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## *Chapter 2: Starting the Paid Service (2)*

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「Dokkaebi. The first time he appeared, someone said so.」 (Korean goblin.

I didn't know why but that sentence suddenly popped up in my head.

The stopped subway train, the dark room... These details gave me a sense of déjà vu.

The subway had stopped before, but it was rare. Even so, why? I remembered the familiar words from a novel... but it was ridiculous. Wasn't it impossible?

At this moment, the door of car 3807 opened wide, and the electricity returned.

Yoo Sangah muttered by my side, "...Dokkaebi?"

My head was ringing. I trembled uneasily as the novel I knew and the reality before me overlapped.

「With two small horns and wearing a small straw mat, the strange and fluffy creature was floating in the air.」

「It was too strange to call it a fairy, too evil to call it an angel, and too tranquil to call it a demon.」

「Thus, it was called a 'dokkaebi. 」

And I already knew the first thing the dokkaebi would say.

「&아#@!&아#@! .....」

[&아#@!&아#@!.....]

Fiction and reality overlapped precisely.

“What is this?”

“Augmented reality?”

Amidst the chattering people, I was thrown into another world alone. This was unmistakably a dokkaebi—the very dokkaebi that opened the door to tragedy for thousands of lives in Ways of Survival.

...It was Yoo Sangah's voice that broke me out of my thoughts. “It sounds vaguely like Spanish. Should I talk to it?”

I was a bit taken aback and asked, “...Do you know what that is? Will you ask it for money?”

“No but...”

It was at this time that I heard the correct pronunciation of Korean. [Ah. Ah. Does this sound good? Ah, I had a hard time because the Korean patch didn't work. Everyone, can you hear my words?]

As a familiar language was being spoken, I could see people's expressions relax. Then the first one to step up was a big man in a suit. "Hey, what are you doing right now?"

[...Huh?]

"Are you filming? I have to go because I have to quickly get to an audition."

He seemed to be an obscure actor since his face was unfamiliar. If I were a casting director, I would've picked him out for his brimming ambition. Unfortunately, the presence before him right now wasn't a director.

[Ah, auditions. That's right. This is also an audition. Haha, there was a shortage of data. I just entered when it was monetized at 7 p.m.]

"What? What are you talking about?"

[Now, now. All of you, relax in your seats and listen to me. From now on, I will tell you something very important!]

My chest was becoming stuffy.

"What? Quickly get off the train!"

"Somebody call the captain!"

“What are they doing without the cooperation of the citizens?”

“Mother, what is that? A cartoon?”

There was no doubt about it. This was the development I knew. I didn’t want to be mixed up in this...but there was no way. The people present wouldn’t listen to the small and cute-looking CG creature. The only thing I could do was stop Yoo Sangah who was trying to get up from her seat.

“Yoo Sangah-ssi, it is dangerous, so stay here.”

“Huh?” Yoo Sangah’s eyes widened.

I spoke during a moment of bewilderment, but there was no way to explain what I understood. To be exact, I didn’t have to explain.

[Haha, you are really loud.]

There was a presence with a stronger persuasive power than anyone else right now.

[I told you to be quiet.]

I closed my eyes slowly as the dokkaebi’s eyes turned red. Something burst, and the subway became silent.

“Uh, uh. Uh...” There was a big hole in the forehead of the unknown actor who had to go to the audition. The man who had spoken several times collapsed on the spot.

[This isn't a movie shoot.]

There was a cracking sound once again. This time, it was the person talking about the captain.

[It isn't a dream. It isn't a novel either.]

One, two... Blood sprayed into the air as the heads of some people started to burst.

They were all the people who had protested against the dokkaebi, as well as the ones who screamed or went wild. Those who caused the slightest fuss had a hole in their heads. Suddenly, the subway became a bloodbath.

[This isn't the 'reality' that you know. Do you understand? So everyone shut up and listen to me.]

More than half the people present here died. Blood and body pieces filled the subway. Now, the people didn't scream. Like primitive apes in front of a powerful predator, everyone just watched the dokkaebi with terror.

I was surprised and held tightly onto the shoulder of Yoo Sangah who was hiccuping.

This was real. The strange message which entered my ears, the dokkaebi had appeared in front of me, and the train car that had become a bloodbath...

[Everyone, your lives have been nice so far. Isn't that right?]

By the special needs seating, an elderly grandmother met the eyes of the dokkaebi.

[You have been living too long for free. Isn't life too generous? You were born and paid no price for breathing, eating, pooping and breeding! Ha! You really live in a good world!]

Free? No one in the subway lived for free. The people strived to make money in order to survive, and they rode the subway on the way home from work. Yet at this moment, no one disputed the dokkaebi's words.

[But now the good days are over. How long can you continue living for free? If you want to enjoy happiness, it is common sense to pay a price. Isn't that right?]

The gasping people couldn't answer. Then at that time, someone carefully raised their hand. "D-Do you want money?"

I wondered what type of person could speak in the middle of this situation, but surprisingly, I knew his face.

"Yoo Sangah-ssi. Isn't that Department Head Han of the finance team?"

"...Right."

There was no doubt. He was a typical parachute in the company and the number one person newcomers avoided. (Parachute: a person who relies on their connections) It was Han Myungoh, department head of the finance team. Why was that man riding the subway?

“I will give you money. Take it. Please note that I am a person like this.”

Department Head Han pulled out his business card as people cheered him on. It was the atmosphere of a savior fighting against terrorists.

“How much do you want? A big one? Or two?”

He was offering a sum that was overly large for a department head of a subsidiary company.

There was a rumor that Han Myungoh was the youngest son of the leader of the affiliate company and now I thought it might be true. I couldn't carry that many cheques in my wallet.

[Hrmm, you are giving me money?]

“T-That's right! The cash I have right now isn't much but... I can give you anything if you let me out of here.”

[Money, good. A plant fibre that many humans mutually agree on.]

The department head's expression brightened. It was an 'Indeed, money is everything' expression. How pitiful.

“Now, this is all I have—”

[It only applies in your time and space.]

“Huh?”

At the next moment, flames appeared in the air, and the cheques in the department head’s hands burned up. Department Head Han let out a scream.

[That paper has no value in the macrocosm world. If you do this one more time, I will blow away your head.]

“U-Uhhh...” Fear once again spread on the faces of the people present. It was easy to read what they were thinking because it was just like the novel.

「 What the hell will happen now? 」

Only I knew what was going to happen in the future.

[Phew, the debt is piling up during the time when you are noisy. Well, yes. Rather than explain it a hundred times, isn’t it quicker for you to make money yourself?]

The dokkaebi’s horns rose like they were antennas, and its body floated to the ceiling of the train.



A moment later, a message rang out.

[#BI-7623 channel is open.]

[The constellations have entered.]

A small window emerged in front of everyone's blank eyes.

[The main scenario has arrived!]

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[Main Scenario #1 – Proof of Value]

Category: Main

Difficulty: F

Clear Conditions: Kill one or more living things.

Time Limit: 30 minutes

Compensation: 300 coins

Failure: Death

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The dokkaebi smiled faintly as it became transparent and disappeared into the next space.

[Then, good luck everyone. Please show me an interesting story.]