
Chapter 10: Protagonist (5)

It would be quite a ludicrous sight if anyone else saw it. A large adult man was being grabbed by the neck and hanging like a monkey.

I could see Lee Hyunsung looking this way from across the bridge. His expression was anxious but he couldn't actually see what was going on here. It was due to the safety ward. I could see over there but they couldn't see here.

"Name."

"What?"

"What is your name?"

Look at this indifferent way of talking, just like a main character. But it wasn't good to provoke him here.

"Kim Dokja."

"A strange name."

"I've heard that a lot."

At this moment, my stomach sank in and felt turned inside out as Yoo Jonghyuk's fist hit it.

"...Ugh."

Despite having skin that a knife bounced off, the attack was very painful.

"You have a solid body. Have you already mastered the use of coins?"

"It is the same with you..."

Bam. There was a hit to my stomach again. I barely managed to swallow back a groan.

This guy, the level of his strength was at least 15. It was at this scale despite only one main and one sub scenario occurring. Indeed, natural born monsters were different.

"Stop the unnecessary answer. Only answer what I ask from now on. Understood?"

I didn't answer. I thought maybe this might happen. However, this was the worst situation that I desperately hoped would never happen.

In the beginning, Yoo Jonghyuk was more intimidating than any other figure.

His personality had worn out after going through regression three times. His principles were cut away in order to maintain his sense of self. The current Yoo Jonghyuk would never hesitate for the sake of his purpose.

"Your answer?"

"...I will."

"Use honorifics."

"What if I don't want to?"

This time, I raised both hands to block the fist. The pain felt like my bones had broken but the shock was dissipated. Yoo Jonghyuk's eyes widened like he was a bit surprised.

[The character 'Yoo Jonghyuk' is on guard against you.]

Then it didn't matter. I wasn't going to be a punching bag just because he was the main character.

"I'm sorry but you are younger than me, pro gamer Yoo Jonghyuk-ssi. Therefore, you should be the one using honorifics."

"...You know me?"

"I know. I am the employee of a game company."

It was a lie. Even if I worked for a game company, it was impossible to memorize the names of all professional gamers. In addition, until recently, 'Yoo Jonghyuk' was just a character in a novel.

"You are famous. At one time, I was a fan."

Being famous was just a setting of the plot. However, it wasn't a lie that I was a 'fan.'

I liked, hated, grumbled and cheered Yoo Jonghyuk on. That's why I stuck with Yoo Jonghyuk for over 3,000 chapters.

"Fan. I haven't heard that in a long time."

Yoo Jonghyuk had a look of nostalgia in his eyes, like he was locked in his memories. However, it was only for a moment.

"I'll forgive your impudence this time. But your situation hasn't changed."

"I can see that."

I looked down at my two legs swaying over a blank space.

"I have only one thing I want to ask."

"Ask."

"How did you survive on the subway?"

It was the question I expected.

“Will you spare me if I answer?”

“I’ll see.”

It was a lie. I could tell just by looking at his face. I was the only reader of Ways of Survival. Numerous possible repertoires were simulated in my head. What could I say to convince this damn regressor?

[Your understanding of the character ‘Yoo Jonghyuk’ is increasing.]

[Your understanding of this person is already very high.]

...Huh?

[The conditions of use for the exclusive skill ‘Omniscient Reader’s Viewpoint’ stage 2 has been reached!]

[Do you want to activate the exclusive skill?]

Then after a moment, I was able to read someone’s thoughts like a waterfall in my head.

「 Only Lee Hyunsung and Kim Namwoon should’ve survived in that carriage. 」

「 Yet Kim Namwoon died and the others survived. 」

「 How did you survive? 」

「 Who the hell is this guy? 」

「 Dig up information. Then if I find any disturbing elements... Kill. 」

A dense flicker of thoughts.

It was obviously a crisis situation but I couldn't prevent the corners of my mouth from going up.

The time remaining until the scenario ended was 5 minutes.

I started the story. I told the story using as much concise, short and accurate vocabulary as possible.

It was from the first moment the 'dokkaebi' appeared in the subway to the end of the first scenario. Of course, I excluded the skills I got and any important issues.

"...You cleared the scenario by killing insects?"

"We were lucky."

Yoo Jonghyuk was so surprised he seemed to have forgotten that his mouth was open.

「 The future has completely changed. 」

He was shocked. Originally, the people in carriage 3807 would kill each other in a battle royale, with only Lee Hyunsung and Kim Namwoon surviving.

"You have keen eyes. How did you know there were insects in the carriage?"

Killing Intent filled Yoo Jonghyuk's eyes as thoughts brushed through my head.

「 Is this guy also a regressor? 」

「If so, I have to kill him right now. 」

A person who commits a fault thinks that everyone speaks of it.

I wasn't surprised that he misunderstood me. I quickly opened my mouth.

"An explosion."

"Explosion?"

"I was able to find an insect due to an explosion from the carriage in front."

Yoo Jonghyuk's body stopped at these words.

"Explain it in a simpler manner."

"When the explosion occurred, a kid fell and dropped his insect collecting net. I picked it up by chance."

"...It is a suspicious coincidence."

"Coincidences are always suspicious. If you don't believe me, ask the people beyond the ward. The boy standing there dropped the net."

Beyond the safety barrier on the way to Oksu Station, people were looking over at this side. The scenario wasn't over yet so they couldn't approach or talk to us.

Yoo Jonghyuk looked over but showed no signs of moving. His eyes changed and memories that seemed to belong to Yoo Jonghyuk crossed my mind.

「 I see. 」

「 Explosion. 」

「This guy isn't a regressor. 」

「He isn't the one who changed the future. Rather, the future changed...」

「 Because of me. 」

I saw people dying painfully in a powerful explosion and Yoo Jonghyuk blankly watching it.

「 It is because I started killing them, unlike the other turns. 」

Due to the impact of Omniscient Reader's Viewpoint, I could feel Yoo Jonghyuk's mental pain and suffering.

"Are your questions over?"

"...Yes."

"Then can you let me go? And let's go to Oksu together. There isn't much time remaining to clear the scenario."

'It is difficult.'

However, a protagonist was a protagonist for a reason.

"Everything you said makes perfect sense."

I have never seen a protagonist as careful as Yoo Jonghyuk.

「 A beginner can't be so calm. 」

「He is abnormally well-adjusted to this changed world. 」

「He probably killed Kim Namwoon. 」

「 He has gone beyond being useful to being dangerous. 」

Yoo Jonghyuk's right eye started shining with a gold colour. I quickly realized what he was doing. In fact, it would be weird if this guy didn't use 'that.'

Sage's Eyes. Yoo Jonghyuk's strongest detection skill. Sage's Eyes was the SS-grade skill that showed the target's attributes window as well as hidden information.

As long as he used it, I couldn't avoid revealing my identity. On the other hand, I thought it was a good thing.

I still didn't know my 'attribute' and 'skills'. If Yoo Jonghyuk discovered my information, I would also be able to know about myself. Then hopefully, I would be able to use the information I learned to escape this situation.

[The exclusive skill, 'Fourth Wall' is activated!]

[Fourth Wall has detected the use of the detection skill Sage's Eyes!]

Sparks flew in the air and Yoo Jonghyuk's body staggered.

「...Kuk, what? 」

Yoo Jonghyuk covered his right eye and watched me with confusion.

"You...what is your identity?"

I'm sorry but I was wondering the same thing.

[The exclusive skill Fourth Wall has blocked Sage's Eyes!]

I didn't know that I had a skill that would defend against Sage's Eyes. After Bookmark, it was Fourth Wall.

This complicated things. Yoo Jonghyuk wouldn't believe me now.

「 I must kill him here. 」

He was a person who didn't trust what he didn't know.

"Yoo Jonghyuk."

Then I also need to change plans.

"You need a reliable companion."

"...What do you mean?"

"You can't break through the 46th scenario alone. Shouldn't you be well aware of it?"

Yoo Jonghyuk's eyes narrowed.

"How do you know this? Perhaps you—"

“It doesn’t matter how I am.”

I stared straight into Yoo Jonghyuk’s eyes and said.

“The important thing is that I can help you.”

「 He isn’t a regressor. If he was a regressor, I wouldn’t be unaware of him.
」

「 Then who is this person? 」

「 ...Perhaps? 」

If I couldn’t hide my hand and if I didn’t possess the best hand, then there was only one way out. It was to show a hand that would make the other person misunderstand.

“Yoo Jonghyuk, I know the future that you don’t know.”

[The character ‘Yoo Jonghyuk’ has used the ‘Lie Detection’ skill.

[Lie Detection has confirmed that your words are the truth.]

Yoo Jonghyuk’s eyes slowly widened.

“...How?”

“How else?”

「 No way. There was a prophet other than Anna Croft? It is also in South Korea? 」

Prophet. In Ways of Survival, it was the only attribute that could see the future and had the passive of ‘nullifying all detection skills.’ In fact, only one person had the attribute of ‘prophet’ in the world of Ways of Survival.

「 Only a prophet can defend against my Sage’s Eyes. 」

I didn’t answer and Yoo Jonghyuk bit his lips.

“Can you perhaps use ‘Future Sight’?”

“It is something similar.”

“You knew I would come here.”

“Yes.”

「 I see. If this man is a prophet, all his actions are convincing. 」

The flow was changing. Yoo Jonghyuk’s fluctuation was conveyed straight away. This was the only chance.

“I know that Yoo Jonghyuk has special powers. You also know things about the future. Isn’t that right?”

“ ... ”

“But that knowledge is never perfect.”

The only weakness of a regressor.

It meant that the future changed when they used their information of the future. In other words, all those who regressed would eventually live in a ‘world they don’t know.’

“Make me your companion. I can fill in the parts you are missing.”

There was no companion as good as a ‘prophet’ to the present Yoo Jonghyuk. In fact, my present self could play a role similar to a prophet. It was because I was the only reader of this story.

[There is one minute to the end of the scenario.]

Yoo Jonghyuk bowed his head and started to think.

「 A prophet will certainly be helpful. 」

[There are 50 seconds left to complete the scenario.]

「Not just the 46th scenario, but later when fighting the ‘chalatustra.’ But... can I really believe him? 」

[There are 40 seconds left to the end of the scenario.]

「 Companion. 」

Finally, Yoo Jonghyuk raised his head as I stared at the clock with an irritated heart.

“I have decided. I will make you my companion.”

[Excessive immersion has severely worn out your mental strength.]

[Exclusive skill, Omniscient Reader’s Viewpoint has been turned off.]

I wasn’t sure if it was due to fatigue or relief but the exclusive skill was released. Now Yoo Jonghyuk’s face was as difficult as a philosophy book with no commentary written.

Yoo Jonghyuk started to take me across the ‘Even Bridge.’ Of course, I was still held by the collar but...I thought things would be all right now. I persuaded this damn regressor and was in a good position.

We had almost crossed the Even Bridge and were right in front of the safe area when Yoo Jonghyuk suddenly stopped.

“I will ask you one last thing.”

“What?”

“If you are really a prophet, you should know your future. Isn’t that right?”

The moment I saw Yoo Jonghyuk’s serene eyes, goosebumps broke out. His test wasn’t over yet. The grip holding my collar tightened.

“Keok.”

His hand raised me up a little bit and a gentle wind passed by my feet. Underneath me was completely empty.

The smell of blood mixed in with the smell of Han River as the ichthyosaurs jumped towards their prey with open mouths.

“Will I let go of this hand or won’t I?”

For the first time, I started sweating. Let me think. Even without his thoughts, I knew this guy more than anyone else. I closed my eyes and thought about Yoo Jonghyuk.

[There are 20 seconds left to the end of the scenario.]

Then I came to a conclusion.

“Yoo Jonghyuk.”

I was certain about what he would do. No matter how I thought about it, there was no other ending when it came to Yoo Jonghyuk.

I talked as I watched a sea commander approaching in the water.

"I will tell you two things first."

"...What?"

"One, I'm not your subordinate. So I hope you will treat me fairly from now on."

"..."

"Two, I will cooperate with you but you also have to promise to cooperate with me."

Yoo Jonghyuk looked at me with interest and nodded.

"Well, what is your answer?"

I replied with a smile.

"Get your hand off me and get lost, you damn jerk."

Then the power holding me disappeared. I was grabbed by the force of gravity. I saw Yoo Jonghyuk's face as I was falling. Yoo Jonghyuk was smiling brightly like something made him happy.

Son of a bitch.

"I believe you. You are definitely a prophet."

Waiting for me at my crash point was the mouth of the giant sea commander.

I closed my eyes from the shock of the impact along with the cold water of Han River. As I sucked in a breath, a warm and enormous darkness swallowed me up.

[You have failed to clear the scenario.]

...Damn, I have to use that method after all.