Guns agent, who was English, Korean bilingual.

My rehab is nearly over, and I was looking for a new team to play for in the next season.

Thats fabulous news! Could you tell me basic information of your current status, such as the speed of your fastballs and etc I need information to advertise to the teams.

Guns rehab stage was the level right before he got back on the mound, ready to pitch. Therefore, he hadnt yet measured his pitch speed properly.

However, Gun was confident.

Although I havent measured it properly, Id assume that it is at the very least 142km

142km/hr was a decent number, but no where near the standard at which Major league teams expected.

Thats not too bad. I guess we could expect at least 145km/hr when you fully recover. Ill look for a decent, and a suitable minor league team for you Mr. Choi

David thought that since Gun was enlisted in the top 40 Major League Roster not too long ago, a AAA or a AA team would be relatively easy to find.

To this, Gun had the same thought.

But he decided to take an extra step.

David, do you think I can make it to the show case?

As expected, Davids response was negative.

Show case? No way Mr. Choi. Thats only possible for players with Major League experience

I know that, but there is something I want to show to the Major League teams

Guns profound confidence triggered Davids interest in his proposal.

Hm he mustve developed a new type of pitch form or something during his rehab, or else where would his confidence come from? Maybe I should try and trick teams that urgently need replacement pitchers

David hesitantly continued.

hmm how about, Mr. Choi, we try and get you into the mini show case held towards the end of December? During the winter meeting, teams that yet need to work on their pitching will definitely show interest.

Gun was delighted by the news.

Is that possible?

If its a mini show case, then I think there may be something I can do. There wont be as many teams attending though

That is fabulous. Thank you very much. I will be ready by December

Very well then Mr. Choi, I will contact you again in December. Until then, please concentrate on your full recovery

Gun ended the call and lied down on his bed.

Everything worked out easier than expected.

Maybe if Im lucky, I could make it straight into the top 40 roster again! Although, there are always conservative teams that tend to refrain from risking and stick to more certified players from safer and stable backgrounds.

In the case of Gun, he only had a record of earned run average -ERA- rate of 3.?? from the AAA league to show to the conservative teams.

And even this record was achieved before he got injured.

Gun got up, grabbed his phone and rang up his trainer.

Player Gun, Whats up?

I want to stand on the mound tomorrow. Can you prepare for some pitching practice please?

Sure thing! I will be looking forward to the pitching training tomorrow

As he hung up, a new message popped up before his vision.
accelerated rehabilitation training has ended
And at the moment, he could feel the daunting heaviness that had been dragging him down being lifted and removed,
and his body felt as light as feather.
wow is this what the training has done?

Rehab -4-

Gun put on the glove that he uses for official games and stepped on the mound. The distinct feature of a pitchers glove is that the crotch is completely sealed up in a web.

This meant that once the ball was inside the glove, nobody else could see the ball through the glove. This was a special consideration for pitchers to hide their grip of the ball from other players such as the batter.

Pitching gloves also had colour restrictions; a restriction that is exclusive to pitching gloves.

White and grey leather were always banned; and the leather, the web and even the thread had to be the same colour.

This was to prevent pitchers using their gloves as a distraction for the batters.

Gun took a deep breath as he got ready to pitch.

This was the first time pitching on a mound in 2 years. It would be weirder to feel comfortable after such a long hiatus.

Gun tried waving his arms about, and jumped lightly on the spot.

Ever since last night, his bodys been feeling a slight as a feather. He felt like he could pitch better than hes ever done before.

alright here goes nothing

Gun embraced the four-seam fastball grip.

And he pitched with all his might.

POW!

The sound of the ball hitting the back of the catchers mitt echoed the stadium.

Kang Han, a bullpen catcher of 2 years at AT telecom, returned the ball to Gun with a smile, shouting nice ball!

He honestly thought Guns ball was good.

his fastball is good the ball comes straight into the mitt. Is this the level you need to be at to aim for the Major League?

Ever since the acceleration program ended, Guns conditions were at an all time high. He felt like he could easily pitch above 160km.

POW!

Trainer, who was keeping an eye on Guns second pitch, applauded as he yelled, nice pitch!

The pitch was at such a speed that even spectators could feel its power.

Alright, this is enough for four seam fastball

Gun fixed his hat and sent out a sign for his next pitch; sign for a Breaking Ball.

Kang Han nervously put up his mitt.

if Gun was successful in the AAA league, then his breaking ball will be good. I better concentrate so I dont miss this ball

In the second division that he primarily trained in, not many pitchers had critical breaking balls.

Kang Han focused on the ball that was leaving Guns hand.

But the next moment, he was stunned and amazed.

What the

It was a pitch hed never seen before.

Kang Han could see the ball dance its way towards the mitt, but did not know how to react.

He put up his mitt towards the ball but the ball flew by the mitt, as if it simply ignored its presence.

After missing the pitch, he looked at Gun.

Gun didnt seem too satisfied.

Was it because I couldnt catch the ball?

But catching a pitch which he had never seen before on his first attempt was too much to ask for anyone.

But the reason behind Guns dissatisfaction was different to what Kang Han presumed it to be.

the ball didnt even go near the home plate, if I lack this much control then I cannot use it during an actual match.

The ball the he had pitched was the knuckle ball that he mastered over the period of 2 years before the injury.

Movement of the ball was definitely good.

It was enough to be used in an actual match.

But Gun lacked control and aim.

Throwing the ball at a wall, like he did in the 2 years, was greatly different to throwing it at an actual catcher on a mound.

Maybe the stats are accurate after all

Gun had to accept the E rank that he received for his knuckle ball from the system.

Damn theres not much time until December. Could there be a way for me to drastically improve my control?

As he let out a sigh, the trainer approached and said,

Player Gun, dont be too discouraged. First pitch at this standard is brilliant! And also wasnt the last pitch a knuckle curve?

Gun could acknowledge other spectators around the stadium so he raised his voice enough for them to hear.

the reason why I lost control of the aim of the ball wasnt due to the knuckle curve, but rather it felt like it simply slipped out of my hand. It doesnt feel like the way it did before the injury

Trainer broke a smile and replied,
 Thats okay, its only the first pitch. It will gradually get better
 I hope so
 Kang Han realised that Gun was not dissatisfied because he failed to catch his ball.
 He quickly threw the ball back at Gun.
 lets move onto the next pitch form!
 Gun nodded and prepared his next pitch form.
 This time, it was his main form, the slider.
 The ball swiftly curved in the air and flew right into the mitt.
 POW!
 Kang Han was amazed by the slider.
 your slider is on point, player Gun!
 Kang Han thought that with a fastball and slider at this standard, Gun could easily thrive in the first division.
 In the national league, he could aim for more than 10 wins with his skill set. Hed be easily making more than \$100k
 a year.
 However, the trainers thought was different to Kang Hans.
 Hm not sure about other teams but it would be hard to draft him into our team. Hes 25 years old now, even if he
 gets drafted into the 1st division next year, he has 9 years till FA thats too distant. Guns only option is to try out for
 the major league.
 He figured that it would be difficult to draft Gun even if AT telecom is able to offer their best possible conditions.
 Gun thought likewise.
 He had already eliminated AT telecom from his potential destinations.
 After the slider, the trainer brought a speed metre.
 Player Gun, would you mind if I measured your speed?
 no not at all! I was actually going to ask you to measure the speed for me. Im assuming the speed will give me
 quantitative measure on how much the rehab has done for me
 His internal system already announced the end of his rehab.
 If thats true, then he should at least be getting the speed he was at before the injury.
 Gun pitched the ball with all his might.
 POW!
 Gun could notice the shift in the trainers face.
 What does it say?
 Its saying 148km isnt this the same speed as prior to the injury? Does that mean youve fully recovered player Gun?
 oh wow thats so good to hear!
 your rehab results are outstanding, player Gun
 148km was equivalent to 92 miles. Even during his prime in the AAA league, his best speed was 94 miles.
 It was safe to say that, as the system announced, his rehab stage had officially ended.
 even got my pitching speed correct, is the system really able to examine every detail of my bodily conditions?
 The system was initially created for angels working under Gods omnipotence. It was almost natural for the system to
 accurately see through the capabilities of a mere human being.

Live Pitching-1-
Suwon SW Park.

Upon hearing the news about Gun Cho's recovered pitching speed and control, AT telecom offered him a session of live pitching.

Live pitching is the final stage before full rehab, and he showed no hesitation in accepting the offer.

Sure, that's fabulous

Okay, what day is good for you?

Live pitching occurs under same conditions as real game pitching so it wasn't an event to occur spontaneously.

I think 3 days from today would be good

Team manager replied,

What about batting? Usually they don't bat in live pitching

Gun let out a grin and replied,

I think it's only real live pitching if the batter tries his best in batting the ball. If possible, please prepare both left, and right handed batters. I'd like to throw about 20 balls, and I'm aiming for at least 3 out-counts.

This meant that Gun wanted to pitch against both left handed and right handed batters.

Okay, understood

Manager delivered Gun's request immediately to the 2nd division's coaching staff for preparation.

2nd division director and the batting coach immediately frowned upon hearing the request.

Both left and right? Not sure if he's arrogant or confident

I did hear that he was a decent pitcher before the injury

Yeah, yeah, major league blah blah. I still don't like the guy. He has no concrete achievements or statistical deeds to back up his supposed skill set

what would you like to do?

The director replied with no hesitation.

Send out numbers 3, 4 and 5

This was intended to send out the 2nd division's best batters to crush Gun's confidence.

Director, isn't that too much?

The batting coach stressed that this may backfire and negatively impact the reputation of AT telecom's 2nd division.

The director shook his head as he replied, in either circumstances, it is a win-win situation for us.

If the clean up squad -best batters in the team- gets struck out by Gun, wouldn't the team's passion and morale be discouraged?

The director raised his tone and volume and replied enthusiastically.

Why do you think our batters in the 2nd division fail to move up to the 1st? Because they are not skilled enough?

Because they're inexperienced? No, I personally do not believe so. I believe they are where they are because they fail to acknowledge the flaws in their skillset. They always blame it on luck, or lack of opportunity, or even other minor, petty circumstances. They are full of shit. I really want to use this opportunity to give them a wake up call.

The batting coach agreed with the director's comment.

Yes, sir. I will do as you request.

The 2nd division clean up squad was not happy at the news.

Why do we have to go out to another player's live pitching session? There are plenty of other bench members

That's right. This should be used as an opportunity for rookies to stand on the field. I heard he was once a major leaguer, it would be an even greater honour for them

I don't want to help an arrogant person like him

Main players in the 2nd division all had a sense of repulsion against Gun. The main ones that hated on Gun happened to be the veterans in the division.

The batting coach raised his voice upon hearing the 3 players' comments.

Batting is allowed in this live pitching session. I want you guys to go out there and crush the so-called major leaguer

The player's attitudes changed at hearing the coach's comment.

Batting is allowed?

That is some exciting news

I will let the major league punk know that becoming a professional isn't easy

The players happily packed their bats.

However, the batting coach thought that Gun wasn't going to fall so easily like the players planned.

He threw around 148km at bullpen pitching, so I'd say he'll throw around 150km. If you underestimate him, you 3 will be the ones to get crushed

Gun got up on the mound and began lightly warming up for the session.

He threw all his practice balls at approximately 50% of the force.

PANG!

The catcher for the session was Kang Han. He supported Gun after every pitch.

Nice ball!

Gun thought that Kang Han's fundamentals as a catcher were very solid and impressive.

I wonder why such a stable and skilled player is still only a bullpen catcher?
 He thought that Kang Han could easily make it into the 1st division as a back-up catcher.
 Focusing entirely on his defence, Kang Han was definitely an impressive player.
 However, his batting rate was critically low. His performance in the 2nd division did not reach above 0.200.
 A catcher who could not bat above 0.200 in the 2nd division.
 Just when he thought he could no longer continue his career as a professional baseball player, he got offered the position as a bullpen catcher.
 He accepted the offer immediately, and since then he's been providing service for pitchers in the 2nd division.
 Gun threw 10 practice balls before he went into live pitching.
 we will now commence live pitching
 Upon trainers signal, Gun nodded.
 Yes, sir
 At the very moment he nodded, a new message popped up before his vision.
 commencing live pitching mission
 Conditions: Pitch out 3 batters in a row.
 Rewards: a point to invest in skillset rank ups.
 Gun was puzzled at the message.
 I didn't even request for such mission. A point for skillset rank up? I don't know what this is about but I guess I've got nothing to lose.
 First in line was player Min Suk who has a batting rate of 0.331 in the 2nd division this season.
 Min Suk went on the plate staring at Gun, determined to crush him.
 Major League? Stop kidding me. I will show you that we are no joke
 Gun was again puzzled at the stare.
 he seems too serious for a live pitching session. Is this also because of the system? Man, it's going to be difficult
 After controlling his breath, and following up with his pre-pitch ritual, he commenced his first pitch.
 First pitch was a fastball.
 WHOOSH.
 Min Suk went for an emphatic all out swing, but Gun's ball reached the catcher's mitt before the bat.
 PANG.
 STRRRRIKE!
 The ball was faster than what Min Suk had expected.
 this guy is pretty good
 In the referees role was Shi Hyung, a 2nd division personal trainer.
 He had an amateur referee certificate so was rightfully qualified for the position.
 Upon realising that Gun's fastballs were faster than 2nd division pitchers fastballs, he gripped onto the bat closer.
 that's okay, we also have a guy in our division that can throw 150km+ fastballs. But I was able to pull off hits off him.
 150km doesn't actually mean much, just a number
 He prepared himself again for a fastball, but his bat once again only cut the air as a slider came flying in.
 The angle of Gun's slider was entirely on another level compared to the 2nd division pitchers.
 damn 150km+ fastball along with a killer slider? This is beyond 1st division pitching
 Gun received the ball expressionlessly.
 2 strike, no ball. Following the traditional ball formulation, you'd go wide this time round
 But instead of pitching wide to the side, he pitched high middle.
 WHOOSH.
 Along with a rapid gush of air, the fastball that left Gun's hand raced threw the strike zone.
 This was not only a good pitch, but a formulation that caught Min Suk off guard.
 STRRRRIKE! BATTER OUT!
 Min Suk was struck out without even touching the ball. Won Yong and Gil Sung, who make the rest of the clean up squad of the 2nd division frowned at Min Suk as he returned to the bench.
 oi, what's with the 3 strikes?
 They don't pitch that formulation in Korea. You usually go safe when it's 0-2 he completely caught me off guard
 that's true that punk, he's getting all cocky with his fancy major league ball formulation
 Won Yong approached the plate. His 2nd division performance was better than Min Suk, with his batting rate sitting at 0.347. He was an outstanding batter with a 15-home run record.

Live Pitching -2-

come at me, lets see what youve got!

Guns first sign was a slider that stretched far wide.

Kang Han was slightly puzzled.

not many players pitch around the batter on their first pitch during a live pitching session. He must be really taking this session like its a real match

There was only one reason why Gun was taking this session as a real game.

He was determined to clear the mission that the system had given him and earn that mysterious point.

its offering me something and theres no reason to decline

Gun readjusted his grip and threw his first pitch.

WHOOOSH.

Won Yong, who was expecting a middle fastball, began panicking as he was greeted by a wide slider.

damn pitching around me on his first pitch during a live pitching session is he insane?

Gil Sung was disappointed to see Won Yongs unprofessional response to Guns pitch formulation.

sigh hes all worked up. Hes already lost to the pitcher mentally theres no way hed win now

Gun threw the next pitch; a deep fastball towards the batter.

Won Yong once again swung his bat.

THUD.

The ball was caught on the side of the bat and flew beyond the 3rd base.

FOUL!

no balls, two strikes.

The count was in the pitchers favour.

Won Yong had already witnessed Min Suks 3-strike out so he could not let this third pitch fly by.

Nervously, he muttered to himself

if you are planning another strike-zone fastball, you will regret it for sure

Guns next chosen pitch was a change-up. Along with his slider, his change-up has a history of sending countless AAA league batters back to the bench.

From Won Yongs vision, Guns change-up seemed like an ordinary, slow fastball.

hm a fastball at this speed its hittable

He swung his bat with all his might and it seemed like it was going to be an accurate hit.

However, the moment before the ball was about to touch the bat, it sunk like a submarine.

DAMN!

Won Yong quickly tried to stop the bats swing, but it had already travelled beyond and home plate.

SWING STRRRRIKE! BATTER OUT!

Won Yong completely lost his balance and collapsed to the ground on his knee.

damn.

2 batters, 2 consecutive strike outs.

They were also both 3-ball 3-strikes; K strikeouts.

Si Hyung, the referee, as well as other 2nd division players spectating the session were all shocked to witness Guns dominance.

this guy is crazy!

did you see the change-up just then?

I thought it was a forkball

the drop of the ball is insane

but didnt it lack a bit on the speed?

what? No way. If that pitch had high speed, then itd just simply be impossible to hit

Gil Sung, the last batter, had realised that hed began sweating as he got more and more nervous.

damn am I really that nervous?

Furthermore, he was left-handed, which made it more challenging than the previous 2 batters.

Instead of getting emotionally worked up, he tried his best to keep his cool and remain rational.

lets not get caught up in his pace. Were the aces of the 2nd division, we cannot back down this easily

Gun allowed a dry gulp as he saw Gil Sung approach the plate.

his atmosphere is entirely different

He carefully exchanged signs with the catcher, and threw his first pitch.

His first pitch was a wide ball to the side.

He tried to pitch narrowly within the strike zone but it had gone beyond.

hm its not going to be too easy

Guns control of his pitches hadnt yet been perfected.

On top of that, the last batter Gil Sung was somehow imposing this pressure on him.

After seeing through Guns first pitch, the strategic formulation game between the pitcher and the catcher heat up.

The ball count was 2-2.

You could see droplets of sweat forming on Guns forehead also.
its really hard to pitch around him. Should I throw a deep slider? No, if I do that, theres a risk of it becoming a full count. Its too risky. And I know the batter is aware of that too
5th pitch.
Gun decided to pitch a change that fell wide.
However, Gil Sung was able to see through the pitch and let it fly by.
That made it a full count.
A ball count that was definitely in the batters favour; a situation which Gun desperately wanted to avoid.
He wiped the sweat off his forehead and regathered himself.
lets not lose the focus. You struggle and fail here, then theres absolutely no chance of getting to the major league
Gun fixed his grip and threw the last pitch with all his might.
I wont back down!
The ball pierced threw the air as it raced its way towards the mitt.
WHOOOOOOSH!
Gil Sung's concentration had already reached its peak.
this is a definite strike
With the accurate judgement, Gil Sung's bat began making its way towards a full swing.
Tick.
With a short, sharp sound of the ball ticking the bat, the course of the ball was disrupted, albeit continuing in the direction of the mitt.
Foul tip, strike out.
STRRRRIKE! BATTER OUT!
Guns fastball had beaten Gil Sung's swing on a head-to-head sequence.
this is incredible! 3 consecutive K strikeouts!
oh man I didnt know senior Gil Sung would be struck out too
the clean-up squad all turned down by K strikeouts the difference is too great
Gil Sung dropped his bat and let out a deep sigh.
that ball was beyond 150km I was not expecting a 150km+ fastball pitched deep. I doubt even a 1st division batter would be able to handle such a formulation
Unlike the previous 2 batters, he showed great sportsmanship by admitting his defeat.
Gun let out a deep breath of relief as he saw Gil Sung make his way back to the bench.
man I just cleared that mission. I didnt Ive been too arrogant recently. I still have such a long way to go
Soon, the system displayed a message.
first mission completed. Reward granted
Reward: 5 points.
Gun was puzzled by the message that was displayed.
5 points where am I supposed to use this?
As if reading and answering Guns thought, a new message popped up.
points can be used for skill level ups.
currently equipped skill: Beasts Blood level 1
invest the points into the skill?
Gun only had one skill to invest in, so realistically he had no alternatives.
sure. Lets do it!
investing points into Beasts Blood
Beasts Blood level up!
Beasts Blood level 2: bodily recovery 24% increase
Gun was excited to see that his body could now recover even faster than before.
level up aye, man this is like a game
He felt like he gained some supernatural powers.
But statistically, the increase of his bodily recovery stat from this level up was only 2 percentage points.
This meant that an injury that would require 100 days to recover, would not take 98 days.
From one perspective, this may not be such a significant level up.