
Chapter 8: Protagonist (3)

I stared straight into Lee Hyunsung and Han Myungoh's eyes and said.

"Do you want to die from that guy beyond the iron door or do you want to try your luck outside the train? Which one will you choose?"

"U-Uh..."

"Dokja-ssi, is there any guarantee that the person beyond the iron door is an enemy?"

The Steel Sword appeared at the crucial moment. There was a reason why Lee Hyunsung couldn't be leader of a party.

"Since they are coming from another carriage, it is likely to be a survivor. If we meet..."

I looked at the bloody room instead of continuing. Lee Hyunsung followed my gaze and quietly spoke.

"...I was too careless. Let's find a way out."

"G-Go! Go quickly!"

At this moment, both people were aware. The other survivors of the carriages would've gone through the same thing as them. They wouldn't have the good luck of finding 'insects.'

"This is broken!"

"Damn, we can't go this way!"

While listening to Lee Hyunsung and Han Myungoh's cries, I also checked the doors. There were no more barriers so the doors could now be touched.

Apart from the doors connecting the passageways, there were a total of eight access doors on the subway. There were three exits that hadn't been confirmed yet.

Kung!

The iron door seemed like it could barely hold on for one minute.

Despite being the main character, I didn't think he would have such high strength in the beginning. I was honestly surprised that he could break such a thick iron door.

"Dokja-ssi! Here—"

I found a working manual switchgear.

"No!"

The opening and closing device worked smoothly but the door didn't open at once. The door opened around one fifth before stopping like it was jammed.

"...It seems to be broken here as well."

"How about other places?"

"This seems to be the only place where we can escape."

It was unknown for a child. But the gap was too narrow for men and women to escape. Han Myungoh and Lee Hyunsung tried to pull the doors open but they didn't move a bit.

[Coins Possessed: 4700 C]

One of the uses of the coins was to raise overall stats. I had already used 2,700 coins to make my stamina level 10.

This problem could be resolved if I used the remaining coins to enhance my strength. But it wasn't wise to use the coins when the situation was unknown.

In the end, there was only one way.

"Lee Hyunsung-ssi. Use a skill."

"Huh? "Skill..."

I quietly activated Character List.

[The exclusive skill, Character List is activated.]

[Character Information]

Name: Lee Hyunsung

Age: 28 years old.

Constellation Sponsor: Master of Steel.

Private Attribute: Soldier who Turned a Blind Eye to Injustice (General)

Exclusive Skills: Bayonet Skills Lv. 2, Camouflage Lv. 2, Patience Lv. 2.

Stigma: Great Mountain Push Lv. 1

Overall Stats: Stamina Lv. 8, Strength Lv. 8, Agility Lv. 7, Magic Power Lv. 5.

Overall Evaluation: The overall stats are very good. Despite turning away from injustice, he received the choice of a constellation. This is another opportunity for him.

Lee Hyunsung's information came to my mind without any restrictions. Fortunately, the sponsor was the same as what I read in Ways of Survival.

"You should've checked it when you opened the attributes window. Lee Hyunsung is a soldier so there must be a skill you can use in this situation."

"Well...I have one but how do I use it—"

"Just think about using the skill."

"...Will that work?"

"It will. I did it earlier."

Lee Hyunsung didn't say anything else as he took a deep breath of determination.

"Haaap!"

Lee Hyunsung's biceps swelled as he grabbed the door. It was the appearance of Great Mountain Push.

In fact, Great Mountain Push wasn't a skill but a 'stigma.' And a stigma was a power from the constellation. I used the word 'skill' in order to avoid suspicions.

Dudududu.

There was a sound like a huge spring turning and the door started to move.

"What? This guy has real strength!"

“That’s it! It is really great!”

[The character ‘Lee Hyunsung’ has started to trust you.]

[Your understanding of the character ‘Lee Hyunsung’ has increased.]

Rather than doubts, my reliability had risen. Lee Hyunsung was a simpler person than I thought.

“Come on, get off!”

But I felt relieved. I handed Lee Gilyoung to Lee Hyunsung.

“Lee Hyunsung-ssi. Carry the child on your back.”

“I understand.”

Now the iron door was almost broken. But if my prediction was right, the problem right now wasn’t that iron door.

[...Ah, this is really. I knew this would happen. Didn’t I saw it earlier? I told you not to go anywhere, Damn! The scenario isn’t ready yet-]

The dokkaebi seemed to be angry as it floated over Dongho Bridge.

“Wahh! I knew this would happen! I told you not to come out!”

Han Myungoh wrapped a hand around his head, like he thought it would explode. But there was no need to worry.

[Sigh...it can't be helped. You are really lucky humans.]

It was because the second scenario started the moment the train door was opened.

[The second scenario has arrived!]

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[Second Scenario – Escape]

Category: Sub

Difficulty: E

Clear Conditions: Cross the broken bridge and enter Oksu Station.

Time Limit: 20 minutes.

Compensation: 200 coins.

Failure: ???

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“Dokja-ssi, something is strange. It says the ‘broken bridge’ but the bridge is still...”

“Don’t worry and just run! Quickly!”

“U-Understood!”

In fact, Yoo Sangah was right. The bridge hadn't been broken yet. In other words, the 'bridge was going to be broken.'

"Dokja-ssi, come quickly!"

"I'm coming."

It hadn't been broken yet because we got off the train 'too soon.' The dokkaebi said the preparation time was 10 minutes. But we escaped three minutes earlier.

Some people might call it cowardly but this scenario couldn't be cleared without such a shortcut. Especially if I was stuck with burdens such as Yoo Sangah and Lee Gilyoung.

"Pant, pant. Indeed, Lee Hyunsung-ssi is a soldier and has high stamina."

"Don't open your mouth. You will lose strength."

Lee Hyunsung was running first with the kid. He was a natural monster who didn't invest any coins in his stats, yet the sum of his strength, stamina and agility exceeded 23.

The next one was Han Myungoh and then Yoo Sangah with me in the rear. It would be close but I thought we could make it in time.

"Ah, what is that?"

At this time, Han Myungoh's scream was heard. There was a huge whirlpool in the centre of Han River, letting out splashes of water.

And a giant monster was at the centre of the splashes. An ichthyosaur. The problem was that the ichthyosaur seemed to be twice the size of the one I saw through the window.

This wasn't a sea serpent...it was a sea commander.

A general sea serpent was only a grade 7 monster. Given that a grade 9 monstrous land rate was difficult for normal humans to cope with, an average human would be torn apart by a grade 7 monster.

In other words, the guy coming now wasn't a monster that could be caught in the early stages. Of course, there was no need to catch it. It wasn't created to be caught.

Ku ku ku ku!

The Han River surged like there was a tsunami and the ichthyosaur moved. It was chewing on the legs of the bridge.

"The bridge is breaking!"

"Run! If we run then we can cross it!"

The remaining distance was around 200 metres. If my calculations were correct, we could cross before the bridge collapsed at our current speed.

[There is no fun if the game is too easy.]

Of course, this was a story for when there were no variables.

[The scenario difficulty has been adjusted.]

[Scenario difficulty: E -> D]

The sound of the dokkaebi's laughter was heard.

[Is there any fun if you just run away? Let's create a bit of atmosphere!]

[The evil thoughts of the dead have returned.]

[The surrounding earth is filled with black ether.]

[The demonic people have woken up!]

There was the sound of something chasing us from behind. Yoo Sangah muttered to herself.

"Z-Zombies?"

Zombie-like bodies were coming in huge waves. Some of them were people from the same carriage as us.

"We just need to go a little further! Quickly!"

The distance to the ichthyosaur was now less than a hundred metres. Fortunately, Lee Hyunsung carried Lee Gilyoung and had crossed the safety line. The problem was the rest of us, including me. Han Myungoh shrieked.

“Y-You bastards!”

There were too many demonic people. If there were only corpses from the subway, we might’ve gotten away. The problem was...

“Kuweeeeooh!”

The drivers who died on the bridge became demonic people. The path that Lee Hyunsung broke through was covered with demonic people. I looked between the demonic people on the road and the approaching ichthyosaur.

“...Everybody get down.”

It was too late.

Kwaaaaang!

The legs of the bridge shook tremendously as the ichthyosaur’s huge mouth bit it.

The scales of the ichthyosaur shone through the dust that poured down onto Han River like rain. A fishy smell of blood and water filled the area.

I staggered and raised my body.

Once the dust went away, the scenery around me was clear. Piles of shattered concrete and cut steel. The carcasses of the demonic people which the ichthyosaur had cleanly bitten through.

The broken leg of the bridge.

“...Dok...sii...kay?”

Yoo Sangah and Han Myungoh raised their bodies from a little further away.

One of Han Myungoh’s legs seemed injured and uncomfortable from the previous quake.

Lee Hyunsung and Lee Gilyoung cried out from across the bridge but their voices seemed blocked by the safety zone.

What should I do? I made plans on the basis of the bridge breaking. But I hadn’t expected Han Myungoh and Yoo Sangah to be with me.

At that moment, a voice was heard in the air.

[Someone has received the favour of a constellation.]

[The constellation’s scenario ‘Deus Ex Machina’ has been activated.]

Along with the voice, a brilliant bridge made of light was created among the remnants of the broken Dongho Bridge. Then a message floated in front of me.

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[Deus Ex Machina – Even Bridge]

Description: A bridge of light made by a constellation. Only an ‘even’ number of people can cross the bridge. The bridge will disappear as soon as an ‘odd’ number of people tries to cross it.

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“Dokja-ssi. This, in my head, suddenly—”

I met the eyes of Yoo Sangah, who was talking nonsense. I could roughly guess the situation.

Deus Ex Machina. Constellations risked a huge loss by intervening in scenarios.

“...It is Yoo Sangah-ssi’s sponsor.”

I didn’t know what constellation it was but somebody had chosen Yoo Sangah as their incarnation and wanted her to live.

Deus Ex Machine was a rare phenomenon in Ways of Survival. And Yoo Sangah was a person who should’ve already died.

I had a moment of doubt. What type of constellation was behind Yoo Sangah?

[The information of this person can't be read in 'Character List.']

[This person isn't registered in 'Character List.']

I was a bit surprised.

I couldn't see her with my skill? Why? Did she have a special background? Or did she have a mental barrier? But if she had something like that from the beginning...no, wait a minute. Perhaps this was...

"Dokja-ssi, what do we do now?"

I heard Yoo Sangah's bewildered voice. I didn't have much time to think.

Ku ku ku ku!

The Han River was swirling. The ichthyosaur had eaten one bridge leg and was turning its huge body around on the other side of Han River. I bit my lips and once again read the explanation of the bridge.

Only an 'even' number of people could cross the bridge.

In the end, 'Deus Ex Machina' was a toy made by the damn constellations who loved tragedies.

There was no way for everyone to survive.

Han Myungoh's body was shaking as his eyes met mine.

In the end, somebody must die.