

After Ten Millennia in Hell

Chapter 2 - The Lord of the Nine Hells Returns to Earth (2)

"Get everything ready."

"My king..."

After hearing his firm tone, Balrog lowered his head in sadness. 'If this is what the demon king wishes...'

Since he had sworn eternal loyalty to Oh Kang-Woo, he had to follow his wishes.

"Balrog, are you going to make me repeat myself?"

"... My apologies."

Balrog bowed and ordered the subordinates to bring out the items Kang-Woo had mentioned. The items he'd asked them to prepare were armaments that had belonged to the seven princes of Hell. Each of the weapons had the strength of the Nine Hells inside them. It was said that if one managed to gather all seven of them, one would gain enough power to twist the boundary between time and space.

After killing Bael a little while ago, Kang-Woo had managed to collect all of the equipment, and they were all lined up neatly in front of him now.

"The preparations are complete."

"Okay."

Kang-Woo slowly stood up from the throne and walked toward the seven armaments of different shapes and colors. The seven armaments that held the power of the Nine Hells were interacting with each other and amplifying the demonic energy inside each of them.

'If I infuse the demonic energy that I've absorbed into them...'

It was possible to forcibly open a dimensional rift.

Kang-Woo sighed. He couldn't believe that he was finally about to return to Earth.

'Finally...'

He was going back.

Fwoooooom!

A huge amount of demonic energy flowed from his body toward the armaments. He had devoured hundreds of thousands of demons through the Authority of Predation. He had so much demonic energy inside of him that it would be no exaggeration to say that he was the embodiment of the Nine Hells.

'Ten Thousand Demon Core' was what Kang-Woo used to describe the giant ball of demonic energy inside his body. He thought it was an appropriate name since there weren't many famous demons that he hadn't devoured.

The demonic energy that came from the Ten Thousand Demon Core began to interact with the seven armaments. A rift was formed in the space, and a black gate appeared before him.

'I can finally return to Earth.'

Remnants of his memories from Earth came back to him. Even after ten millennia, he hadn't been able to forget about his home. It wasn't like he had a family waiting for him, nor did he have a partner whom he had promised to spend the rest of his life with. However...

'I'm sure it'll still be far better than this place.'

Kang-Woo was willing to do anything to be able to get away from this place that had no good food or entertainment, just blood and slaughter.

'I also need to adjust the time.'

He had no intention of returning to an Earth where ten millennia had passed. Many of the things that he missed about Earth were probably no longer around after that much time.

'Kimchi stew might have disappeared.'

Kang-Woo didn't even want to think about an Earth without kimchi stew. He wanted to return to the past, to the Earth from before he had arrived in the Hells. Thankfully, he could also adjust time by using the armaments of the seven princes of Hell.

"Well then, see ya," Kang-Woo expressed.

"My king..."

After hearing the determination in Kang-Woo's words, Balrog lowered his head in sadness.

Tears dripped from all eighteen of Lilith's eyes while she opened her long mouth and said, "Sniff, a-are you really going to abandon me?"

"Don't cry," Kang-Woo replied.

'You look terrifying,' he remarked inwardly.

The sight of Lilith crying was straight out of a scene from a horror movie. It seemed like she'd misunderstood his words.

She shouted as her tentacles trembled, "Oh! Your kind words have moved me! My heart is about to burst from your love."

After saying that, one of the tentacles linked to Lilith's chest exploded, and yellow pus came out of it.

'Oh, heavens,' Kang-Woo thought.

"My king! My love!"

'Stay away from me.'

"Ahh, I will go with you, my king!"

'Screw off.'

Upon seeing Lilith, who was covered in yellow pus, approach him, Kang-Woo threw himself into the dimensional rift.

"My king! I, Lilith, will come find you, no matter what happens!"

When Kang-Woo heard the chilling shout ring out behind him, a weird sensation swept through his body.

'Let's never meet again.'

While raising his middle finger toward Lilith—no, the Hells that had made him suffer for ten millennia, Kang-Woo regulated the boundary of time inside the dimension.

'This is pretty hard.'

Controlling an absolute entity such as time was a difficult task, even for him. Kang-Woo was trying to adjust the time settings to be as similar to the period when he fell into the Hells as possible.

'I'm okay with a difference of around ten or twenty years.'

Because he had been born an orphan, there wasn't a past he wanted to change or a future he wanted to go to. He was okay as long as some of the Earth he remembered was still there.

Fwoooosh!

"Urgh!"

When he finished setting up the time, a strong force sucked him in. Kang-Woo closed his eyes as he was pulled by a force he couldn't resist.

- A Rift Core has been detected.
- Activating the Dimensional Defense Mechanism 'Gaia System.'
- Fail. Fail.
- The Rift Core is too powerful.
- Focusing all defense mechanisms of the infinite dimension on the Rift Core. The Gaia System is being overloaded.
- Fail. Fail.
- The Rift Core is too powerful. Complete elimination of the Rift Core is impossible.
- Complete elimination deemed impossible. Beginning sealing process of the Rift Core.
- Fail. Fail.
- The Rift Core is too powerful. Complete sealing of the Rift Core is impossible.
- Applying a limiting seal on the Rift Core.

'What is it saying?'

Kang-Woo frowned when he heard a voice in his ears. However, his thoughts did not last long.

'Ah...'

The world seemed to distort as he lost consciousness.

"Urgghhh...!"

Kang-Woo felt an intense pain weighing on his body. He was struggling to even move a finger.

After coming back to his senses, Kang-Woo opened his eyes while groaning.

'Where am I?'

The first thing he saw was a dense forest. The light shining through the thick bushes tickled Kang-Woo's cheeks.

"Fuu..." Kang-Woo stood up while taking a deep breath.

The pain that was spreading through his body made him feel dizzy.

'First, I need to check my status.'

He needed to know what had happened to his body.

Riiing!

[Opening the Status Window.]

"Eh?"

The moment he thought that he should check his current status, a blue window opened in front of his eyes. Kang-Woo narrowed his eyes to stare at the unexpected blue status window in front of him.

[Status Window]

[Player Name: Oh Kang-Woo

Level: 1 (First Awakening)

First Awakening Trait: Authority of Predation (Rank: ???) *The majority of the trait's power is currently sealed.

Strength: 8

Dexterity: 9

Health: 7

Mana: 0

Demonic Energy (Unique Stat): 12

Intelligence: 8

Wisdom: 7]

"... What the hell is this?"

The status window reminded him of the games that he used to play a long time ago before falling into the Hells.

Kang-Woo frowned at the phenomenon he couldn't get a grasp on.

'Most of the power of Predation has been sealed?'

Authority of Predation was the only power he'd had when he had fallen into the Hells, and it was what had made him the lord of the Nine Hells. It was the authority that lay dormant within the Ten Thousand Demon Core, which he considered the entirety of his power.

The moment Kang-Woo read that the strength he had accumulated for ten millennia had been sealed, he started to feel anxious.

"Fuu." Kang-Woo took a deep breath and tried to calm down.

Being anxious because something unexpected happened would only make things worse.

'Calm down.'

The most important thing was checking out his current status. Kang-Woo tried to bring out the strength of his Ten Thousand Demon Core, which contained the demonic energy of hundreds of thousands of demons.

'It isn't moving.'

To be more precise, he could only move a tiny bit of his demonic energy by will—which was almost nothing, considering the limitless amount of demonic energy it contained.

"At this rate, I'll have trouble using my Authorities as well," Kang-Woo mumbled while frowning.

A few demons possessed a special Authority similar to his Authority of Predation. Among the hundreds of thousands of demons he had devoured, only six hundred and sixty-six of them had possessed an Authority. Apart from the ones that the seven princes of Hell used to have, he could use the rest.

Each Authority required a certain amount of demonic energy to activate, although the amount required varied between them. With the amount of demonic energy he currently had access to, there were more Authorities he couldn't use than ones he could.

'With my current demonic energy, I'll probably struggle with even the Authority of Blades.'

Authority of Blades was the Authority of the demon Sabnak. It allowed one to pull out blades made of demonic energy from one's body.

'But it isn't a good Authority.'

There were ways in which he could use the Authority of Blades effectively with enough demonic energy, but it would be difficult with the amount that he had right now.

Kang-Woo focused on his left hand and used the Authority of Blades.

Schwiiing!

A sharp black blade sprang out from the back of his left hand. He felt the demonic energy leaving his body.

'It's hard getting used to it.'

It was stifling to go from having unlimited demonic energy to it being limited. At present, he couldn't freely use the Authorities he had access to as he had done before.

"Anyway, it seems like the information on this status window is true."

Kang-Woo didn't know why his Authority had been sealed, but it was true that he couldn't use most of the demonic energy he had stored inside the Ten Thousand Demon Core. That meant that the status window in front of him showed exactly his current state.

"... Am I actually inside a game?"

At that point, the thought of whether or not this was truly Earth made Kang-Woo feel a bit anxious.

"Skree, skree!"

He suddenly heard an ear-splitting sound. Kang-Woo turned toward where the sound had come from.

"Damn it."

He scowled upon finding out what had made such an unpleasant sound. It was a small creature with green skin, sharp teeth, and a height that reached Kang-Woo's chest. The creature was as ugly as one of the monsters that roamed around the First Hell. There weren't monsters like these on the Earth that Kang-Woo knew.

"Is this... seriously not Earth?" Kang-Woo murmured in despair.

He couldn't even laugh at the thought that the place he had come to after ten millennia of suffering might not be Earth.

"Skreeee!!"

Upon seeing Kang-Woo, the green monsters charged toward him.