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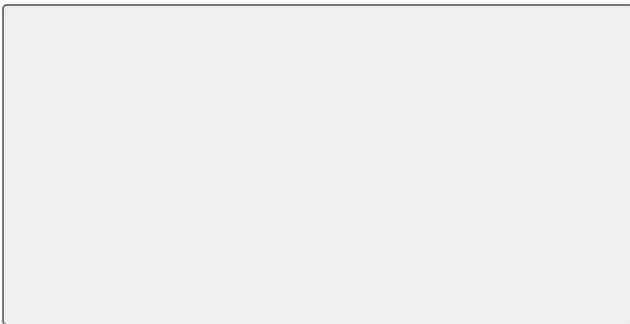
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Chapter 301 - 400

BCJ Chapter 351

Let's Make a Playground!

by *BlossomTLBlack Corporation: Joseon*

Hyang turned the page. The next page showed a floor plan of the third floor. Hyang pointed to various parts of the floor plan with his pointer and continued his explanation.

“As you can see, the space is divided around a central stage.”

Listening to Hyang’s explanation, Sejong stroked his beard, thought for a moment, and then asked a question.

“You’re planning to hold competitions for baduk and janggi too, aren’t you?”

“That’s correct.”

Hyang continued to explain about the rankings he had in mind.

“... Thus, we’ll call the person who occupies the highest rank among these divisions the ‘National Hand’. Those who reach this National Hand position will not only receive prize money but also the privilege of teaching baduk in the royal court.”

“Those who play baduk would become desperate for that.”

“Indeed.”

As Hyang affirmed, Jo Gye-saeng, who had been listening, interjected.

“There are two problems. First, as the story of King Gaero of Baekje from the ancient Three Han period shows, becoming obsessed with baduk could lead to the collapse of state affairs.”

King Jangsu, who was pursuing a southern expansion policy, devised various methods to attack the Han River basin occupied by Baekje. Upon learning that King Gaero was fond of baduk, King Jangsu sent the monk Dorim to Baekje.

Dorim, who entered Baekje under the guise of defection, used baduk as a means to approach King Gaero and gain his trust.

Subsequently, King Gaero, deceived by Dorim, was made to enforce excessive construction projects. As Baekje weakened through this process, King Jangsu immediately began his southern advance and was able to occupy the Han River.

To Jo Gye-saeng’s point, Hyang immediately replied.

“Have you ever seen Father having leisure time?”

“ ... ”

At Hyang’s words, not only Jo Gye-saeng but all the ministers fell silent.

Although officials of the court, regardless of rank, often complained, “There’s so much work, I’m dying. I want to leave work on time,” Sejong’s workload was no less intense.

Once, when Hyang saw some mid-level officials complaining about their workload without noticing him, he had made a remark:

“At least you have homes to return to and rest, don’t you? For Father, the palace is his home.”

“We, we are sorry!”

Therefore, the implication of Hyang’s question was simple:

‘Does the King of Joseon have enough spare time to become addicted to baduk?’

The ministers, well aware of the king’s enormous workload, could only keep their mouths shut.

While that answered the first problem, Jo Gye-saeng pointed out the second issue.

“Secondly, to reach the level of skill to be called a National Hand in baduk would require considerable time and effort. If so, someone with good skills but lacking in character or learning might become the National Hand and form ties with the royal family. We must certainly find a solution for this aspect.”

Hyang had to nod at Jo Gye-saeng’s point.

“I acknowledge that this could be a problem.”

‘Even in the 21st century, there were quite a few professional players with character issues... No, not just professional players. From celebrities to BJs...’

Recalling examples of celebrities causing scandals due to various character issues even in the 21st century, Hyang immediately continued.

“Therefore, if those who reach high levels through these competitions commit crimes related to character, we will strip them of all their positions and expel them from the field.”

“That’s not enough...”

“That’s sufficient!”

As Jo Gye-saeng tried to raise more objections, Maeng Sa-seong quickly intervened.

“Even ministers and nobles are dismissed or removed from the local register when they cause problems.”

“Isn’t that right?”

“Indeed it is!”

Strongly affirming Hyang’s words, Maeng Sa-seong glared at Jo Gye-saeng and the other ministers.

‘These people are digging their own graves! If His Majesty decides to crack down, quite a few of them would be in trouble!’

Seeing Maeng Sa-seong’s glare, Jo Gye-saeng and the ministers immediately bowed their heads and replied.

“That seems appropriate!”

At the ministers’ reaction, Hyang turned to look at Sejong. Sejong, who had been observing the ministers’ reactions from his elevated position, muttered quietly.

“I should conduct an audit sometime. For now, Crown Prince, is your explanation finished?”

“Not yet. We’ll sell food because people will get hungry while enjoying gambling in this ‘Siunru’ (Hall of Fortune Testing).”

“Siunru? Hall of Fortune Testing... What a poetic name.”

“Thank you. To continue my explanation, we’ll sell food but prohibit alcohol.”

“Why?”

“We don’t know what people excited by gambling might do under the pretext of alcohol.”

“Your words are right!”

At Hyang’s words, Sejong slapped his knee and strongly agreed.

Even in this period, there were criminals who used alcohol as an excuse.

‘It’s the alcohol that’s bad, not the person.’

This was a common belief.

Contrary to this, Sejong was making decisions to deal more severely with alcohol-related crimes.

– It’s true that alcohol tends to cloud people’s minds. However, if a person who committed a crime initially had no intention of doing so, they wouldn’t commit a crime even if they were extremely drunk! Moreover, if one gets so drunk as to forget conscience and morality, they can barely move properly! Therefore, saying alcohol is the cause is absurd! No, it’s a cunning trick to avoid punishment using alcohol as an excuse, so it should be punished more severely!

Regarding this, Hyang fully supported Sejong’s decision.

“If nothing else, we must eradicate the practice of giving lenient punishments using ‘diminished capacity due to intoxication’ as an excuse!”

By now, Hyang’s presentation was almost over. Judging from the reactions of Sejong and the ministers, the establishment of the ‘Comprehensive Entertainment Venue’ seemed almost certain.

Therefore, the direction shifted from Hyang actively explaining the plan to a question-and-answer session.

“But you know, isn’t just bull fighting and wrestling a bit lacking? Of course, there are performances by entertainers and gisaengs, but it still feels insufficient.”

At Sejong’s point, Hyang provided an answer as if he had been waiting for it. Turning the page, Hyang pointed out possible items with his pointer.

“We can add as much as we want in that area. The easiest addition would be hand-to-hand combat tournaments. Participants in these tournaments will also be divided into ranks, and the final winner will be recommended as a hand-to-hand combat instructor for the army and navy.”

“That’s good.”

At Hyang’s words, Sejong nodded, and Jo Mal-saeng’s face brightened.

Although Sejong nodded at Hyang’s answer, he still felt it was a bit lacking.

“While we’re at it, wouldn’t it be good to include polo? It seems quite good to create two polo teams in each of Joseon’s eight provinces and have them compete. Or if polo on horseback is difficult, isn’t there also stick ball that can be played on foot?”

“We’re thinking of creating separate facilities for polo along with horse racing.”

As he answered, Hyang turned the page. The next page showed an oval-shaped stadium.

“This is the racecourse. We’re thinking of building it when both the people and the government have more financial leeway than now.”

“Why?”

“Horses are animals that incur a lot of financial burden. Moreover, to please the spectators in horse racing or polo, large horses imported from the West are more advantageous than ponies. Horses are already economically

burdensome animals, and if they're large, that burden will be even greater. Another reason is that the number of horses bred from these imported stallions is still insufficient. This requires both time and funds, so we must postpone it for later. That's why we chose bull fighting first. Many households already raise cattle, and it's a familiar form of gambling for civilians."

"That's true. Then explain about the racecourse."

"Yes, Father."

After lightly clearing his throat, Hyang soon continued his explanation.

- The racetrack for horse racing is modeled after the battlefield environment.
 - Multiple obstacles 2 to 3 feet high are installed, and a pond with appropriate depth and width is also installed.
 - The overall shape of the track is not just a combination of simple curves and straight lines, but includes multiple low hills and bends.
 - Such a track makes not only the superiority of the horse important, but also the horsemanship of the jockey and the skills of those managing the racehorses.
 - Therefore, if this type of horse racing becomes established, it can provide jobs for cavalry who retire after completing their minimum service period or for Jurchens.
 - And the horse that achieves the best performance in nationwide touring races can be acquired by the state as a breeding stallion.
- "...In this way, the court can consistently acquire stallions with excellent qualities at minimal cost."

At Hyang's answer, Sejong unconsciously muttered.

"You never let anything slide... You're my child, but you're ruthless. Hup!"

Startled by his own muttering, Sejong was about to say something to the court historian but closed his mouth.

It was already too late, judging by how busily the historian was writing.

“Tsk...”

Clicking his tongue briefly, Sejong looked at the bird’s-eye view and said.

“It’s quite a large facility, so it would require quite a lot of funds.”

“That’s why we’re thinking of building it when finances are more abundant.”

‘In reality, wasn’t it during the Victorian era, when money was overflowing due to the Industrial Revolution and imperial management, that horse racing became popular in the West?’

“Hmm...”

While Sejong was doing his own calculations, Hyang added:

“Additionally, we’ll greatly increase the betting limit for this horse racing. We’ll allow bets from a minimum of 50 copper coins to a maximum of 5 nyang of gold per race.”

“I think that’s too excessive.”

Kim Jeom immediately interjected at Hyang’s words. Hyang immediately responded to Kim Jeom’s objection.

“If you consider the profit distribution, it’s not. Aren’t horses quite expensive animals? If the distribution rate isn’t reasonable, there won’t be any horse owners willing to participate.”

“That’s true, but... still...”

As Kim Jeom continued to object, Hyang added:

“Minister, who do you think will mainly enter the third floor of Siunru?”

“Well, wealthy nobles...”

Kim Jeom, answering unconsciously, suddenly exclaimed.

“Ah! Only those with wealth can be horse owners, and they’ll gamble too, so setting a large amount is indeed more certain!”

“That’s right.”

Hyang pointed to the bird’s-eye view with his pointer.

“We’ll divide the spectator seats into levels. The lower section will have an entrance fee of 10 copper coins for ordinary people, while the upper section will charge 3 nyang of silver. In exchange, all food will be provided free of charge, and during breaks, they can enjoy singing and dancing performances by gisaengs.”

At Hyang’s explanation, Yi Jik interjected.

“Those who consider themselves wealthy would naturally go to the upper level and bet larger amounts.”

“That’s what we’re aiming for. We expect to have 6 to 8 horses compete in each race. So the probability is 1/6 to 1/8. It’s a profitable business even after deducting the profits for the horse owners.”

In the end, Sejong and the ministers agreed to create the Comprehensive Entertainment Venue.

“We should build the racecourse before the Comprehensive Entertainment Venue!”

Of course, there were some extremists like Kim Jeom shouting “Racecourse first, no matter what!”

Sejong and the court's decision was soon announced nationwide through the government gazette.

– ...Therefore, 'Comprehensive Entertainment Venues' will be built across the country. After these venues are constructed, those caught gambling or betting outside these venues will receive severe punishment.

The public's reaction to the gazette was half welcoming, half curious. And a very small number of individuals pounded the ground in frustration.

“The country is promoting gambling! We're headed for ruin!”

While some wrote petitions in indignation at the existence of gambling halls called 'Comprehensive Entertainment Venues', others were frustrated for different reasons.

“Dammit! If the country takes over even the gambling dens, what are we supposed to live on!”

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BBCodes

Bold of you to assume I have a plan.

Deathbringer, emphasis on *death*.

I'm totally ~~crossed-out~~ by this.

- Listless I'm counting my bullets.



<http://topwebfiction.com>.

[link=https://www.n.ot](https://www.n.ot) [clickbait](#).

... me like my landlord!

Spanish Inquisition!

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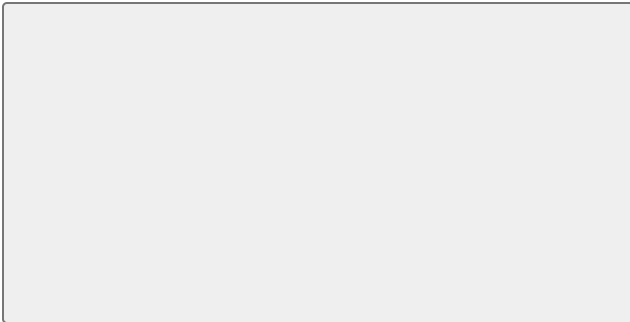
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Chapter 301 - 400

BCJ Chapter 352

Battle of Strait of Gilbratar (1)

by *BlossomTL*Black Corporation: Joseon

Northern Morocco, *Ceuta*.

Here stood a Portuguese naval fortress established by Prince Henry.

On the watchtower of the fortress's northern wall, soldiers and knights in full armor and helmets were keeping watch over the sea, despite the sweltering heat.

“Those fucking Spanish bastards...”

Ricardo, the knight commanding the watchmen, gritted his teeth as he gazed at the northern horizon.

About 5 leagues (roughly 21km) north of Ceuta lay Gibraltar, home to a naval base of the United Kingdom of Castile-Aragon.

This naval base was the source of Ricardo and his soldiers' fury.

Those arrogant pricks who called themselves “Hispania” instead of the United Kingdom, using that ancient name from Roman times as they pleased, acting like the entire Iberian Peninsula was their territory, were now eyeing Portuguese waters – or more precisely, the west coast of Africa.

Since Prince Henry had begun actively supporting exploration, the west coast of Africa was gradually revealing its secrets.

As Prince Henry's expeditions pioneered new routes, scholars and merchants followed in their wake.

While scholars gathered and compiled geographical information, merchants collected anything of value – mostly slaves.

As the profits from the west African coast became substantial, Portugal – or more accurately, Prince Henry – increased their support.

Moreover, with the emergence of Joseon, the so-called “Land of Flowers,” the importance of the west African coast became increasingly apparent.

The current situation was that Islamic forces controlled the routes to Joseon and India. If Africa could be circumnavigated, the profits that had been going to Islamic powers could be seized.

Prince Henry gathered ship captains, geographers, and cartographers at Vila do Infante (Prince's Town) in Sagres to discuss the situation.

“We already know the routes from India to Kitai and Joseon to some extent. Therefore, all we need to do is find a route around Africa! Don't forget! Once we find the route to India and Joseon, immense wealth will fall into our hands!”

As Prince Henry showed even more enthusiasm, Portugal's African exploration accelerated.

Thanks to this, they broke through Cape Bojador at the end of 1431, almost three years earlier than in the history before Hyang's intervention.

Until then, it had been known as the “Cape of No Return,” with rumors that passing it meant certain death.

Once it was proven that one could survive beyond Cape Bojador, exploration gained even more momentum.

It was in this situation that those detestable Spain mongrels had stuck their noses in.

Ricardo, who had been grinding his teeth while glaring at Gibraltar beyond the horizon, now turned his anger towards other targets.

“Those stupid Venetian bastards. They say they build good ships...”

The ones Ricardo was calling stupid were the Venetian shipbuilders.

Venetian shipbuilding had a good reputation. True to the rumors, the ships built in Venice performed well, and the pride of the shipbuilders was sky-high.

The problem was that the ships they built were mainly galleys, and they were primarily used in the Mediterranean.

Because of this, Portugal and Venice were at odds from the very beginning of the shipbuilding process.

“We don’t need rowers! Make storage spaces instead, enlarge the hull, and reinforce its strength!”

“I understand the issue with rowers, but enlarging the hull and reinforcing its strength will take some time.”

“Can’t we just increase the size of our caracks and caravels a bit?”

“The hull expansion you’re talking about isn’t just a simple ‘little’ increase! 120 to 140 cubits (about 62m)? That’s more than twice the size of the caravels you’re currently using! And you want to reinforce the strength to carry more cannons? Do you think building ships is like baking bread in an oven? Ships are ships!”

“The Land of Flowers, I mean Joseon, built them that way!”

“Don’t be ridiculous! I’ve never heard of or seen such large ships being built!”

In reality, the galleys built in Venice weren’t weak. Florence, which mainly processed wool, was importing wool from England and France using galleys and caravels built in Venice.

However, the performance Portugal demanded was the issue.

– Hull size nearly twice that of existing ships. Hull strength capable of withstanding cannon fire.

– This is the minimum requirement. Faster speed would be even better.

The Venetian craftsmen were so agitated because of these conditions set by Portugal.

Despite Venice’s protests, Portugal remained adamant.

“I’ll say it again, Joseon’s ships are that big!”

Venice countered Portugal’s claim.

“Are you sure about that? Show us the evidence!”

“Islamic merchant sailors who traveled with Joseon ships said so. And our knights reported the same!”

“You want us to believe the words of sailors? Don’t you know how much sailors exaggerate?”

“Why are you ignoring the fact that knights reported the same thing? Are you going to say the knights are exaggerating too?”

“...”

“Thinking about future needs, we need large ships! Build the ships according to the conditions we’ve presented!”

“It takes too much time and money! No way!”

While Portugal and Venice were at an impasse, Cosimo of Florence stepped in to mediate.

“Both sides have valid points. Would you listen to this merchant’s words for a moment?”

“Very well.”

“Alright.”

The representatives of Portugal and Venice had to close their mouths.

Although he referred to himself as a merchant, Cosimo de’ Medici was one of the absolute power holders in Europe at the time. He couldn’t be ignored.

“It’s reasonable for Portugal to need large and sturdy ships. Of course, I also had my merchants observe Joseon’s ships, and they say they are indeed large.

However, Venice’s claim that it’s impossible also has merit. No matter how good you are at building ships, it’s a dangerous gamble to build large ships without experience. Considering the costs and time wasted on trial and error, it’s not the situation to insist on large ships unconditionally. So let’s do this. Venice, how much larger can you build compared to the ships you’re currently building and operating?”

“For now, about 20 cubits (about 9m) is the maximum.”

“And how many cannons can you mount on that?”

“Fourteen.”

“Hmm...”

Cosimo briefly recalled his memories at the Venetian representative’s words. Even transport ships carrying wool and other goods mounted

cannons for self-defense. The outermost ships responsible for escorting the fleet carried 10 cannons.

‘Not bad.’

“Hmm...”

Although he had reached a conclusion to some extent, Cosimo pretended to ponder a bit more with a serious face.

As the tense-faced representatives of Venice and Portugal waited, Cosimo, who had maintained silence for a while, opened his mouth.

“For now, I think it’s best to be satisfied with the largest ship Venice can build. I believe that size will be sufficient to operate until a route completely circumnavigating Africa is discovered. It would be a huge loss if we were to build large ships without proper verification and then lose them. What do you think?”

Though it was phrased as a suggestion, it was actually a notification of the decision. Although Portugal, Venice, and Florence had joined hands, Florence held the largest financial stake.

The reason Florence was heavily investing in this venture was simple.

‘The more ways to get goods from India and Joseon, the better.’

Thus, accepting Florence’s mediation proposal, shipyards in Portugal and Venice began building ships.

However, contrary to Henry’s wishes, the new ships weren’t produced quickly.

In Venice’s case, they had to go through trial and error from the design stage because it was a new type of ship – a sailing ship relying 100% on wind power, not the existing galley.

The Portuguese shipyards were no faster. Although they were already familiar with sailing ships from building caravels and caracks, they couldn't avoid the trial and error involved in increasing the size.

Furthermore, with those Spain rascals poaching a significant number of skilled craftsmen, the mass operation of new sailing ships was being pushed further and further back.

Given this situation, curses against Spain were overflowing not only in Ceuta but also in Sagres and Lisbon.

While the Portuguese were cursing like this, in Gibraltar (Gibralter in Spanish), the Spaniards were spewing profanities.

“Damn Ceuta! Damn Portuguese bastards!”

If Gibraltar was the northern pillar of the famous “Pillars of Hercules,” Ceuta was the southern pillar.

Those Portuguese bastards who had gotten their hands on Ceuta would launch a large number of warships to monitor Spanish ships whenever they sailed out of Gibraltar into the Atlantic.

It would be understandable if they reacted this way when Spanish ships headed north. After all, going north would lead directly into Portuguese territory.

But what infuriated the Spaniards most was when they headed south. Portugal was now claiming that the ports where they occasionally stopped along the way were their territory.

To avoid this, Spain had to create new stopover points for themselves, but Portugal had already occupied the optimal locations.

As a result, Spain had to find somewhat usable places and build ports themselves. However, finding such places wasn't easy, and building ports was even more difficult.

In the end, while Portugal had broken through Cape Bojador and was gradually moving south, Spain was just rounding the northwest corner of Africa.

Despite this gloomy situation, Spain couldn't give up on exploring West Africa. The considerable amount of wealth Portugal was gaining from the West African region was tempting, but what was even more enticing was the detour route to India and Joseon.

If they could find and secure that detour route, they could get their hands on enormous wealth, which is why Spain was sending ships southward in partnership with Genoa.

Given this situation, the Portuguese bastards entrenched in Ceuta didn't look good to Spain. In fact, unless they encountered a critical crisis while sailing along the west coast of Africa, they couldn't even enter ports built by Portugal.

On top of this situation, the resentment created by the history of separation from the Kingdom of Castile during the Reconquista was added. Portugal and Spain were in a situation where they cursed each other as "vile traitors" and "greedy ruffians." With this historical background and economic issues overlapping, Gibraltar and Ceuta were in a situation where they were glaring at each other with swords drawn.

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[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.
Deathbringer, emphasis on [i]death[/i].
I'm totally [s]~~crossed out~~[/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

[img]https://www.agine.this[/img]
[link]http://topwebfiction.com[/link].
[link=https://www.n.ot]clickbait[/link].

[quote]... me like my landlord! [/quote]

[spoiler]Spanish Inquisition! [/spoiler]
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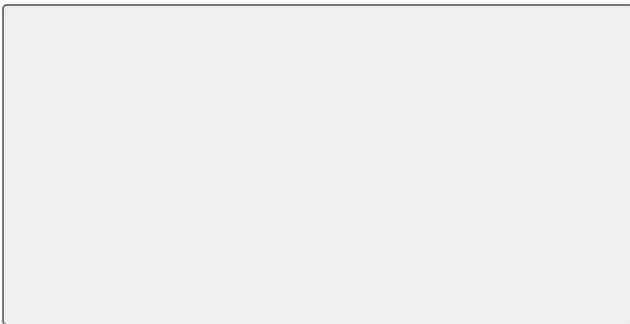
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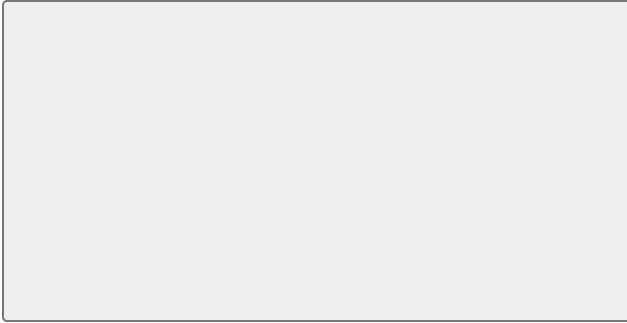
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Chapter 301 - 400

BCJ Chapter 353

Battle of Strait of Gilbratar (2)

by *BlossomTL*Black Corporation: Joseon

While both sides were glaring at each other and growling, rumors about the new ships Portugal was building reached Genoa.

“They’re building a new type of ship?”

The governor asked, and the person in charge immediately explained.

“Yes. It appears to be an improved version of the carrack^[1], but overall it’s a bit larger.”

“How much larger?”

“The length has increased by about 20 cubits (about 9m), and the deck height is about 3 cubits (about 1.35m) taller. It also seems to be equipped with about 14 cannons.”

“Hmm...”

Upon receiving the report, the governor of Genoa wore a serious expression.

Increasing the size of a ship was advantageous in many ways. It immediately increased cargo capacity and could accommodate more crew

members.

Especially for sailing ships like carracks or caravels that didn't have rowers, the number of crew members directly translated to the number of combatants. Moreover, the increased size of the ship meant an increase in the ship's combat power itself.

Although mounting cannons on ships had become somewhat commonplace, most battles still involved ships fighting in close quarters with hand-to-hand combat.

In such situations, having a higher position was an enormous advantage.

The governor of Genoa, well aware of these points through the tiresome maritime disputes with Venice, asked another question.

“Can we obtain the blueprints or craftsmen?”

“Well, since we poached craftsmen last time, surveillance has intensified. The blueprints are also said to be kept in the most strictly managed vault.”

“Damn...”

Displeased with the answer, the governor of Genoa clicked his tongue. After pondering for a while, leaning back in his chair, he soon reached a conclusion.

“Contact Madrid and Valencia. First, we need to confirm if the craftsmen in Valencia can build similar ships. After that's confirmed, we'll consider our next move.”

“Understood.”

Ten days later, representatives from Genoa and Spain met in Madrid.

After brief greetings, the attendees from both sides sat around the table and got straight to the point.

“Have you seen the report on Portugal’s new ships?”

In response to the Spanish official’s question, the Genoese representative immediately answered.

“Yes, I’ve confirmed it. It’s not good news.”

“Indeed. If we’re not careful, Portugal might monopolize the West African route.”

“That is the problem. So, have you checked with the craftsmen in Valencia?”

In response to the Genoese official’s question, the Spanish official handed over a thick report.

“To cut to the chase, ‘It’s possible in principle. However, it’s impossible in the short term.’”

“‘Impossible in the short term’?”

“Unfortunately, that’s the case.”

“That’s disappointing.”

The Genoese officials couldn’t hide their disappointment at the Spanish officials’ response.

Seeing the Genoese officials’ reaction, the Spanish officials added:

“They say they can shorten the time because they’ve been researching hull expansion even before coming to Valencia. The problem is the time consumed by trial and error. So... Could Genoa dispatch more craftsmen from its shipyards?”

At the Spanish officials’ request, this time the Genoese officials wore troubled expressions.

“Well, because we need to continue building warships to deal with Venice, additional dispatches are difficult.”

Now it was the Spanish officials’ turn to be unable to hide their disappointment at the Genoese officials’ response.

“That’s quite unfortunate.”

With no easy solution in sight, time was slipping away uselessly.

“Ah!”

Lost in thought during this frustrating situation, one of the Spanish officials suddenly exclaimed, drawing everyone’s attention.

“Do you have a good idea?”

At the Genoese official’s question, the official in question cautiously opened his mouth.

“Um... What about bringing craftsmen from France?”

“From France?”

“Doesn’t France build pretty good ships too?”

“Hmm...”

Upon hearing the suggestion to ‘recruit French craftsmen,’ the Genoese and Spanish officials all started calculating the pros and cons with serious expressions.

After a while of deliberation, the officials soon spoke up.

“It seems like it could work.”

“Indeed. It seems like quite a good idea.”

While favorable responses were continuing, one Genoese official raised an objection.

“Wouldn’t it be dangerous?”

“Dangerous?”

“Yes. Although they’ve weakened considerably due to nearly a hundred years of war with England, France is still a large country. If we’re not careful, we might create a powerful competitor with our own hands.”

“Ah...”

“That’s right. Come to think of it, the very fact that they could wage war for nearly a hundred years implies that they have considerable national power...”

In the end, the ‘recruitment of French craftsmen’ was scrapped.

“In the end, we have no choice but to minimize trial and error as much as possible.”

“We’ll have to thoroughly utilize the ships that come out of the trial and error process.”

“There’s no other answer, is there?”

In the end, they had no choice but to choose the most fundamental method.

Thus, a shipbuilding competition broke out between the Portugal-Venice-Florence alliance and the Spain-Genoa alliance.

In the shipyards of Sagres, Valencia, and Venice, craftsmen and designers had to rack their brains to build even slightly larger ships.

In this process, an unexpected butterfly effect occurred.

“We can’t properly build these new ships with just our current experience. We need assistance.”

“Assistance? Explain in more detail.”

At the request of the designers and craftsmen, the superiors demanded a more detailed explanation. The craftsmen and designers responded in detail.

“The ships we’re designing and building now need to leap several steps at once. This process can’t be solved by experience alone. For example, even things like the thickness and spacing of the ribs attached to the keel need to be recalculated. We need mathematicians skilled in calculations.”

“Mathematicians...”

At the craftsmen and designers’ request, the superiors trailed off with troubled expressions.

The problem wasn’t finding mathematicians, but the mathematicians themselves. Most renowned mathematicians were at odds with the Vatican.

Last year, a considerable number of monks had to leave for Joseon, and even now, not a few were quietly moving towards Alexandria, liquidating their assets.

After a long deliberation, the superior sighed deeply and concluded.

“Sigh~ We should leave political issues to the politicians.”

“They need mathematicians?”

“Yes. The reason is...”

Upon receiving the report, the kings of Spain and the governor of Genoa were lost in thought, holding their heads.

A wrong decision could lead to a situation where they’d be at odds with the Pope.

This was a particularly serious political burden for the kings of Spain – the King of Castile and the King of Aragon.

If they were to fall out with the Pope, they would have to make many concessions to the nobles. No, there was a considerable possibility of second and third Portugals emerging.

In the end, the Spanish kings passed the ball to the governor of Genoa. After much deliberation, the governor of Genoa made a decision.

“Tch! There’s no choice!”

The governor of Genoa passed an appropriate gift to the Pope and received permission to recruit mathematicians.

– It is not against doctrine as it is necessary for building safe ships.

Holding the document with the Pope’s decree, the governor of Genoa smiled bitterly and muttered.

“The amount spent to get this single sheet of paper...”

Of course, upon hearing the rumor, Portugal also bribed the Pope and obtained the same decree.

Thus, a not insignificant number of scholars flowed into Venice, Florence, and Genoa – which was religiously safer than Spain.

The mathematicians, tasked with researching the formulas needed for design and calculating answers according to those formulas, carried out their work while also conducting their own research.

Thanks to this, the Renaissance began a bit earlier compared to the history before Hyang’s intervention.

As the shipbuilding competition between the two forces progressed, experimental ships began to be launched steadily, one or two at a time.

The launched ships completed simple test voyages and were immediately put into actual service.

“You can only know if a newly built ship is properly made by actually moving it!”

“Verify through actual navigation!”

That’s what they said, but the inner thoughts of the higher-ups were simple.

‘Do you know how much money we’ve spent on this!’

The fact that these launched ships were continuously deployed for voyages meant that more and more ships were traveling the routes.

Of course, the number of ships drastically decreased past Cape Bojador, but to the north of it, many ships passed each other, fluttering large flags emblazoned with the coats of arms of Spain and Portugal.

The sea is vast, but the safe space of the sea routes was a limited area. Therefore, although it would be a long distance on land, at sea, they frequently passed each other at what was practically point-blank range.

As these encounters became more frequent, the atmosphere began to grow increasingly ominous.

As mentioned before, Portugal and Spain had been at odds since the founding of Portugal, and after Spain’s expansion into Africa began in earnest, relations had worsened further due to issues with stopover points.

Therefore, captains from both sides tried to keep as much distance as possible when they spotted ships from the opposing country.

They didn’t want to see blood spilled over trivial matters.

However, when they inevitably had to pass close to each other, crude curses were exchanged between the crews of both ships.

But the situation continued to deteriorate at an increasingly rapid pace.

The main culprit that triggered the worsening of the situation was the African continent.

The ships exploring the west coast of Africa had two main missions.

One was to find a detour to India and Joseon, and the other was to trade with local Africans – mainly Arab chiefs or kings.

They exchanged various goods produced in Europe – tableware, weapons, and other luxury items – in return for various underground resources or slaves, which was a pretty good business.

However, with Spain joining in after Portugal, the situation became one where demand increased for a limited supply.

The atmosphere on the ‘Vendaval’ (strong wind) returning to Ceuta was gloomy.

This was because they hadn’t achieved much in this trade.

They had sailed down with the hold full of weapons, cloth, and other luxury items, but the Spanish bastards had already finished trading and left.

“I’m sorry. I had an urgent matter and couldn’t help it. Let’s make sure to have a good trade next time. I’m really sorry.”

The Arab local magnate who had broken off the deal repeated his apologies with a face that didn’t look sorry at all.

In the end, the Vendaval had to set sail for home, hoping for better luck next time.

If worst came to worst, there was always the option of landing in a nearby unexplored area and raiding indigenous tribes, but there were no such places left in the vicinity.

They had all been completely wiped out by slave-desiring local magnates, by Portugal, by Spain.

In the end, they needed to venture deeper inland, but that was too much for just the crew of the Vendaval.

“Damn it all! And I’ve got a lot of credit built up too!”

“Tell me about it!”

“The thought of my wife’s nagging is terrifying enough!”

The crew of the Vendaval complained with gloomy faces.

It had been the norm until now that when they returned from a voyage, they would receive a considerable bonus in addition to their wages. They had heard that many fellow sailors had missed out on bonuses lately, but they had dismissed it as someone else’s problem.

But now that misfortune had befallen them.

Ding ding ding!

As they were lamenting like this, the sailor watching the sea from the crow’s nest urgently rang the bell.

“Ship ahead!”

Far in the distance, a transport ship flying the Spanish coat of arms was heading north.

Navigate to Other Arcs

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

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1. is a three- or four-masted ocean-going sailing ship that was developed in the 14th to 15th centuries in Europe, most notably in Portugal and Spain.[↩]

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BBCodes

[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.
Deathbringer, emphasis on [i]*death*[/i].
I'm totally [s]~~crossed out~~[/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

[img]https://www.agine.this[/img]
[link]http://topwebfiction.com[/link].
[link=https://www.n.ot]clickbait[/link].

[quote]... me like my landlord! [/quote]

[spoiler]Spanish Inquisition! [/spoiler]
[ins]Insert[/ins] more bad puns!
[del]~~Delete~~[/del] your browser history!

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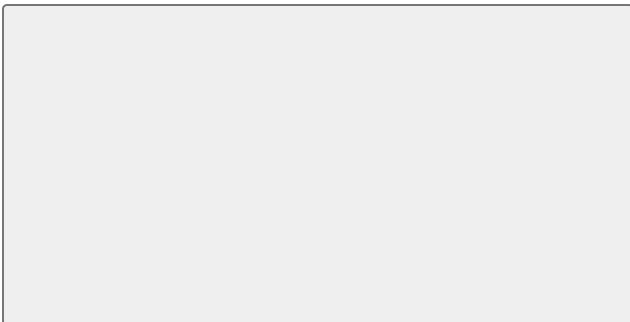
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Chapter 301 - 400

BCJ Chapter 354

Battle of Strait of Gilbratar (3)

by *BlossomTL*Black Corporation: Joseon

sailing ship, the sailors chatted amongst themselves.

“The more I look at it, the more it looks like our carrack.”

“Similar? At that point, it’s just the same damn thing!”

“Fucking Spanish thieves!”

Looking at ships that were almost identical to their own, the sailors spat out curses.

It was already widely known that Spain and Genoa were poaching craftsmen to build ships.

And this wasn’t the first time they had seen Spanish ships; it had happened many times before.

Despite this situation, the reason the sailors were cursing now was because they were returning empty-handed due to those Spanish bastards.

As they were venting their frustrations with a stream of curses, some sailors noticed something they had forgotten.

“Wait... If it has the same performance as our ship, there’s no way it should be moving that slowly. Why is it going so slowly?”

“Yeah, you’re right?”

As they watched the approaching Spanish ship with curiosity, the sailors soon realized one thing.

“Looks like they’re loaded to the gills!”

“Are they so loaded that the ship can’t pick up speed?”

“That’s why we’re empty-handed!”

The sailors were getting fired up again, but they immediately fell silent at the words of the most senior sailor.

“I’m really curious about what they’ve loaded and how much.”

“Ah!”

The sailors who let out exclamations immediately rushed to the navigator.

“Navigator!”

“Navigator!”

At the sailors’ clamor, the navigator waved both hands and shouted.

“I get it! I get it! I know what you bastards want to say, so shut up!”

After calming the sailors, the navigator immediately approached the captain.

“Captain.”

“I know what the navigator wants to say. But not now.”

“Are you saying we should just let go of those bastards who definitely intercepted our trade?”

At the navigator's words, the captain explained, pointing at the sea chart with his finger.

“Half a day more and we'll reach Santa Anna port, built by those Spanish bastards. If we're not careful, we could be the ones in trouble. Let's ambush them after they leave the port.”

The navigator's face brightened at the captain's explanation.

“That's a great idea! As expected of you, Captain!”

Seeing that the navigator, who could move the sailors, seemed to understand, the captain rechecked the ship's situation.

“Navigator, do we have enough food and water?”

“Plenty!”

“What about the amount and condition of gunpowder? The cannons?”

“They're fine! But I'll order an immediate inspection!”

“Do it now!”

“Aye!”

At the captain's order, the navigator excitedly rushed to the sailors.

Watching the navigator's back, the captain muttered softly.

“Piracy, huh...”

The situation for the officers, including the captain and navigator, was even more urgent than for the sailors.

The sailors basically had fixed wages, with some additional rewards from the profits. However, officers like the captain, first mate, and navigator

received a certain share of the profits. If the voyage ended successfully, they could pocket a large sum, but if it went wrong, they wouldn't receive a single penny. And if this happened repeatedly, they would be kicked out of their positions as captain or first mate.

Therefore, even if the sailors didn't like it, they had to take the lead in this situation.

Meanwhile, tension was high on the Spanish ship San Jose, which was sailing ahead.

“The Portuguese bastards aren't showing any unusual behavior.”

Upon hearing the first mate's report confirming the crow's nest's observation, the captain of the San Jose still wore a worried expression.

“We can't let our guard down. That fucking Arab must have had a deal with that ship. If so, they must be boiling with anger. We absolutely can't relax until we enter Santa Anna. Explain the situation properly to the crew and prepare them for battle.”

“Yes, Captain.”

Having heard the captain's orders, the first mate headed towards the crew along with the navigator.

Standing on the stern deck and watching the Vendaval chasing them, the captain's eyes were full of concern.

Around sunset, the San Jose was able to enter Santa Anna port.

From the captain to the lowest-ranking sailor, all crew members of the San Jose, having safely entered the port, let out sighs of relief.

“Phew~”

“Now I can breathe a bit easier.”

While the sailors sighed in relief, the captain and officers held a meeting with serious faces.

“Check immediately if we can rent warehouse space or a place to hold slaves. No, check if we can rent a place to hold slaves.”

“Are you going to unload the slaves here?”

The captain nodded at the navigator’s question.

“I’m still worried about those Portuguese bastards.”

“But they didn’t do anything until we entered the port, did they?”

To the first mate’s objection, the captain explained in more detail.

“Unless their eyes are knotholes, they couldn’t have ignored this Santa Anna.”

At the captain’s explanation, the officers finally nodded.

In preparation for the increasingly hostile Portugal, Santa Anna had been built with sturdy coastal walls. And on those walls, large cannons were glaring at the sea.

The captain summarized the situation.

“I’d like to unload all the cargo here and go up, but if I did that, the shipowners would hang me from the mast. So, let’s unload the bulky slaves first and move. Have the crew prepare to be ready for battle as soon as we set sail.”

“Understood.”

Two days later, the San Jose left Santa Anna port.

“Stay sharp!”

“Yes!”

“One moment of carelessness and you’ll be shark food! Stay alert!”

“Yes!”

At the shouts of the navigator and boatswain, the sailors responded with tense faces.

The captain, positioned on the stern deck much higher than the main deck, checked the situation.

“Are the cannons ready?”

“All ready!”

“I’ll say it again, don’t open the gun ports until the order is given! It’d be a disaster if the gunpowder gets wet from the waves and misfires!”

“We’re well aware!”

The first mate and navigator immediately responded to the captain’s warning.

A total of 14 cannons were positioned on the upper deck and the two decks directly below. Four on the upper deck, two on each side, and five on each side of the two decks below, totaling 14.

The sailors in charge of operating the cannons were gathered around the loaded guns. All they had to do was open the gun ports, push the muzzles out, and light the fuses when the order was given.

“Come from port or starboard, it doesn’t matter...”

Most of the sailors were hardened veterans from battles with Barbary pirates, so there were hardly any who feared combat.

As the tense moments ticked by, the sailor watching the sea from the mast rang the bell while shouting.

Ding ding ding!

“Portuguese bastards on the port side! Distance about 1 league (about 4.2km)!”

At the lookout’s cry, the captain drew his sword and shouted.

“Battle stations! Wait for my order to fire!”

Just as the San Jose was preparing for the upcoming battle, the Vendaval was also closing the distance, ready for combat.

Like the San Jose, the sailors were ready to push out the loaded cannons, with the captain’s shouts continuing behind their backs.

“Don’t fire until the order is given! We can’t give them time to retaliate!”

“Yes!”

“Gunners at the bow and stern, properly manage the fuses and powder pans of the gonnies!”

“Yes!”

At the captain’s order, the soldiers in charge of the matchlock guns responded loudly and rechecked their fuses and powder pans.

The hand cannons used by soldiers at this time had evolved one step further.

They still used a long pole tucked under the armpit instead of a stock. However, they had a primitive firing mechanism using springs and triggers, as well as aiming devices.

After giving orders to the hand cannon gunners, the captain muttered with a face full of regret.

“We should have persuaded the shipowners to get new gonnies...”

Matchlock guns imitating the breech-loading guns carried by Joseon soldiers frequenting Alexandria were just starting to appear here and there. However, matchlock guns weren't cheap items, so the argument to buy unproven equipment didn't fly.

“Half a league ahead (about 2.1km)!”

Snapped out of his thoughts by the lookout's cry, the captain shouted again.

“Don't fire until we're right up against the side of the Spanish ship! Wait for my order!”

At the captain's shout, the sailors swallowed dry saliva as they watched the enemy ship drawing closer.

As the chase continued and the distance between the two ships narrowed to just about 20 cubits (about 9m), both captains shouted simultaneously.

“Fire!”

“Shoot!”

Boom boom boom!

Ratatat!

In an instant, the space between the two ships was filled with gunpowder smoke.

The Vendaval and San Jose engaged in a fierce exchange of fire.

Boom!

Ratatat!

The surviving gunners and musketeers desperately reloaded and spewed fire at the enemy.

Every time the cannons blazed, wooden splinters and the broken bodies of unfortunate sailors fell into the sea from the opponent's ship.

“Die!”

“Kill them!”

The surviving sailors moved desperately, cursing and snarling, to kill their opponents and to survive.

Ratatat!

Bang!

“Reload! Reload!”

“Water's coming in! Water's coming in!”

“Go down and plug it!”

“Plug it! I said plug it!”

They fired cannonballs at each other to deliver a fatal blow, but the solid shot cannonballs couldn't deliver a killing blow.

In the end, in this ongoing battle, it was only the sailors who were dying.

The situation became even more intense as ships from both sides, passing nearby and discovering the battle, approached.

“Our comrades are under attack!”

“Kill them!”

As it turned into a 2:2 battle, the fight became even fiercer, ultimately ending in a draw.

The four battered ships nursed their wounds as they headed north.

As the ships arrived at Ceuta and Gibraltar, an intense diplomatic battle broke out between Spain and Portugal.

“This incident absolutely cannot be overlooked!”

“Piracy! How dare they engage in piracy!”

As both sides accused each other of provocation, ships from both countries gathered in the Strait of Gibraltar.

In this tense situation, with ships facing off across the strait and envoys from both countries engaging in verbal battles in the Vatican, things finally came to a head.

The ‘Battle of Gibraltar’ had begun.

The naval battle, which involved about 60 ships from both sides mixed together, ended with both sides losing more than 10 ships each.

As the ships returned to Ceuta and Gibraltar for repairs, both sides claimed victory.

While both sides claimed victory and demanded ‘compensation’, naval commanders and shipbuilders analyzed the battle.

The result of their analysis was simple.

‘Bigger ships with more cannons.’

The technicians reviewing their analysis results tilted their heads.

“Where have I heard this before?”

“Right?”

Navigate to Other Arcs

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BBCodes

[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.
Deathbringer, emphasis on [i]*death*[/i].
I'm totally [s]~~crossed out~~[/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

[img]https://www.agine.this[/img]
[link]http://topwebfiction.com[/link].
[link=https://www.n.ot]clickbait[/link].

[quote]... me like my landlord! [/quote]

[spoiler]Spanish Inquisition! [/spoiler]
[ins]Insert[/ins] more bad puns!
[del]~~Delete~~[/del] your browser history!

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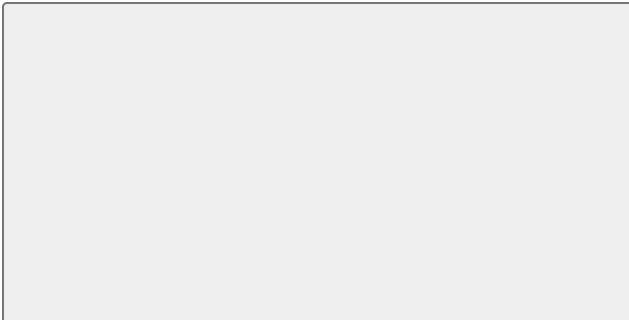
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Chapter 301 - 400

BCJ Chapter 355

People are the Problem, In Many Ways

by *BlossomTL*Black Corporation: Joseon

While shipbuilding officials in the Mediterranean region were tilting their heads and muttering, Hyang was picking his ear and mumbling in Area 51.

“Who’s talking about me? Why is my ear so itchy?”

“Your Highness.”

Hyang, who was picking his ear with her pinky, straightened his posture when he sensed the presence of a eunuch outside.

“What is it?”

“Prince Anpyeong has arrived.”

At the eunuch’s announcement, Hyang frowned deeply.

“This bastard again...”

Though he kept grumbling, Hyang soon had no choice but to allow him entry.

“Let him in.”

“Yes, Your Highness.”

A moment later, Anpyeong entered and paid his respects to Hyang.

“I greet Your Highness.”

“We just saw each other yesterday, what’s this... If it’s about the Entertainment Industry Inspection Office, I have nothing to say.”

As Hyang jumped to a conclusion, Anpyeong immediately raised his voice.

“Brother, I mean, Your Highness! The Inspection Office is indeed my divine calling!”

Hyang nodded at Anpyeong’s words.

“Considering the things you’ve done since childhood, I suppose it is.”

Anpyeong had been spanked at age four for saying he wanted to become a traveling performer, and as an adult, he had traveled around the country to see all the troupes, making King Sejong hold the back of his neck in exasperation.

At Hyang’s words, Anpyeong put strength into his voice.

“Your Highness just acknowledged it! Indeed, a person can achieve the best results when doing their divine calling! So, please allow me to transfer to the Inspection Office!”

“Personnel matters are decided by His Majesty.”

“That’s the problem! His Majesty won’t allow it! So if Your Highness could help a little...”

“Have you not considered why our Father refused?”

“...”

Anpyeong suddenly fell silent at Hyang’s question.

As soon as he heard rumors about the establishment of the ‘Entertainment Industry Inspection Office,’ Anpyeong had jumped up.

“The Inspection Office is where I should dedicate my life!”

Sejong briefly asked Anpyeong, who had come to Geunjeongjeon Hall, jumping for joy:

“Have you finished organizing the Korean music and folk songs?”

“There’s still a bit left.”

“Stay in your position until you finish that work. Once it’s done, I’ll arrange a place for you in the Entertainment Industry Inspection Office.”

“Father!”

“I won’t say it twice. It’s not allowed until you properly finish the task you’ve been given.”

Thus rejected by Sejong, Anpyeong had been pestering Hyang for days.

“If you properly finish the task you’ve been given, Father would transfer you without you even asking. When it comes to personnel matters, Father is more certain than anyone else.”

At Hyang’s words, Anpyeong presented his own compromise proposal.

“Then how about a concurrent position...”

“Hey, you bastard!”

Before Anpyeong could finish, Hyang burst out shouting.

“What was the first principle Father established when starting the reforms? No concurrent positions! And you want to break down a principle that’s just barely being established because of you alone? Get out now! If you really

want to move to the Inspection Office, finish your assigned task as quickly and properly as possible!”

“Yes, yes!”

“Are you not leaving right now? I’ll...!”

“I’m going!”

Pressed by Hyang’s intensity, Anpyeong left the room as he answered.

Watching Anpyeong’s retreating figure, running away as if his tail was on fire, Hyang sighed deeply and grumbled.

“Sigh~ We’re already in a stagnant period because we’re so short on people...”

As Hyang said, the first principle Sejong established when starting the reforms was ‘no concurrent positions.’

Until then, concurrent positions had been the norm for government officials, especially those of senior rank. Even junior officials often handled work from multiple departments simultaneously due to the shortage of people.

This was also related to Joseon’s founding ideology.

‘If the king follows the way of the sages and realizes benevolent governance, a large government is unnecessary. The king’s virtue will shine in all directions, so the people will follow that virtue and live righteously and beautifully. If disputes arise among the people, learned and virtuous scholars will educate them.’

After removing the elder ministers through the Great Purge, Sejong immediately began to expand the size of the government.

“When one person handles work in multiple fields, progress is slow and lacks depth.”

Under this justification, Sejong began prohibiting concurrent positions and increasing personnel.

Moreover, the incident of document forgery and embezzlement by Hwang Hui’s sons provided further justification for the ban on concurrent positions.

Of course, for smooth governance, there had to be people who could oversee the overall framework, coordinate policies, and advise the king, and senior officials took on this role.

However, as the size of the government greatly increased, the first problem to solve was the shortage of talented individuals.

Although they revised the civil service examination system to broaden access and attract more talented individuals, the workload Sejong was delegating easily surpassed the supply.

As the situation became like this, the pace of reforms began to slow down little by little. Therefore, the thing ministers, prime ministers, and Sejong worried about most was adjusting the priority of policies.

And all sorts of methods were employed to secure talented individuals.

Among these methods, the most useful was the ‘petition.’

Whenever Sejong implemented a radical policy, petitions would be submitted. And every time these petitions came in, officials became rather excited.

“We need to catch a big fish this time...”

“It’s about statecraft, so it should be good, right?”

Interestingly, even among those submitting petitions, there seemed to be areas of expertise. The volume of petitions varied depending on which field Sejong's radical policy was related to.

And among those who had been in seclusion and submitted petitions out of indignation, officials immediately rushed to those who presented useful opinions, carrying Sejong's royal command.

“Your opinion is pretty good. Why don't you come and see how different theory and practice are!”

As people steadily entered official positions through petitions, some began to aim for official positions through petitions.

Among those who submitted petitions, there were some who genuinely had exceptional insights but were in seclusion for various reasons. However, there were also many who tried to use tricks.

Those who were summoned because their petition content was good engaged in debates with Sejong in front of the ministers at Geunjeongjeon Hall. Observing the debate, Sejong and the ministers took note of the petitioner's character and abilities, and soon placed them in an appropriate department. And many of those who entered this way started at a slightly higher position than those who entered through the lower civil service examination. Seeing this, people who tried to use tricks appeared.

“One well-written petition is better than the lower civil service exam!”

People began to use petitions for faster promotion than others.

When talent was recruited through petitions, the government announced the content of the petition nationwide through the official gazette.

“We hope you will ponder this content and compare it with the policies implemented by the government to come up with better opinions.”

Although it was published with good intentions, some people began to abuse it.

They carefully copied the petitions written in the gazette, and then submitted petition letters when new policies in similar fields were announced in the future. They didn't just copy one petition, but combined the contents of several petitions to create a plausible one.

Because the volume of petitions submitted each year was enormous, these recombined petitions easily passed through the officials' filters.

However, what these tricksters didn't consider was that the final gatekeeper was Sejong, and that Hyang, second to none in memory, was by his side.

“Doesn't this seem familiar?”

“It seems to be a mix of several.”

With Hyang's confirmation added, Sejong wrote the answer in red and returned it to the officials.

‘Re-examination required.’

The moment a petition came back with this written on it, hell unfolded for the officials. They had to go through all the petitions published in the gazette for the past few years.

“This fucking bastard! Just wait till I catch you!”

Officials who were unexpectedly saddled with this task had to engage in ‘furious searching.’

And those caught ‘copy-pasting’ were severely punished.

‘Banned from official positions and submitting petitions for 10 years.’

And Hyang, upon receiving a report of the situation, chuckled and muttered.

“As expected of the ‘nation of tricks’...”

However, even in this situation where ‘copy-pasting’ was prohibited, there were some who actually advanced their careers through ‘copy-pasting.’

-Looking at the petition published in the gazette on ** month, ** year... (omitted)... However, the content of the petition published in the gazette on ## month, ## year regarding the same policy... (omitted)... As shown, the contents of these two selected petitions conflict, and the original intention of the policy... (omitted).

Officials who saw petition letters that openly cited sources and made point-by-point arguments all exclaimed in admiration.

“That’s innovative!”

And Sejong, upon seeing such a petition, immediately concluded:

“This is exactly the kind of person we need in a position to review and coordinate policies implemented so far. Bring him here immediately!”

“We obey your command!”

Although they used all sorts of methods like this to gather talented individuals, it became increasingly difficult to find talent.

The rate at which talented individuals were leaving the stagnant talent pool far exceeded the rate at which they were being supplied.

As a result, whenever Sejong discussed state affairs with Hyang, he always complained about this problem.

“People are all Joseon has, yet how can there be such a lack of talent?”

“There must still be many in seclusion.”

At Hyang’s answer, Sejong let out a long sigh.

“Sigh~ Those still in seclusion should be considered as having no intention of entering official service, shouldn’t they? Shouldn’t they be seen as no different from those ruthless ones who rebelled in the year of Giyu?”

“Well, that could be the case.”

Hyang responded with a bitter smile to Sejong’s complaint.

One of the biggest causes of the current talent shortage was the Giyu Rebellion. Not only was the number of scholars who participated in the rebellion problematic, but the number of scholars who died for refusing to participate or for trying to stop it was also enormous.

In simple terms, the Giyu Rebellion was a critical event that resulted in the loss of a significant portion of properly educated human resources.

“It will still take some more time for talent to emerge from the Commoner’s School and the Middle School...”

“Yes. It’s a bit regrettable, but it can’t be helped.”

Hyang nodded at Sejong’s lament. Looking at Hyang, Sejong continued.

“Scholars came from the Western Regions, but you took them all...”

“Hahaha! They’re only useful for mathematics and natural sciences, aren’t they? And although they can communicate to some extent verbally, they’re still useless when it comes to writing.”

At Hyang’s answer, Sejong stroked his beard and muttered.

“Writing is indeed the problem...”

Hyang’s eyes sparkled at Sejong’s muttering.

‘The tide has come in! Let’s row!’

“Father, honestly speaking, why wouldn’t there be people in this Joseon? Even looking at the example of the ‘Straight Talk on Farming,’ weren’t

there many wise people?”

“That’s true.”

Sejong nodded at Hyang’s words.

In the early stages of the reforms, Sejong had ordered officials to create an agricultural manual.

“The Ming’s agricultural manuals are tailored to the climate of the Central Plains, so they don’t suit us well! Find wisdom from elderly farmers in each province and record it!”

That’s how the ‘Straight Talk on Farming’ came to be after years of effort.

And this ‘Straight Talk on Farming’ soon became an essential book that had to be in every rural village across Joseon.

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[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.

Deathbringer, emphasis on [i]death[/i].

I'm totally [s]~~crossed-out~~[/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

[img]https://www.agine.this[/img]

[link]http://topwebfiction.com[/link].

[link=https://www.n.ot]clickbait[/link].

[quote]... me like my landlord![/quote]

[spoiler]Spanish Inquisition![/spoiler]

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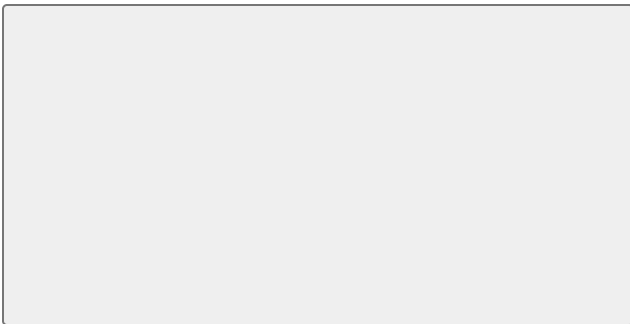
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Chapter 301 - 400

BCJ Chapter 356

People are the Problem, In Many Ways (2)

by *BlossomTLBlack Corporation: Joseon*

The ‘Straight Talk on Farming’ didn’t become essential reading only in Joseon’s rural areas.

Hearing the rumors, envoys from various domains in Japan rushed to Joseon.

In Japan’s situation, where they hadn’t strayed far from the agricultural techniques passed down from the old Three Kingdoms period on the Korean peninsula, the ‘Straight Talk on Farming’ that Joseon began to distribute was a textbook of advanced farming methods that had to be introduced.

Citing the example of the ‘Straight Talk on Farming,’ Hyang continued speaking.

“I don’t think there’s a lack of people in Joseon right now. It’s not that there aren’t people, but that those who have learned to write are rare. Ah! To explain this part again, there are many who can read sentences. If we include those who can read characters even sporadically, I can guarantee that those who don’t know characters in Joseon are extremely few. The problem is...”

“The problem is that those who can write sentences are extremely limited. Sigh~”

Interrupting Hyang’s words and summarizing the situation, Sejong let out a long sigh.

As Sejong and Hyang said, among those living in Joseon, the number of people unable to read and understand text was very small.

As mentioned before, even the so-called ‘ignorant’ farmers could read several hundred Chinese characters necessary for daily life.

This was to read the official gazettes or various proclamations posted on the walls of government offices, or to check the contents of debt certificates when borrowing goods and to write their own names on them.

The problem was writing. Among those who could read, the number of people who could compose sentences even in Idu script dropped sharply. If we narrow the range to those who could write sentences according to grammar and etiquette, it shrank drastically to a very small number of scholars.

“Sigh~ In this situation, can we truly understand the people’s sentiments? No, even putting that aside, can we find proper talent?”

Hyang responded to Sejong’s complaint.

“In about 2-3 years, those educated in the Commoner’s School will emerge, won’t that quench our thirst to some extent?”

However, Sejong’s face didn’t brighten much.

“It seems like it will only make us more thirsty rather than quenching our thirst. The characters are the problem, the characters... Instead of helping

talented individuals express their intentions correctly, it's become a situation where it's holding them back..."

'Yes! Accurate situation awareness! Let's add just a bit more MSG here!'

Inwardly cheering, Hyang suggested to Sejong.

"Then, why don't we create our own characters for Joseon? Not something that requires knowledge of Chinese characters like Idu, but characters that can be easily written even without knowing Chinese characters."

'We're already on a new historical path anyway! Don't make it later, make it now! If you create it now when you're in your prime, I'll have less trouble later!'

Whether knowing Hyang's thoughts or not, Sejong slightly shook his head.

"Creating our own characters... The intention is truly good. But it's not an easy task."

"The brilliant scholars of Hall of Worthies..."

Hyang, who was about to mention 'Hall of Worthies,' quickly closed his mouth. As soon as the word Hall of Worthies came out, Sejong's face turned fierce.

"Don't even mention those stubborn fools!"

As Sejong's reforms progressed and Hyang established research institutes, the nature of Hall of Worthies also changed significantly.

Hall of Worthies, which initially was responsible for advising the king and academic research, changed its character to a specialized policy research institution as the reforms progressed.

Their work changed, or rather, was limited to analyzing policies proposed by the king and ministers and presenting improvement plans, or planning

appropriate policies based on materials submitted by each department.

However, as things progressed this way, resistance from the Hall of Worthies scholars began to emerge.

“It’s true that the physics research conducted in Area 51 and the research institute is important! However, studying the writings of sages, contemplating them, and clarifying morality is also important!”

“Most of the policies currently implemented by the court deviate from Confucian academic traditions! These policies must be abolished immediately and Confucian academic traditions must be preserved! Practical studies are important, but preserving and studying ancient traditions is even more important!”

The Hall of Worthies scholars who irritated Sejong by advocating for a return to the past went a step further.

“For the people to be comfortable, their food, clothing, and shelter must be stable! For this, we must implement equal distribution of wealth!”

As the argument for equal distribution of wealth emerged again, Sejong pointed out the facts to the Hall of Worthies scholars.

“It was already decided that equal distribution of wealth is unrealistic and empty. So why are you advocating for it again?”

“Practical difficulties are naturally encountered in the process of realizing theory! Although there may be sacrifices, if we continue to implement it, it will eventually take root properly! We must not fear sacrifice!”

At the words of the Hall of Worthies scholars, Sejong became greatly angered.

“Saying not to fear sacrifice is nothing but empty talk! Look at reality when you speak!”

Greatly angered, Sejong conducted a large-scale personnel reshuffle in the year of Sinhae (13th year of Sejong’s reign, 1431) and assigned Hall of

Worthies scholars to practical positions.

However, the Hall of Worthies scholars strongly resisted this decision of Sejong's.

“This is tyranny that blocks the path of speech!”

Most of the Hall of Worthies scholars who resisted like this submitted letters of resignation.

“This is a big problem!”

“Indeed it is!”

Surprised by the mass resignation of Hall of Worthies scholars, the ministers busily went back and forth between Sejong and the scholars, trying to calm the situation.

“Your Majesty, they are still young. It's something they did unable to overcome their youthful passion, they will soon reflect on their actions. Please give them some time.”

“Listen, you all! Why are you so hasty? Isn't it good to refine your theories while seeing practical matters?”

The ministers went back and forth busily, but Sejong and the Hall of Worthies scholars remained at a standstill.

“Youthful passion? What they've done is trying to coerce me based on their meager knowledge!”

“Hmph! I cannot just overlook such tyranny!”

“Watch your mouth! Have you forgotten whose bloodline His Majesty carries?”

In the end, Sejong approved all the resignation letters submitted by the scholars. And then he issued a royal command.

“Those whose resignations have been processed this time will never be allowed to enter official service again, and they are also forbidden from submitting petitions for life! This measure applies to their children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren as well!”

If the strict regulations related to scholars that had been implemented through the reforms and the Giyu Rebellion were applied, they would not be called scholars for at least 100 years.

After this commotion, Hall of Worthies completely established itself as a ‘specialized policy research institution.’ The law was even changed so that those assigned to the Hall of Worthies were not selected from among those who passed the highest level of the civil service examination, but rather those who had at least 10 years of practical experience.

And another aftershock was a wave of divorces that hit the families of the scholars.

Feeling that Sejong’s mood had turned sour over the Hall of Worthies issue, Hyang hurried to defuse the situation.

“Yes. Even without those stubborn fools, there are many talented individuals in the court. So, if Father makes up his mind, you will find excellent talent.”

At Hyang’s words, Sejong stared at him blankly.

“I heard you’re having a lot of trouble with document preparation with the scholars from the Western Regions. Is that why?”

At Sejong’s question, Hyang gave a bitter smile and nodded slightly.

The early appearance of Hunmin Jeongeum^[1] was also what Hyang wanted. Initially, it was just because he found it annoying to write documents in

Chinese characters. But now, it was for his hobbies.

“Shit! Is my job from clock-in to clock-out just translating documents?”

Translating while grinding his teeth at the mountain of Latin documents piled up in the Area 51 office was Hyang’s daily routine these days.

“For a peaceful life of indulgence in my interests, Hangul is absolutely necessary!”

Seeing Hyang like this, Sejong smiled and continued speaking.

“I see. They have now become people of Joseon, so we should solve their difficulties too. Hmm... But even if there’s a lot of talent in the court, there’s so much work being done in the court now that we can’t easily spare anyone. Creating characters isn’t something that can be done by one or two people’s efforts, so it’s impossible for me alone. Would you help me a bit?”

“Pardon?”

“Your brilliance has been famous since you were young, hasn’t it? I think we could achieve good results if you help. What do you say? Will you help this father of yours?”

At Sejong’s request disguised as an order, Hyang finally had to nod.

“If my meager abilities can be of help, I will do my best.”

At Hyang’s answer, Sejong’s face brightened greatly.

“Thank you! Thank you!”

After ending this secret talk between father and son, Hyang muttered softly as he left.

“No matter how I think about it, I feel like I’ve been tricked. Of course... I had heard theories that the royal family was involved... But still, I can’t

shake the feeling that I've been tricked.”

Unable to shake off the feeling that he had been tricked, Hyang soon came to a conclusion.

“Fuck it! Might as well do it now that it's come to this! I'll carve my name firmly in history!”

Meanwhile, inside Gangnyeongjeon Hall, Sejong looked towards Eastern Palace with a satisfied face.

“I've finally caught a big fish. Let's see... The parts I've organized and researched so far...”

However, as Hyang and Sejong worried, Joseon was now entering a period of stagnation.

Not only the court but also the common people were moving busily, the economic scale was growing day by day, and people's pockets were becoming more comfortable, but stagnation was stagnation.

The court was moving busily, but it was overwhelmed just maintaining and improving existing policies. At best, only 2-3 out of 10 new policies or systems were being implemented.

The same was true for the people. Those working in the rapidly growing commerce and industry sectors were all screaming the same thing.

“We don't have enough people to work!”

As this problem was unavoidable, Sejong and his ministers put their heads together.

“What exactly is the current population of our Joseon?”

At Sejong's question, Minister of General Affairs Heo Jo immediately answered.

“According to last year's population survey, it exceeded 7.5 million.”

“Does that include slaves?”

“Yes.”

At Heo Jo's answer, Sejong stroked his beard.

“Then the actual number of free people is about 6.8 million?”

“That's correct.”

As taxes were being imposed on slaves, the number of private slaves was gradually decreasing. Most of the remaining 700,000 or so slaves were government slaves, and most of them were those serving labor sentences in mines for serious crimes.

“6.8 million isn't a small number, so why...”

To Lee Maeng-gyun's point, Heo Jo immediately responded.

“Of that population, 800,000 are Jurchen who have submitted to us, and nearly 1.8 million are children under 7 years old.”

“Ah...”

“Oh no...”

At Heo Jo's answer, all the ministers clicked their tongues.

Through smallpox vaccination and the semi-forced implementation of various hygiene policies, the survival rate of children had greatly increased.

As a result, Joseon's population had grown significantly, but this was just a numbers game.

Even if the population increased, it wasn't really an increase until those children grew up and could pull their own weight.

Rather, because of the rapidly increasing number of children, the burden on adults had increased.

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1. Hunmin Jeongeum is a 15th-century manuscript that introduced the Korean script Hangeul.[↔]

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[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.

Deathbringer, emphasis on [i]*death*[/i].

I'm totally [s]~~crossed out~~[/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

[img][/img]

[link]<http://topwebfiction.com>[/link].

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[quote]... me like my landlord! [/quote]

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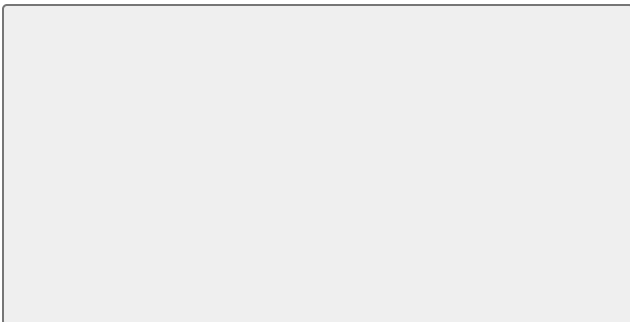
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Chapter 301 - 400

BCJ Chapter 357

People are the Problem, In Many Ways (3)

by *BlossomTLBlack Corporation: Joseon*

After briefly calculating based on Heo Jo's explanation, Lee Maeng-gyun stepped forward and asked a question.

“Hmm... Minister Heo, don't the numbers seem a bit off? 1.8 million out of 6.8 million are under 7 years old... People aren't cows, are they? Even cows that can give birth after about two years... If we subtract 1.8 million from 6.8 million, it's 5 million, and even if all 5 million paired up... Having children isn't something that happens just because you want it to...”

To Lee Maeng-gyun's roundabout way of asking if there was some error, Heo Jo immediately responded.

“Why are you calculating with 5 million? We need to calculate properly. It's not like slaves can't have children, and are you saying the Jurchens give birth to foals instead of people?”

“...”

At Heo Jo's point, Lee Maeng-gyun closed his mouth. Looking at Lee Maeng-gyun, Heo Jo continued.

“There's a lot of unpleasant history in between, but in any case, the Jurchens have lived like brothers since the ancient Three Han period.

They've decided to submit and live as Joseon people, so shouldn't we count them as Joseon people?"

At Heo Jo's words, Sejong concluded.

"The Minister of General Affairs is right. They've come into the embrace of our Joseon and become our people, so how could we treat them differently? We must enable them to live comfortably and allow them to live using their innate qualities."

At Sejong's decision, the ministers all bowed their heads and responded.

"Your Majesty is so benevolent, the future of our Joseon is truly bright!"

The court historian who recorded all this added a note afterward:

-Thus, when His Majesty spoke, all the ministers, great and small, were in awe and praised His Majesty's benevolence.

The historian says:

It's been almost 10 years since the Jurchens submitted, and the number of slaves is gradually decreasing.

I think that in the future, only those who have committed high treason and those implicated with them will remain as slaves, becoming a kind of punishment.

As the saying goes, 'There is no person below a person, and no person above a person,' slaves are also people, so it's extremely unjust to despise them.

Above all, the most important thing is that there aren't enough people! In a situation where we're already short-handed and wailing, is this the time to be picky about origins?

Those who say such carefree things should all be dragged to the Office of Records and... (omitted).

The meeting that continued afterward proceeded with discussions on solutions to various problems caused by the shortage of talent.

The first to speak was, of course, the Minister of General Affairs, Heo Jo.

“First, we need to prioritize the policies and projects that are currently in progress or about to start.”

“Are you talking about the ‘selection and concentration’ that the Crown Prince often mentions?”

“That’s correct.”

At Heo Jo’s answer, Sejong, who had been stroking his beard in deep thought, came to a conclusion.

“Each and every policy and project is incomparably important, but given the situation, we have no choice. Let’s think about it along those lines.”

Following Sejong’s decision, the ministers began a fierce verbal battle over the policies and projects they had been pursuing and were about to start.

Kim Jeom went crazy in this verbal battle.

“We must pay special attention to policies related to statecraft! If even a little goes wrong, it will cause big problems for the people’s lives and the nation’s finances! Especially, don’t even think about touching anything related to the Entertainment Industry Inspection Office! Keep in mind that even now, there are not just one or two people squandering their family fortunes on gambling!”

At Kim Jeom’s words, Jo Gye-saeng grumbled.

“It’s not about the people’s problems, but about the wealth you can suck out of there, isn’t it?”

“So what? Do you think the salary you receive just falls from the sky?”

At Kim Jeom's rebuke, Jo Gye-saeng immediately shut his mouth. But inwardly, he was heaping a barrelful of curses on Kim Jeom.

'Damn! How can a person be so self-centered!'

'People change!'

'What were his parents thinking when they gave birth to such a son...?'

'This is why those who enter through nepotism are no good!'

Because Sejong had strictly forbidden personal attacks, the ministers could not speak outwardly but were inwardly cursing Kim Jeom in every way possible, starting with inquiring about the well-being of his parents.

The process of adjusting the priorities of various policies and coordinating personnel assignments continued for more than two weeks.

Most of the policies that had been implemented so far were born out of strong necessity. And as the policies progressed and showed visible results, it was inevitable that there would be some pain.

Therefore, the verbal battles were fierce, and for the first time in a while, there were even ministers who dared to oppose Sejong.

As a result, the historical records written by court historians amounted to at least three volumes per day, and several pots of tea had to be prepared for the ministers whose throats dried up in between.

Amidst such fierce verbal battles, the outline began to take shape gradually.

"First, let's have the General Affairs Department maintain its current pace. And I want the Ministry of Finance to create a list of candidates for projects that can be handed over to the private sector among the projects currently being carried out by the government and newly implemented projects."

"We obey your command."

Hearing the responses of Kim Jeom and Heo Jo, Sejong moved on to the next agenda.

“The problem is with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of National Defense. They need more and more personnel continuously, have you thought about ways to supply these personnel?”

With the rising birth rate, more and more children were entering the Commoner’s School. As a result, there was an additional demand for teachers to educate them.

To Sejong’s question, Jo Gye-saeng immediately answered.

“First, we will temporarily recruit retired officials with high reputations, and we will add women with high learning and virtue as teachers.”

“There will be many rambunctious children at the prime age for learning, will women be able to control these children?”

“That’s why we thought of this: if there are children who are too unruly to control, we will officially summon their parents to the school.”

At Jo Gye-saeng’s answer, Sejong unconsciously muttered.

“If we’re not careful, there will be wailing.”

At Sejong’s muttering, the ministers inwardly added.

‘Just wailing? If we’re not careful, there will be a bloodbath.’

To ‘officially’ summon meant a warning that they would spread rumors all over the neighborhood. In current Joseon, this was a more certain and harsh honorary punishment than simply using the rod.

Hyang, who attended the meeting worried that sparks might fly to Area 51 and the research institute, threw a question at Jo Gye-saeng.

“But when teachers and parents meet like that, there could be scandalous rumors. Do you have a solution?”

‘Even in the 21st century, when teachers and parents met, rumors about bribes circulated, right?’

To Hyang’s question, recalling memories of the 21st century, Jo Gye-saeng immediately answered.

“Yes. Honestly, since such things could happen, we’ve thought about it. First, before summoning the parents, four or more teachers will have an official discussion to decide whether to do so and record it. Then, when summoning the parents, three or more teachers will be present, and we will record the entire process and submit a report.”

“I see. That’s all.”

At Jo Gye-saeng’s answer, Hyang nodded and stepped back.

‘Indeed, Joseon, the country of records!’

“The Ministry of Education’s opinion seems fine. Has the Ministry of National Defense thought of any measures?”

To Sejong’s question, Jo Mal-saeng immediately answered.

“After the administrators of the Ministry of National Defense and the commanders of the Joint Chiefs of Staff put their heads together, the first option is to reduce the ratio of bayonet soldiers and increase the ratio of gunners and artillery soldiers.

The second option is to select talented individuals from among the submitted Jurchens and bring them into the military.”

“Do you mean to increase the cavalry?”

To Sejong’s question, Jo Mal-saeng added.

“No, it’s the navy.”

At Jo Mal-saeng's answer, Lee Maeng-gyun interrupted.

“Do you think the Jurchens know how to operate ships? It's good to fill the manpower, but won't it consume a lot of time and cost in the training process?”

The ministers nodded at Lee Maeng-gyun's question. Instead of Jo Mal-saeng, Maeng Sa-seong stepped forward to answer Lee Maeng-gyun's question.

“Looking at the records of the previous dynasty, there are many records of Jurchens engaging in piracy.”

“Are you saying the Jurchens were pirates?”

To Lee Maeng-gyun's incredulous reaction, Jo Mal-saeng added.

“There are records that even the Japanese, famous for their Wokou pirates, trembled at them.”

Records in the Goryeo History and Goryeo History Abridged stated that from the 11th to the early 12th century, Jurchens boarded ships and plundered the east coast regions of the Korean Peninsula.

At this time, Jurchens who departed from Hamhung, which was Jurchen territory, advanced as far as Gyeongju to plunder. (Note 1)

These Jurchen pirate attacks extended their range even to Japan.

During the Heian period, there was an incident where Jurchen pirates invaded and plundered Iki, Tsushima, and Chikuzen.

In Japan, this was called the “Toi Invasion” or “Toi Incursion.”

Records remained that at the time, Jurchen pirates used tactics of loading horses onto ships, landing, immediately transforming into cavalry, quickly plundering inland areas, and retreating. (Note 2)

“Jurchens... That’s fine. Try implementing it.”

“We obey your command! We will do our best!”

As soon as Sejong’s decision was made, Jo Mal-saeng immediately bowed his head and answered.

Watching this scene from the side, Heo Jo presented an opinion to Sejong.

“Your Majesty, what do you think about mobilizing Japanese people for administrative work?”

“Mobilize Japanese people for administrative work?”

“Yes.”

At Heo Jo’s words, Sejong, who had been pondering for a moment, asked Heo Jo again.

“Do you mean to use the Japanese people sent by the Ouchi clan?”

“That’s correct.”

Ouchi, who had been keeping an eye on Joseon’s prosperity, had sent envoys to Joseon.

– *We want to create educational institutions like the Commoner’s School in Ouchi’s domain, so please send teachers.*

After discussing the request brought by the envoys, Sejong and the ministers delivered the following answer to Ouchi:

– *Due to diplomatic relations with the shogunate, we cannot dispatch teachers without the shogunate’s permission. However, we are willing to*

accept up to 100 people who have at least learned Elementary Learning and mastered the Korean language, and educate them.

Afterward, envoys busily went back and forth between Ouchi and Joseon for coordination. After such coordination, the following matters were decided:

– At minimum, know the Thousand Character Classic. Even better if they’ve learned Elementary Learning.

– Must be able to converse in Korean. This is essential.

– The number of people that can be taught at one time should not exceed 120.

The Japanese people Heo Jo mentioned were these 120 Japanese from Ouchi who were currently studying in Hanseong.

At Heo Jo’s suggestion, Sejong immediately asked about their achievements.

“Are they usable?”

“It seems they will be capable of lower-level practical work in about 2-3 years.”

“Hmm...”

Sejong, who had been pondering for a moment while stroking his beard, turned to Lee Maeng-gyun.

“It’s somewhat tempting, but won’t there be problems with Lord Ouchi?”

To Sejong’s question, Lee Maeng-gyun immediately answered.

“If we bring them in unconditionally and indefinitely, there might be problems, but if we set an appropriate period, say about 5 years, it should be

fine. If we say we'll 'teach them practical work and send them back,' Lord Ouchi probably won't dislike it."

"Hmm..."

After pondering for a moment, Sejong soon came to a conclusion.

"Send an envoy to Lord Ouchi."

"We obey your command!"

Note 1) <http://www.atlasnews.co.kr/news/articleView.html?idxno=409>

Note 2) https://ko.wikipedia.org/wiki/Toi_Invasion

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[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.

Deathbringer, emphasis on [i]death[/i].

I'm totally [s]~~crossed-out~~[/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

[img]https://www.agine.this[/img]

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[quote]... me like my landlord![/quote]

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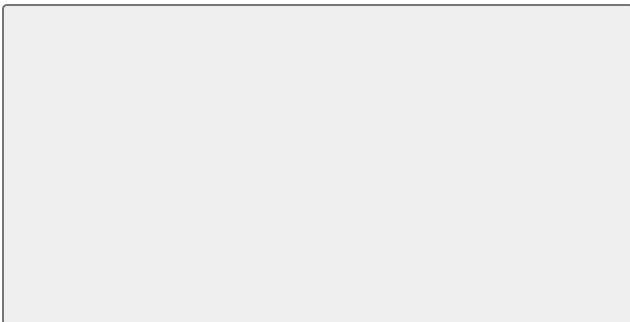
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Chapter 301 - 400

BCJ Chapter 358

People are the Problem, In Many Ways (4)

by *BlossomTL*Black Corporation: Joseon

After deciding on the plan to educate Japanese exchange students and use them as apprentice officials, Sejong, who had been observing the situation, proposed a radical measure.

“What about appointing women as officials?”

At Sejong’s proposal, Lee Jik asked Sejong with an expression that seemed to say, ‘Surely not?’

“Are you talking about formal officials, not teachers?”

“That’s right.”

At Sejong’s answer, the ministers’ faces turned pale.⁵

It was the early Joseon period, which guaranteed stronger women’s rights both absolutely and relatively compared to the mid and late Joseon periods. However, it fell short compared to the previous Goryeo dynasty, and women’s rights had weakened enormously compared to the ancient Three Kingdoms period.

Therefore, the ministers immediately expressed negative opinions.

“Women’s learning is shallow...”

“Those women with shallow learning are teaching children in the Commoner’s School.”

“Aren’t women inherently petty and lack the capacity to discuss state affairs?”

“There was Wu Zetian who led the country during the period called ‘Wu Zhou’s Rule,’ though opinions are divided on her.”

“Wu Zetian is a bit...”

“Fine. Let’s say Wu Zetian was extreme and think about this. No matter how good the seed, if the field is bad, you can’t get a good harvest. Can talented individuals be born if the mother’s innate qualities are poor?”

“That’s true, but...”

“Half the world is women, do you think it’s right that talent only comes from men?”

“...”

As Sejong’s words were reasonable, the ministers raised objections in a different direction.

“Even now, government officials work overtime and night duties as if it’s their daily bread. No head of household would like his wife or daughter wandering the streets late at night or spending the night outside.”

“Even now, women are walking the streets of Hanseong at night. Legally, at that.”

“...”

At Sejong’s point, the ministers had to close their mouths.

Joseon had legally designated a nighttime curfew.

The Annals of King Taejong's first year, in May, had the following record:

– Those who violate the curfew after the third point of the first watch and before the third point of the fifth watch shall all be arrested.

In simple terms, it prohibited movement from 8 PM to 4:30 AM.

However, as this caused tremendous damage to people's lives, the curfew hours gradually decreased.

In the history before Hyang's intervention, during King Sejo's era, the nighttime curfew was relaxed to the second to fourth watches – from 10 PM to 3 AM – and was finalized in the Great Code of Administration as from after the second watch to before the fifth watch.

Interestingly, those subject to this nighttime curfew were limited to men – a gender-differentiated curfew system.

Joseon, which adopted Neo-Confucianism as its national ideology, applied strict gender segregation laws.

According to these laws, women of the nobility and merchant classes could only stay at home during the day and go out at night, while men couldn't go outside at night. (Note 1)

That's why the ministers fell silent at Sejong's words.

After refuting the ministers' objections, Sejong dangled the bait.

“Let's think about it the other way around. Isn't it because we're short on people that officials are working overtime and night duties as if it's their daily bread? But if we have enough personnel, won't there be no need for overtime and night duties? Then women won't have to work late or spend nights outside, right?”

“That's true, but...”

Although logically overwhelmed by Sejong's words, the ministers continued to oppose.

“Your Majesty's intention is lofty and beautiful, but there will be strong resistance.”

At Maeng Sa-seong's point, Sejong scoffed.

“Hmph! If they don't like seeing women wearing official hats, tell them to sit at home and take the civil service exam instead of just quoting Confucius and Mencius! Don't just sit at home with buttocks heavier than those of stone Buddhas in mountain temples! We can't even do our work properly because we're short on people, what nonsense are you talking! Don't you all know the current situation of the court! Right now, I feel like dragging in even those monks worshipping Buddha in the temples. But I'm holding back for fear of someone like the evil monk Sin Don from the end of the previous dynasty emerging!”

Sejong's last words were a strong warning.

‘Should I open the way for women? Or should I give power back to the monks? Choose.’

In the end, the ministers had to make a choice.

“We will contemplate methods to carry out Your Majesty's intentions.”

“I look forward to it. This is an important period to prepare for 10 years from now. Although it's not voluntary, since it's come to this, think of it as catching our breath. Don't forget that we must forge ahead even more from 10 years on, building our foundations as if catching our urgent breath.”

At Sejong's admonition, the ministers bowed their heads and answered.

“We will engrave it in our bones and hearts.”

The court historian who recorded all this added:

-Thus, when His Majesty admonished, the ministers answered that they would engrave it in their bones and hearts.

The historian says:

It's true that there's a shortage of people to work in this court right now. However, appointing women to official positions is something that should be decided only after careful consideration many times over.

This situation has come about, as His Majesty said, because of those who waste their time sitting idle at home.

If their insight is so bright, it's natural that they should enter official service, but they're petty individuals who just move their mouths while holed up in their rooms.

Right now, they should all be thrown into the Office of Records...

“What is the historian writing so diligently? My words ended a while ago.”

The historian who was writing, criticizing the ‘scholars who just make noise while holed up in their rooms,’ immediately bowed his head at Sejong’s words.

“I-I’m sorry.”

“A historian’s job is to record the affairs of the court, not to record private feelings. It seems the historians have been too leisurely lately. It wouldn’t be bad to adjust the personnel allocation.”

“Please show mercy!”

At Sejong’s words, the historian with a tearful face immediately bowed his head.

Seeing this, another historian busily moved his brush.

-Thus, when His Majesty mentioned personnel adjustment, the historian who became the subject quickly begged for forgiveness.

The historian says:

Threatening someone with their weaknesses is not befitting of a great person.

How could His Majesty do something like a petty person...

“Are you now doing something else too? Perhaps we should adjust the personnel...”

“Please spare us!”

The two historians with tearful faces had to keep bowing their heads.

Watching this scene from the side, Hyang smiled bitterly and muttered inwardly.

‘Father won’t be getting any good words from the historians. Even with cross-verification, it’ll be full of criticism.’

During the Joseon Dynasty, whenever the king and ministers discussed state affairs, two historians always attended.

This was not only to prevent interruptions in recording due to toilet issues or other urgent situations but also to prevent malicious manipulation.

Two historians recorded the same event so that when compiling the Annals later, they could cross-verify.

Thus, after the tumultuous meeting ended, the ministers and Hyang who were in Geunjeongjeon Hall came out.

Hyang, who was heading towards the Crown Prince’s Palace, stopped walking and looked at Geunjeongjeon Hall.

“Advancing women is one thing, but how are you going to solve the problems of parental leave and career breaks...”

Hyang, who was worrying about the solution to a problem that was an important controversy even in the 21st century, burst into laughter.

“Hah! Oh my, oh my...”

‘I forgot! What kind of person he is...’

Sejong was the first to institutionalize maternity leave for female government slaves and paternity leave for their husbands.

As Hyang was chuckling and turning around, he suddenly turned back to look at Geunjeongjeon Hall again.

“Wait, something’s strange...”

“Your Highness?”

“Ah, it’s nothing. Let’s go.”

At the words of the eunuch who was accompanying him, Hyang hurriedly waved his hand and turned around, but the smile had disappeared from his face.

‘Why? He opened the doors even to women? Why? If he was so worried about the shortage of talent, wouldn’t it have been easier to abolish slavery? There would have been less resistance than opening up to women? Why?’

Hyang was heading towards the Crown Prince’s Palace, tilting his head at the sudden curiosity.

The next day, Lee Jik visited Maeng Sa-seong’s house.

Thanks to it being an official holiday set by law, Lee Jik’s face was full of relaxation he hadn’t seen in a long time.

Hearing of Lee Jik's visit, Maeng Sa-seong came out to the yard to welcome him.

“How did you come to this humble place on such a precious holiday?”

“I was at home, but I sensed they wanted me to pay for medicine...”

At Lee Jik's joke, Maeng Sa-seong burst into laughter.

“Hahaha! You're still in good harmony! Please drink!”

As they settled in the guest room, a modest drinking table with wild vegetables was soon brought in.

“Let's have a game of Go after a long time.”

“That sounds good!”

At Lee Jik's words, Maeng Sa-seong brightened and brought the Go board that had been placed in one corner of the room.

The two exchanged drinks while playing Go.

Carefully placing a Go stone, Lee Jik spoke to Maeng Sa-seong.

“What do you think?”

“About what?”

“About His Majesty's intention to open the door of appointment even to women.”

“Hmm...”

At Lee Jik's words, Maeng Sa-seong put down a Go stone and fell into thought with his arms folded. As Maeng Sa-seong was lost in thought, Lee Jik continued.

“His Majesty must have anticipated that those noisy fellows wouldn’t stay quiet. Don’t you think?”

“He probably did.”

“Even though their numbers have drastically decreased due to that unspeakable incident in the year of Giyu, there are still those who keep making noise. I don’t understand why he created something for those guys to make noise about.”

Seemingly frustrated, Lee Jik filled the cup beside him with alcohol and drained it in one gulp before continuing.

“There was an easier way to go. Namely, abolishing slavery.”

At Lee Jik’s words, Maeng Sa-seong silently nodded.

Maeng Sa-seong didn’t open his mouth after that. After pondering for a long time, Maeng Sa-seong slowly opened his mouth.

“Minister, do you know the situation of the slaves in Joseon now?”

“I know roughly. They’re gradually decreasing after taxing slaves as property.”

“That’s the case for private slaves, but government slaves haven’t decreased much. To be precise, the number of those who were government slaves from before has decreased, but the number of those who have newly become government slaves has exploded.”

At Maeng Sa-seong’s words, Lee Jik’s eyes widened as he briefly recalled his memories.

“No way! From the year of Giyu?”

At Lee Jik’s words, Maeng Sa-seong nodded.

“Those implicated in the rebellion of the year of Giyu. As long as they exist alive, His Majesty will never mention abolishing slavery.”

At Maeng Sa-seong's assertion, Lee Jik's expression turned bitter.

"I see."

Looking at Lee Jik's expression, Maeng Sa-seong continued.

"I still remember what the previous king said about His Majesty. 'Chungyeong may seem weak, but when he makes a decision, he's more resolute than anyone else.' Seeing how His Majesty thinks about the royal ancestral shrine, the state, and the people, he would be worthy of being recorded as more than a wise king, even a sage king. But there's something we must not forget."

"He's an absolute monarch and a dictator."

"That's right. If you think about the cases of Minister Ryu Jeong-hyeon and other ministers in the past, it's certain. As long as there are beings that could make the royal authority unstable, His Majesty will never abolish the slave system. The same goes for the system of guilt by association."

At Maeng Sa-seong's words, Lee Jik, with a bitter taste in his mouth, filled his cup with alcohol and drained it in one gulp. But the bitter taste still remained in his mouth.

At the same time, Hyang, sitting alone in the Crown Prince's Palace organizing his thoughts, also had a bitter expression.

"Unless it's a constitutional monarchy, the essence is an absolute monarchy..."

Those who masterminded and carried out the Giyu Rebellion were all killed.

Those who are now working in mines as government slaves are their children or relatives who were punished by association.

In a way, they could be victims of the inhumane system of guilt by association, but in the context of this era, they were potential traitors who directly inherited the ideology of the rebellion leaders.

As long as there are those who plotted national rebellion and those who directly inherited that thinking, the abolition of slavery would never be implemented.

Note 1) Encyclopedia of Korean Culture. Entry on Nighttime Curfew.

<http://encykorea.aks.ac.kr/Contents/Item/E0035247>

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[b] **Bold** [/b] of you to assume I have a plan.

Deathbringer, emphasis on [i] *death* [/i].

I'm totally [s] ~~crossed out~~ [/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li] bullets [/li].

[img] <https://www.agine.this> [/img]

[link] <http://topwebfiction.com> [/link].

[link=https://www.n.ot] [clickbait](https://www.n.ot) [/link].

[quote] ... me like my landlord! [/quote]

[spoiler] Spanish Inquisition! [/spoiler]

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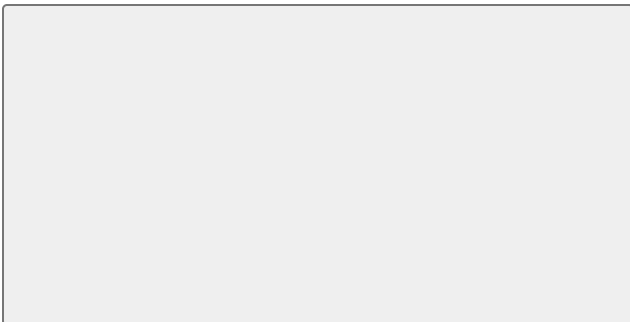
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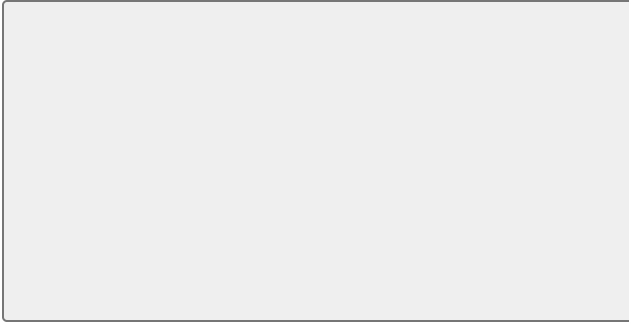
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Chapter 301 - 400

BCJ Chapter 359

Things That Multiply When Divided: Work and Curses

by *BlossomTL*Black Corporation: Joseon

As the situation settled, the court moved swiftly. Following the agreed-upon results, they reassigned personnel and checked the situation. Amidst this busy activity, a secret envoy carrying King Sejong's handwritten letter crossed the sea.

Morimi, upon receiving King Sejong's handwritten letter, checked its contents and spoke.

"This doesn't seem to be something we can decide right away. Please wait a moment."

"Certainly."

After asking the envoy to wait, Morimi put his heads together with his retainers.

"You've all heard the contents, so there's no need to repeat them. What do you think we should do?"

"Including the planned education period, they'll be staying in Joseon for nearly ten years. They might even end up naturalizing in Joseon."

“Joseon’s governance is completely different from ours. What use would it be to learn their ways of ruling?”

Initially, those opposing the idea were in the majority. However, as they noticed Morimi’s unfavorable expression, opinions started to shift towards accepting Joseon’s proposal.

Mochiyo, recognized as the next lord, was the first to speak up.

“We should accept it. Our domain is growing more powerful by the day. The old ways will surely reach their limits. Therefore, we must learn the governance of Joseon, which is becoming stronger day by day. We must learn Joseon’s ways of ruling to overcome the limitations of our domain.”

While managing the Iwami silver mine together with Joseon, Mochiyo was gradually becoming addicted to Joseon.

To be precise, he was captivated by Joseon’s policies. And it all started with a labor dispute at the silver mine.

While Mochiyo was considering forceful suppression as his subordinates suggested, Ahn Sang-taek proposed Joseon’s method, which Mochiyo accepted.

The results were good, so Mochiyo began to gather information about various policies implemented by Joseon.

As he researched the information he gathered, Mochiyo became addicted to Joseon.

“This is what governance should be! Our domain must change like this too! No, not just our domain, but the entire world should change to be like Joseon!”

To clarify, when the Japanese spoke of “the world,” they meant the entirety of Japan, not the whole world.

Because of this, when Ming Emperor Zhu Yuanzhang sent an envoy regarding the *wokou* (Japanese pirate) problem, the relationship between Ming and Japan soured due to a single phrase in the reply sent by Ashikaga Takauji, the shogun at the time.

“The world does not belong to any one individual.”

In Takauji’s case, he meant “The Japanese realm doesn’t belong to me alone,” but from Zhu Yuanzhang’s perspective, it was understood as “The entire world doesn’t belong to the Ming Emperor alone.” (Note 1)

After Mochiyo expressed his agreement, other retainers who concurred with his opinion began to raise their voices.

“That’s right! When our Ouchi clan takes control of the realm, we must govern with a broader perspective. For this, we need people who know well how to rule like great and advanced nations. This is a great opportunity!”

“The *bakufu* and other lords are still like frogs in a well. To surpass them, we must first surpass them in governance!”

“Exactly!”

“Those despicable Sō clan are still waiting for opportunities in Tsushima. We must learn everything we can from Joseon and gain control of the realm to completely subjugate the Sō clan. Governance is just the beginning!”

The situation had completely turned in favor of acceptance. Seeing the retainers’ reactions, Morimi smiled broadly and made his decision.

“Good! We accept Joseon’s proposal! Let’s learn everything we can and take this realm into our Ouchi clan’s hands!”

“Ha!”

At Morimi’s declaration, the retainers prostrated themselves and responded loudly.

Morimi put all his efforts into realizing his dream of overthrowing the Muromachi bakufu ruled by the Ashikaga clan and taking control of the realm.

Using the tally trade with the Ming, he sent people to Ming, and also sent envoys to Joseon to establish friendly relations and adopt their culture.

In this process, Morimi, like Mochiyo, gradually became addicted to Joseon.

The splendor of the great empire described by those who returned from Ming was admirable, but the dazzling development of Joseon reported by those who visited there was close to miraculous.

Whether official or unofficial, the Joseon envoys who came to Ouchi were all highly learned and full of wisdom. Every time these envoys came and went, Morimi sighed at the backwardness of the domain he ruled.

Especially when he heard about the iron horse, Morimi was shocked as if struck by lightning.

‘A cart that moves without cattle or horses! This is it! Joseon is the future I dream of! Our Japan is neither a great nation like Ming, nor do we have much! The only path we should follow is the path Joseon is taking!’

‘I will grasp the realm (of Japan) in my hands!’

The long-standing aspiration of the family was now transforming from political ambition to religious conviction.

“It is the supreme heavenly mandate given to me and our family to transform this backward realm into an advanced nation like Joseon!”

“We must change everything from what we wear, eat, and use! Abandoning our Japanese ways and following Joseon’s path is the only way for our family and the realm!”

This marked the beginning of what historians would later call “De-Japanization Theory” or “Abandoning Japan for Joseon.”

Whatever the background, the envoy who obtained Morimi’s acceptance immediately returned and reported to King Sejong.

“Is that so? Ouchi Morimi accepted?”

“Yes, Your Majesty. He only asked that we teach them well, as they are valuable talents who will manage their domain.”

King Sejong smiled at Lee Maeng-gyun’s answer and replied.

“As it’s a request from those who are friendly with us, do your best. And remember that we can’t keep such important talents indefinitely.”

“I will engrave it on my bones and heart!”

Soon after King Sejong’s order, the Japanese students studying in Hanseong suspended their classes to hear an announcement from the court.

“...so, once you complete the course, you’ll be immediately assigned to duties to learn practical skills.”

“Yes. Understood.”

“I should add that the intensity of your classes will increase a bit from now on.”

At the words of the Chief Education Officer, the color drained from the students’ faces.

“Pardon?”

“Your lord requested to His Majesty, ‘They are valuable talents who will manage the domain, so please teach them well.’ How could we be negligent?”

“Hai...”

“So, brace yourselves and follow along well.”

“Hai...”

The students responded with half-dazed faces to the Chief Education Officer’s words.

The classes had been tough so far, but now they were being told that future classes would be even tougher.

Later, when the students who completed the course and were assigned to practical duties, they all screamed.

“The classes were easier in comparison!”

And when those who returned to Ouchi and took charge of practical duties, they badgered their subordinates.

“What! You call this work? When I worked in Hanseong...”

While things ended well with Ouchi, the internal affairs of Joseon were once again in an uproar.

It was because of the court’s proclamation announcing ‘partial revision of the civil service examination system.’

“Opening the doors to women? What nonsense is this!”

“It’s the end of times! The end of times!”

Local nobles men, indignant at the news that women would also be given the right to take the civil service exam, took action.

“Write a petition! A petition!”

“No! We must go to Hanseong! Meoksoe! Bring the axe! I’m going to submit a petition with an axe!”

“I’ll go with you!”

And so, once again, petitions flooded into Gyeongbok Palace. The royal secretaries and lower-ranking officials of the Privy Council who received the petitions sighed deeply at the mountain of petitions piled up.

“Huu~ We expected this, but...”

However, it was their job to pre-screen and categorize the petitions, so the royal secretaries and lower-ranking officials began to open the envelopes and read the contents.

The royal secretaries and lower-ranking officials reviewing the petitions showed unusual behavior: they inserted yellow papers into most of the opened petitions and set them aside.

“We should contact the Typography Bureau and ask them to print more of these.”

“Right? How many copies do you think would be appropriate?”

“Let’s start with about 100 sheets.”

“That sounds about right. You go and deliver the message, then take a short break.”

“Yes.”

King Sejong and his ministers, anticipating this flood of petitions, had prepared and printed appropriate responses in advance.

“Please reconsider!”

“Your Majesty~. Please reconsider!”

“Hm?”

Hyang, who was returning to the Crown Prince’s palace after working in Area 51, stopped his horse at the sound of shouting in front of Gwanghwamun Gate.

“What’s going on? Asking for reconsideration?”

“I’ll go check and report back, Your Highness.”

In response to Hyang’s question, an accompanying eunuch ran forward to assess the situation.

Shortly after, the returned eunuch reported the situation to Hyang.

“They say it’s a petition with axes, Your Highness.”

“A petition with axes? For what reason? Don’t tell me it’s because of the recent civil service exam system revision?”

“Yes, Your Highness.”

“Oh my... tsk!”

Hyang clicked his tongue briefly and rode his horse towards the shouting crowd.

“Your Highness! It’s dangerous!”

“Your Highness!”

The Royal Guard guards in charge of protection were startled. A petition with axes meant that the protesters were demonstrating with dangerous blades placed beside them. As the Royal Guard tried to stop him, Hyang smiled and replied.

“I trust you all.”

At Hyang's words, the Royal Guard wore expressions of resignation as they rode their horses to the front of Hyang.

"We'll go ahead, Your Highness."

As Hyang approached the vicinity of the protesters, he dismounted and walked. The Royal Guard, who had also dismounted, surrounded him in layers as Hyang drew near, and the protesters raised their voices.

"Your Highness! You are not only the Crown Prince but also a subject! It is the duty of a subject to speak frankly to the king and prevent foolish policies, so why have you neglected this duty!"

"That's right! Why are you neglecting your duty?"

In response to the protesters' outcry, Hyang muttered quietly.

"They have loud voices and big guts."

"Pfft!"

"Kup!"

At Hyang's words, the surrounding Royal Guard soldiers gritted their teeth to forcibly hold back their laughter.

"Captain Jang."

"Yes, Your Highness."

Hyang pointed at the protesters with his finger and ordered.

"Start with the one sitting on the right, and bring them one by one with their axes and petitions."

"Yes, Your Highness."

A moment later, after reading the petition brought by the captain, Hyang examined the axe.

“Hmm...”

Making a nasal sound, Hyang took out a golden brush from his sleeve, scribbled something on the petition, and returned it to the captain.

“Return it, and tell them to read aloud what I’ve written.”

“Yes, Your Highness.”

Shortly after, the scholar who received the message through the captain unfolded the petition. The scholar’s arms trembled like aspen leaves as he confirmed what Hyang had written.

“What are you doing?”

At Hyang’s urging, the scholar gritted his teeth and shouted loudly.

“Axe blade equals penmanship!”

At the scholar’s shout, the surrounding people murmured.

“What does that mean?”

“I don’t know?”

Amidst the murmuring, a somewhat literate commoner clicked his tongue.

“Tsk tsk tsk... He got insulted outright.”

“What did the Crown Prince say to make you say that?”

“He said the axe blade and the writing skill are the same.”

“Huh?”

The commoner who heard the explanation looked at the axe held by the scholar in question and burst into laughter.

“Puhah!”

The scholar’s axe was covered in bright red rust.

Similar evaluations followed. One scholar who received the evaluation that “the axe blade is sharper than his writing skills” burst into tears on the spot.

Looking at these scholars, Hyang raised his voice.

“If you can’t stand the sight of women wearing official robes, then you take the civil service exam and pass it yourselves! How dare you have so much to say when you can’t even pass the exam!”

Note 1) Joseon Dynasty Military Strategy. P.61. Ministry of National Defense Military History Compilation Research Institute.

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BBCodes

Bold of you to assume I have a plan.

Deathbringer, emphasis on *death*.

I'm totally ~~crossed-out~~ by this.

- Listless I'm counting my bullets.



<http://topwebfiction.com>.

[link=https://www.n.ot](https://www.n.ot) [clickbait](#).

... me like my landlord!

Spanish Inquisition!

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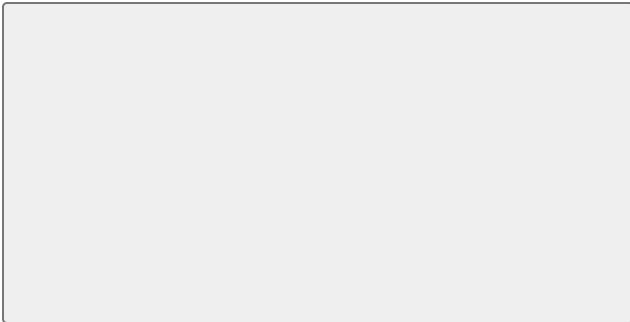
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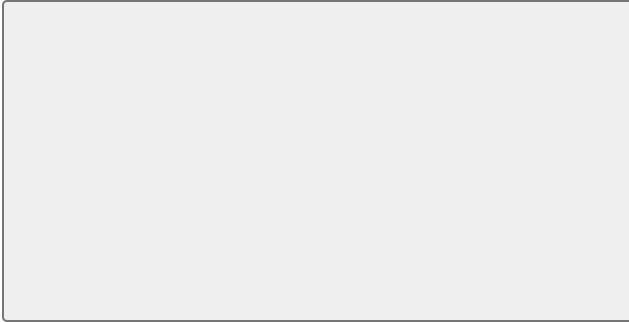
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Chapter 301 - 400

BCJ Chapter 360

Things That Multiply When Divided: Work and Curses

by *BlossomTLBlack Corporation*: Joseon

The nobles, having been thoroughly scolded by Hyang, had to retreat with dejected faces, gathering their mats and axes. Watching their departure, Hyang turned away.

“Tsk! And yet...”

The nobles gritted their teeth at Hyang’s blatant rebuke.

The faces of the commoners watching these nobles were full of mockery.

“I bet they strut around in their hometowns, puffing up their chests and saying they’re nobles.”

“Just their chests? I bet they puff up their lower halves too whenever they see female servants!”

“Puhahaha!”

“You insolent bastards!”

At the mockery of the watching commoners, one of the axe-wielding nobles shouted angrily and approached.

“Eek!”

A few of the mockers screamed and stepped back as the nobles approached with a fierce expression, looking ready to swing his axe at any moment.

However, others stepped forward, rolling up their sleeves.

“What? Did His Highness the Crown Prince say anything wrong? Or is it because your stinking parts have been exposed? Go ahead, try swinging that axe! But be prepared to have something broken or lose your life.”

“You lowly creatures!”

As the scholar’s face turned bright red and he raised his axe high, the men who had been arguing also clenched their fists and lowered their stance.

At this critical moment, a young nobles who had been watching nearby intervened.

“Stop! What shameful behavior is this! How can someone who calls himself a nobles resort to violence! Aren’t you ashamed!”

“Step aside! Are you saying we should tolerate such lowly creatures insulting the nobles?”

“If they are wrong, we should convince them of their error through reason! Why resort to violence?”

“A beating is the only medicine for those who insult nobles!”

As the axe-wielding nobles shouted furiously, Hyang’s voice was heard from behind.

“Then, I insulted you too. Will you raise your axe against me as well?”

“Gasp!”

At these words, the face of the nobles who had been radiating murderous intent turned pale white.

‘I forgot! No, hasn’t he entered the palace?’

The pale-faced nobles forcibly turned his trembling body around.

There stood Hyang, arms crossed, glaring at him. And the other nobles who had been participating in the petition with axes were prostrated on the ground, watching the situation nervously.

Finally, the scholar in question threw his axe aside and prostrated himself, begging for forgiveness.

“I have committed a crime punishable by death! Please, just spare my life!”

“Why? Why don’t you come at me with your axe?”

“I lost control of my anger and showed unseemly behavior! Please forgive me!”

But Hyang’s rebuke did not stop.

“A true gentleman becomes more composed the more he studies and cultivates himself. Yet you couldn’t control your anger over a few taunts and tried to resort to violence. How can you call yourself a gentleman!”

“I’m deeply sorry! Please forgive me!”

Seeing the scholar’s state, Hyang turned his head and ordered the Royal Guard captain.

“Take this man to the State Tribunal and report him. The charge is attempting to harm people by recklessly wielding a deadly weapon in public view. And I was among his targets.”

“Your Highness! That’s absolutely not true! Your Highness! Please spare me!”

The scholar, turning pale at Hyang’s words, desperately raised his voice, but Hyang simply replied.

“The iron horse has already departed. Take him away.”

“Yes, sir!”

“Your Highness! Your Highness!”

The scholar called out to Hyang as he was dragged away by the Royal Guard soldiers, but Hyang completely ignored him.

“Do you all want to visit the State Tribunal too?”

“N-no, Your Highness!”

The prostrated nobles hurriedly gathered their mats and axes and disappeared.

Watching the nobles vanish into the distance as if fleeing, Hyang moved towards the other protagonists of the incident.

As Hyang approached, the gathered commoners quickly prostrated themselves.

“You may stand.”

“Oh my, how could we lowly ones...”

Seeing the commoners prostrated on the ground as they answered, Hyang smirked and continued.

“You were quite bold earlier, weren’t you?”

“How can Your Highness be compared to nobles whose faces we don’t even know?”

Hyang burst into laughter at the honest answer.

“Hahaha! That’s the right answer! It’s alright! I permit you, so stand up!”

At Hyang's permission, the prostrated commoners slowly rose from the ground.

Looking over the faces of the standing commoners, Hyang addressed the men who had been arguing with the scholar earlier.

“Are your bodies made of iron? What were you thinking, provoking a man holding an axe?”

The men sheepishly smiled and answered Hyang's words.

“It was clear at a glance that he had never wielded an axe before, so what was there to fear?”

“His arms were trembling as he held the axe, he probably couldn't have swung it properly!”

Hyang chuckled at the commoners' answers but didn't forget to admonish them.

“Still, life is precious, so in such situations, call for the constables.”

“Yes, Your Highness.”

“Now, return to your business.”

“Yes, Your Highness.”

Having finished his conversation with the commoners, Hyang turned his gaze to the scholar who had tried to mediate earlier.

Was he about Hyang's age? The scholar looked to be in his mid to late teens, tall with a sturdy build. (Note 1) However, he didn't seem to be from a well-off family, as his *durumagi* (*outerwear*) showed signs of patching in many places.

Hyang stared at him for a moment before asking a question.

“Were you not afraid?”

“I was afraid, Your Highness, but how could I stand by and watch a so-called nobles intimidate people with violence? As one who studies the way of the sages, I could not let this pass.”

“That’s a noble spirit. So, what’s your name?”

“This lowly one is called Han Myeong-hoe, Your Highness.”

The moment he heard the name, Hyang’s body froze for an instant.

‘Here!’

He had just met the man known as “Joseon’s greatest traitor” and “a legendary opportunist” among various other evaluations.

‘This is an opportunity! I can prevent him from getting involved with Jinpyeong altogether!’

Though Hyang made an instant judgment, he proceeded with additional verification.

“What is your father’s name?”

“My late father used the character ‘Gi’ and served as an inspector in the Office of the Inspector-General, Your Highness.”

“Is that so? How old are you?”

“I will turn seventeen in October, Your Highness.”

‘Let’s see... According to the records I’ve glimpsed, Han Myeong-hoe lost his parents early, right? Given that he referred to his “late father,” it seems to match. Anyway...’

As he analyzed the person and the situation, Hyang looked at Han Myeong-hoe with a slight smile.

“It was truly a good opportunity, wasn’t it?”

Momentarily confused by Hyang's words, Han Myeong-hoe immediately bowed his head as he grasped the meaning.

As he bowed his head, Han Myeong-hoe felt cold sweat running down his back.

‘As expected of the Crown Prince, the rumors were true!’

The impulsive action he had just taken was part of Han Myeong-hoe's calculation.

Han Myeong-hoe was born as the grandson of Han Sang-jil, a founding contributor who had served as the Chief Scholar of the Hall of Worthies. His family's downfall came with the deaths of his parents, Han Gi and Lady Yi of Yeosu.

As the saying goes, “When a dog from a minister's house dies, mourners flock, but when the minister dies, no one comes,” the family's fortunes took a sharp downturn with the premature death of his father, Han Gi. Of course, they weren't desperately poor, but they had been pushed to the outskirts of power since King Taejong's era, and Han Gi's untimely death inevitably led to the decline of their family fortunes.

Fortunately, with the help of his great-uncles, Han Myeong-hoe was able to study Chinese classics and pursue his education under Ryu Tae-jae in Gangwon Province.

While studying under Ryu Tae-jae, Han Myeong-hoe formed friendships with Gwon Ram and Seo Geo-jeong, and had recently returned to Hanseong.

“I must revive our fallen family!”

With this firm resolve, he prepared for the civil service examination, but the situation was not easy.

Hoping against hope, he wrote petitions whenever various issues arose, but because his answers were not what the court, changed by the great reforms, wanted, he had to face rejection each time.

Still, Han Myeong-hoe didn't give up. He made efforts to understand what the current court wanted by networking extensively, and pondered how to apply this to what he had learned.

In the midst of this process, the "partial revision of the civil service examination system" was announced, causing an uproar.

"Should I support or oppose..."

As Han Myeong-hoe was contemplating not based on his own standards but on how to stand out, he immediately rose from his seat when he heard about the petition with axes.

"This is an opportunity!"

Those currently submitting petitions with axes were clearly fools who didn't understand the current trends.

Such fools would certainly cause an incident. And if he used that incident well, he could get a chance to reveal himself.

Certain of the opportunity, Han Myeong-hoe ran to the front of Gyeongbok Palace to observe the situation. As he waited, Hyang arrived and rebuked the nobles who were submitting petitions with axes.

'Will something happen? Or will it end like this? It can't end like this...'

As if his earnest wish was granted, one nobles, angered by the mocking commoners, raised his axe to intimidate them.

'This is the chance! If I miss this, I'll regret it for a thousand years!'

Though scared of the axe, Han Myeong-hoe jumped in front of the commoners to create a confrontation.

Thanks to this, he thought he had caught the Crown Prince's eye, but the Crown Prince had already seen through Han Myeong-hoe's intentions.

As he bowed his head, Han Myeong-hoe remembered what his father had told him when he was young.

'His Majesty is extraordinary, but the Crown Prince is even more so. If you ever enter officialdom, you must think two or three times before acting.'

As Han Myeong-hoe was feeling dejected, thinking he had failed at a golden opportunity, Hyang's voice reached his ears.

"Yes. Sometimes silence is a good answer too. And... the ability to seize a good opportunity is also a valuable skill. You, come to this place tomorrow morning before Gwanhwamun opens. Ah! Make sure to bring your household register as well."

At Hyang's words, Han Myeong-hoe unconsciously raised his head to look at Hyang. Still smiling, Hyang continued.

"Whether your ability is limited to seizing opportunities or if you're truly capable will be proven in practical work. Do you understand what this means?"

To Hyang's question, Han Myeong-hoe immediately prostrated himself and answered.

"I will do my utmost best!"

"Then I'll see you tomorrow!"

Han Myeong-hoe remained prostrated until Hyang disappeared inside Gwanhwamun.

After Hyang's figure vanished and Gwanhwamun closed, Han Myeong-hoe rose from his position. The commoners who had been watching the scene applauded and congratulated him.

“Congratulations, sir!”

“Congratulations!”

“Thank you, thank you.”

Bowing his head in response to the congratulations, Han Myeong-hoe quickly left the place.

After turning into an alley and escaping from people’s sight, Han Myeong-hoe clenched his fist.

“I did it! This is the beginning!”

Meanwhile, Hyang, who had entered Geunjeongjeon to report his return, paused at an unexpected situation.

“Huh?”

Starting with King Sejong, all the ministers were looking at Hyang with sparkling eyes.

“This son reports his return.”

“Yes, good work.”

King Sejong, after a brief response, immediately got to the point.

“I hear you caused another incident on your way back?”

“Yes, there were those who didn’t properly understand the will of Father and the court, insisting only on their narrow views, so I gave them a piece of my mind.”

“Well done. But that wasn’t the end of it, was it?”

‘At any rate, the news network in Gyeongbok Palace is as fast as 5G...’

With a wry smile, Hyang continued immediately.

“Yes, among them, one foolish individual tried to intimidate the people with violence, so I sent him to the State Tribunal. And in the process, I came to know a quite promising individual.”

“Oh? What kind of person?”

“He said his name was Han Myeong-hoe, the son of Han Gi who served as an inspector in the Office of the Inspector-General.”

At Hyang’s introduction, the ministers soon began to search their memories.

“Ah!”

Having recalled information about Han Gi, the ministers immediately reported to King Sejong.

After listening to the ministers’ words, King Sejong stroked his beard and nodded.

“I’ve heard of him too. I remember thinking it was a pity that such a capable person died prematurely. So, how did Han Gi’s son seem to you?”

“I couldn’t fully gauge his character, but his ability to respond to unexpected situations seemed top-notch. He appeared to be someone who could avoid the worst outcomes, if not achieve the best, in any sudden situation.”

“Is that so?”

As Hyang continued speaking, King Sejong and the ministers’ eyes grew increasingly brighter.

Note 1) <https://www.mk.co.kr/news/culture/view/2015/10/959590/>

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BBCodes

[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.
Deathbringer, emphasis on [i]*death*[/i].
I'm totally [s]~~crossed out~~[/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

[img]https://www.agine.this[/img]
[link]http://topwebfiction.com[/link].
[link=https://www.n.ot]clickbait[/link].

[quote]... me like my landlord! [/quote]

[spoiler]Spanish Inquisition! [/spoiler]
[ins]Insert[/ins] more bad puns!
[del]~~Delete~~[/del] your browser history!

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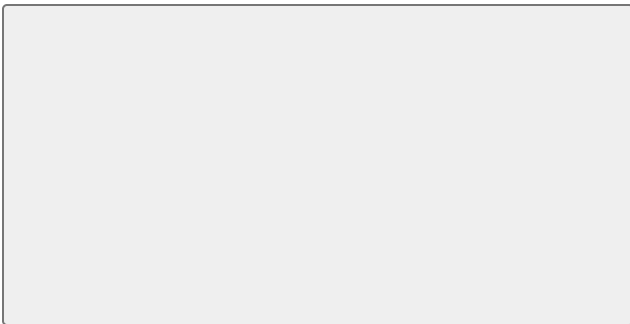
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Chapter 301 - 400

BCJ Chapter 361

Things That Multiply When Divided: Work and Curses

by *BlossomTL*Black Corporation: Joseon

The next morning, Han Myeong-hoe stood at the entrance of Gwanghwamun with a tense expression.

Fidgeting with the sleeve of his dobo containing his household register, Han Myeong-hoe swallowed hard.

“This is the chance of a lifetime. I must leave a good impression.”

Giving himself this pep talk, Han Myeong-hoe waited for Gwanghwamun to open.

Shortly after, Gwanghwamun opened and the gate guards changed shifts. As the gate opened wide, Han Myeong-hoe stepped towards it.

“Halt! What’s your business?”

Han Myeong-hoe stopped at the guards’ shout and stated his purpose.

“I am Han Myeong-hoe, here by order of His Highness the Crown Prince.”

“Ah! Wait there for a moment!”

At Han Myeong-hoe's words, a guard who seemed to recognize the situation quickly went inside.

Soon after, the head guard came out and approached Han Myeong-hoe.

“Are you that scholar?”

“I am.”

“Please show me your identification tag.”

At the head guard's request, Han Myeong-hoe searched his clothes and produced his identification tag. The head guard examined it front and back before returning it.

“I'll send word in. Please wait a moment.”

“Understood.”

The head guard disappeared back inside, and Han Myeong-hoe stepped back to wait for a response.

Shortly after, a eunuch scurried out and approached the gate guards, asking something. The guard pointed at Han Myeong-hoe in response. Seeing Han Myeong-hoe, the eunuch approached and said,

“Please follow me.”

“Understood.”

After leading Han Myeong-hoe through Gwanghwamun and Geunjeongmun, the eunuch positioned him in front of Geunjeongjeon and said,

“Please wait here for a moment.”

“Understood.”

Leaving Han Myeong-hoe at the bottom of the stairs leading up to Geunjeongjeon, the eunuch scurried away and disappeared behind the hall.

As the eunuch vanished, Han Myeong-hoe hurriedly adjusted his attire and waited to be called.

However, Han Myeong-hoe had to wait for quite a while longer.

“Have they forgotten about me?”

Though growing impatient at the long wait, Han Myeong-hoe recalled the character for patience and continued to wait.

Just then, ministers walked through Geunjeongmun towards Geunjeongjeon. The ministers, trailed by officials carrying stacks of reports, stopped in their tracks when they saw Han Myeong-hoe.

As the ministers approached, Han Myeong-hoe bowed politely according to etiquette. Seeing this, the ministers began to ask questions.

“Are you Han Gi’s son?”

“Eh? Yes.”

“Raise your head for a moment.”

As Han Myeong-hoe straightened up, the ministers each made a comment.

“He’s the spitting image of his friend.”

“He has a sturdy build. He must be strong.”

“He’s been standing for quite a while without showing signs of fatigue. His stamina must be good.”

“Indeed. After all, isn’t endurance the most important thing?”

Except for the first comment, Han Myeong-hoe was bewildered by the stream of seemingly irrelevant remarks.

‘What’s going on here? It’s like they’re inspecting a cow at a cattle market.’

“Ah! We’ll be late for the court session at this rate! Let’s hurry!”

“Indeed! We’ll see you later, young man!”

The ministers, having thoroughly confused Han Myeong-hoe, rushed into Geunjeongjeon with their officials in tow.

Left alone again, Han Myeong-hoe couldn’t hide his perplexed expression.

“What kind of goblin play is this... Oh! I must pull myself together!”

As Han Myeong-hoe was trying to gather his scattered wits, a eunuch emerged from Geunjeongjeon and approached him.

“His Majesty summons you.”

“Understood.”

Entering Geunjeongjeon, Han Myeong-hoe prostrated himself and made a deep bow to King Sejong.

“Eunuch, bring a chair.”

“Yes, Your Majesty.”

As Han Myeong-hoe sat in the chair brought by the eunuch, King Sejong began to question him.

“Well... Let’s start with praise. Your action yesterday in stepping forward to protect the people is praiseworthy. You did the right thing.”

“Not at all, Your Majesty. It was merely what any scholar should do.”

“You seem to have learned from a good teacher. So, under whose tutelage did you study?”

“I studied under Master Taejae, Your Majesty.”

At Han Myeong-hoe’s answer, King Sejong’s eyes sparkled.

“Taejae? Is he well?”

“I occasionally sent letters inquiring after his well-being, and he seemed to be doing well.”

“Is that so?”

King Sejong’s eyes sparkled.

Taejae Ryu Bang-seon had lived a tumultuous life. After passing the civil service examination and studying at Sungkyunkwan, he was implicated in Min Mu-gu’s case due to his father’s involvement and was exiled. Released from exile in 1415, he taught students in Wonju, but was exiled again to Yeongcheon due to false accusations. He was only released in the 9th year of King Sejong’s reign.

He was highly regarded for not neglecting his studies and conduct even during exile, and was recommended for an official position immediately upon his release. However, having experienced the filth of politics firsthand before even properly taking office, Ryu Bang-seon declined the position, citing illness.

But now, through Han Myeong-hoe’s words, it was confirmed that he was perfectly fine.

“Hmm... That aside, I have a question for you. Listen to the situations I present and share your thoughts.”

“Yes, Your Majesty.”

From then on, King Sejong presented various scenarios and asked for Han Myeong-hoe's opinions. If there was even a slight gap in his answers, King Sejong ruthlessly probed that point.

It wasn't just King Sejong. The ministers also took turns questioning Han Myeong-hoe and pressing him for answers.

After this intense round of pressure interviews, Han Myeong-hoe was completely exhausted.

Looking at Han Myeong-hoe's half-dazed face, King Sejong smiled and made his conclusion.

“Taejae has taught him well. Hmm... His ability to grasp the context of situations and his quick-wittedness are quite good. For now, let him work in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.”

“Your grace is boundless, Your Majesty!”

At King Sejong's decision, Lee Maeng-gyun smiled broadly and bowed his head. As other ministers were about to speak up, King Sejong spoke first.

“For now,’ I said. For now...”

At King Sejong's additional explanation, the ministers closed their mouths. Seeing this, King Sejong muttered to himself without realizing it.

“This insatiable appetite for talent...”

At King Sejong's words, the ministers quietly raised their heads to look at him. Though they didn't speak, they were all inwardly shouting the same thing:

‘Look who's talking! Who's the one with the real appetite here!’

Whether aware of the ministers' feelings or not, King Sejong proceeded with business.

“You will start learning practical skills at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs from today. We will evaluate your abilities after one month and grant you an appropriate rank, so do your best.”

Hurriedly coming to his senses at King Sejong’s words, Han Myeong-hoe prostrated himself and exclaimed,

“I will do my utmost best, Your Majesty!”

“I look forward to it. You may go.”

At King Sejong’s words, Han Myeong-hoe bowed again and began to back away. As he was retreating, King Sejong called out to him.

“Wait. I forgot something.”

At King Sejong’s words, Han Myeong-hoe came forward again.

“Do you have any friends who studied with you under Taejae?”

Han Myeong-hoe immediately answered King Sejong’s question.

“Yes, there are a few, Your Majesty.”

“Oh? Who are they?”

“There’s Gwon Ram, the grandson of Master Yangchon (Gwon Geun), and though still young, a friend named Seo Geo-jeong who has exceptional literary talent.”

“Is that so? Submit their personal information in writing. Minister of Foreign Affairs.”

“Yes, Your Majesty! I will make sure to receive and submit it!”

“Very well. You may go now.”

“Eh? Yes, Your Majesty.”

Later, when Hyang heard the story through the eunuchs, he smacked his lips.

“It’s not some multi-level marketing scheme... Anyway, splitting them up like this should put my mind at ease.”

Thus, the “Han Myeong-hoe multilevel recruitment” that unfolded disrupted the lives of several people.

First, officials carrying documents with King Sejong’s royal command rushed to Yeongcheon. The officials who found Ryu Bang-seon’s house shouted loudly.

“Royal command!”

Next were Gwon Ram and Seo Geo-jeong.

“This child called Seo Geo-jeong might be a problem.”

“What’s the problem?”

“He’s only twelve years old. He hasn’t even had his coming-of-age ceremony yet.”

At Heo Jo’s words, the ministers’ faces became troubled. However, Kim Jeom resolved their dilemma in one stroke.

“What’s the problem? We already have a child named Kim Dam in the research institute.”

“He’s younger than Kim Dam, so it’s not an issue.”

“Let’s use Kim Dam as a precedent and move past this point. Can’t we just bring him in and raise him like they do at the research institute? Isn’t it better that he’s not fully mature yet?”

At Kim Jeom’s words, the ministers unconsciously nodded their heads.

Despite abolishing the ban on government service for children of concubines and people from the northwestern provinces, and automatically placing those who passed the lower civil service exam into local and central administrative organizations, there was still a shortage of talent.

The reasons for the talent shortage in Joseon's government were complex.

First, it occurred during the process of changing the low-level officials in central and local administrative organizations from unpaid volunteer positions to paid full-time positions. One cause was the vacancy created by weeding out incompetent or corrupt individuals after investigating their past work.

Secondly, although the door to the lower civil service exam had been widened, passing through it was not easy. Despite the expansion, the pass rate did not exceed 25% of applicants.

Third, with the flourishing of commerce and industry, more nobles and commoners began to dedicate their lives to these fields rather than seeking official positions.

Lastly, even among those who entered through the lower civil service exam, not all were talented. There were many with academic knowledge but little practical ability. As a result, senior officials in local and central governments had to go through great trouble to identify the truly capable individuals.

This was also why the ministers agreed to establish the Samin Hakdang and Junghak Dang. However, since these institutions had not yet produced results, Joseon was still facing a talent shortage.

In any case, caught up in this multi-level recruitment, Gwon Ram and Seo Geo-jeong were brought to the court and received practical training.

After performing well in the evaluation following their training, they were immediately dragged to the Ministry of General Affairs and the Ministry of Education to take on practical duties.

The officials who were initially pleased to have bright talents join them soon had to put on long faces.

“Why is the workload increasing!”

As work progressed faster, all the tasks that had been put off came flooding back.

And one day, as they were living under the flood of work that had poured in, Gwon Ram turned at the sound of someone calling him.

“Who is it? Isn’t it Sohan-dang?”

Turning around, Gwon Ram brightened at the sight of the voice’s owner.

“Who do we have here, isn’t it Jajun!”

Seeing Han Myeong-hoe, Gwon Ram’s face lit up and he started running towards him.

The two hadn’t met even once since being suddenly recruited into the government. This was due to the practical training followed by evaluations, and then the tremendous amount of overtime work that followed. Of course, they could have met on holidays, but when holidays came, they were in a situation where they did their best to rest.

Seeing Gwon Ram running towards him with a bright face, Han Myeong-hoe smiled and opened his arms wide. Gwon Ram, who had sprinted at full speed to reach Han Myeong-hoe, immediately executed a flying side kick.

Crash!

“Ouch!”

As Han Myeong-hoe, suddenly kicked in the chest, fell to the ground, Gwon Ram sat on top of him and shouted,

“Good to see you, you damn bastard!”

While the daily life of the court was passing uneventfully like this, Hyang received a summons from King Sejong.

Late at night, Hyang entered Gangyeongjeon and was guided by a eunuch into King Sejong’s room.

“You called for me, Father?”

“Yes. Sit down over there.”

“Yes, Father.”

As Hyang sat down, King Sejong got to the point.

“Crown Prince, I will give you a choice.”

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BBCodes

[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.

Deathbringer, emphasis on [i]death[/i].

I'm totally [s]~~crossed-out~~[/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

[img]https://www.agine.this[/img]

[link]http://topwebfiction.com[/link].

[link=https://www.n.ot]clickbait[/link].

[quote]... me like my landlord![/quote]

[spoiler]Spanish Inquisition![/spoiler]

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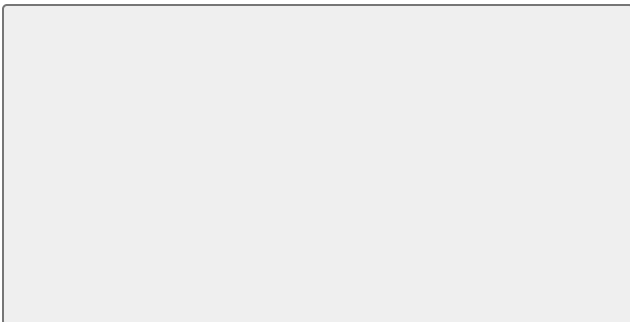
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Chapter 301 - 400

BCJ Chapter 362

Things That Multiply When Divided: Work and Curses

by *BlossomTLBlack Corporation: Joseon*

At the words “I will give you a choice,” Hyang’s mind raced furiously.

‘A choice? Of what?’

Quickly reviewing the various events that had transpired, unexpected incidents that had occurred, and conversations he had shared with King Sejong, Hyang immediately realized.

‘It’s you! *Hunminjeongeum!*’

“This son chooses to create the writing system, Father.”

“Huh?”

King Sejong, who was about to continue speaking with a very serious expression, momentarily gaped at Hyang’s immediate response.

After a moment, King Sejong regained his composure and asked Hyang.

“How did you know I was going to talk about creating a writing system?”

“There haven’t been many important matters recently, and the few significant issues all require a long time. Additionally, I made a promise to

you before, Father, so I thought there could only be one answer.”

At Hyang’s reply, King Sejong turned his head and muttered softly.

“He’s sickeningly clever, as always.”

“Pardon?”

“Nothing, nothing at all. Hmm... Well, since you’ve guessed this much, I’ll be frank. Wouldn’t it be better to serve as regent instead?”

“Absolutely not!”

At King Sejong’s words, Hyang expressed his refusal with his whole body. Seeing Hyang’s reaction, King Sejong began to worry instead.

“Do you dislike it that much? You’ll have to take over when I die anyway, won’t you?”

“Father, you are still in your prime. How could I serve as regent? People will surely misinterpret it.”

King Sejong nodded at Hyang’s words.

“That’s true, but... Wouldn’t being regent be easier than creating a writing system?”

“This son has always enjoyed pondering since childhood. Also, I’ve keenly felt the need for our own writing system for Joseon since I was young.”

At Hyang’s lengthy answer, King Sejong briefly pointed out the core issue.

“So, you don’t want to be regent, but you’ll only create the writing system?”

“Yes!”

“This consistently stubborn fellow... Tsk!”

Clicking his tongue, King Sejong rose from his seat.

“Wait here for a moment.”

“Eh? Yes.”

As King Sejong swiftly disappeared, Hyang, left alone in the room, let out a long sigh.

“Phew~. That was close.”

Having experienced depression in the 21st century, Hyang found government affairs burdensome.

‘Announcing political views or various policies is one thing since it ends with the announcement, but practical work is really not for me!’

Although Hyang was making excuses to himself, there was a fact he was overlooking.

The amount of administrative work that needed to be processed in Area 51 and the research institute was not insignificant. Of course, Jeong-cho, Jeong Inji, and Lee Chun shared much of the workload, but Hyang was still handling more than half of it.

In the end, it was a matter of aptitude related to his interests.

A moment later, King Sejong returned carrying two large bundles in his hands.

“Hup!”

With a small grunt, King Sejong placed the two bundles on the desk and sat down. Hyang asked,

“What’s in these bundles, Father?”

“Open them and see.”

“Yes...”

As Hyang opened the bundles at King Sejong’s command, his eyes widened.

Inside were an enormous number of books, easily exceeding 40 volumes.

“This is...”

Hyang opened the book on top and looked at King Sejong with surprised eyes.

“Have you already finished creating the writing system?”

“To some extent, yes.”

“Then is there nothing left for me to do?”

“You have much to do. First...”

King Sejong tapped the books with his hand as he continued speaking.

“I’ve created the letters and written down their principles, but there might be errors in my thinking. Also, there’s a high possibility of conflicts between the explanations at the beginning and end. So you need to cross-verify those parts.”

“... Yes.”

As King Sejong’s explanation continued, Hyang’s face gradually turned pale.

“...And when that organization is complete, you must also arrange the examples related to pronunciation. And when that’s done, you need to

create vernacular explanations based on those examples. Do you know why?”

“It’s to understand more quickly by comparing the example book and the vernacular explanation book.”

At Hyang’s answer, King Sejong nodded with a smile.

“Hahaha! Correct! As expected of the Crown Prince!”

“I’m worried whether I can do it properly.”

At Hyang’s words, King Sejong pulled out a few sheets of paper from his sleeve and handed them to Hyang.

“This is... Oh!”

Hyang, who had thoughtlessly taken the papers, checked them and looked at King Sejong with surprised eyes.

The papers King Sejong handed over were the ones on which Hyang had written Hangul. They were clearly some of the papers he had scribbled on, crossed out lines, and even inked over. As Hyang stared open-mouthed at the papers still bearing stains here and there, King Sejong spoke.

“Was it concrete? Ever since I heard from the court historian that you had scribbled something and erased it, I had some suspicions. So I investigated just in case, and it confirmed my thoughts. You must already have some ideas, so the work shouldn’t be too difficult.”

In the end, Hyang had to wave the white flag.

“I will do my best, Father.”

“I’d like to see results as soon as possible.”

At King Sejong’s request, Hyang made one last attempt at resistance.

“May I bring in Anpyeong and Jinpyeong to help?”

“Those children have their own tasks. Once you’ve properly completed this, we’ll test how easy it is to learn through those children and others. And if we get satisfactory results from that, Anpyeong will organize vernacular songs, and Jinpyeong...”

Suddenly stopping mid-sentence, King Sejong let out a long sigh.

“Ah~. Jinpyeong is a problem. That boy is obsessed only with the iron horse...”

At King Sejong’s complaint, an idea flashed in Hyang’s mind.

“Then how about having him write the research records related to that iron horse using this writing system? If this writing system is properly completed, all the records from the research institute and Area 51 should be rewritten as well. This would be a test to see if the writing system can fulfill its role in such cases too.”

“That’s not a bad idea.”

Having thus taken on the assignment from King Sejong, Hyang left Gangyeongjeon carrying the bundles in both hands.

“Your Highness, let me carry those.”

“It’s fine. By the way...”

Hyang glared at the eunuchs following him.

“Was it you all?”

At Hyang’s question loaded with meaning, the eunuchs bowed their heads.

“Please forgive us.”

Seeing this, Hyang let out a long sigh and muttered.

“Huu! What fault is there in you? It must have all been by royal command... I need to make a shredder first thing...”

Grumbling like this as he walked, Hyang suddenly stopped.

“Wait...”

Hyang’s expression, as he stood still looking at the bundles, was more serious than ever before.

‘What I wrote on those papers were all just random words, weren’t they? And I scribbled them haphazardly... Could this end up different from the Hangul I know?’

The Hangul Hyang had scribbled on the papers were written randomly, following the flow of consciousness. They weren’t written in neat rows and columns, but scrawled wherever there was empty space as thoughts came to mind. Of course, there were some characters transcribed from Chinese while writing reports and petitions, but mixed with those random scribbles, it would surely only add to the confusion.

‘If I’m not careful, this could... I made a mistake not checking properly earlier!’

Hyang began to break out in a cold sweat.

For a simple example, he might have written ‘ㄱ’ but pronounced it as ‘ㄴ’ or ‘ㄷ’.

If Hyang’s worries turned out to be true, it meant he would have to either revise everything or learn it all anew himself.

‘No, it would be better to learn it anew than to revise everything.’

“Phew~.”

Having made his decision, Hyang sighed and continued walking.

“Why are these bundles so heavy!”

“Your Highness, let us...”

“It’s fine!”

Hyang’s voice was sharp with irritation that rose unconsciously, and the eunuchs had to remain on edge.

Upon returning to the Crown Prince’s palace, Hyang immediately opened the bundles and began checking the contents. It was urgent to confirm whether it was the worst-case scenario or not.

After checking about half of the books in the bundles, Hyang let out a sigh of relief.

“Phew~. Fortunately, nothing’s off...”

Having confirmed that the principles, consonant and vowel forms, and pronunciations were not different from what he had learned in the 21st century, Hyang soon became curious about something else.

“But why is there so much content?”

The half he had already checked contained most of the related information he knew.

As he looked through the contents of the remaining books out of curiosity, Hyang’s expression turned bewildered.

“My goodness... You’ve even created pronunciation notations for Chinese, Latin, Greek, and Arabic? That means... if this part hadn’t been done, the results could have come out faster?”

After examining several times the sections that organized not only the books that had entered Joseon but also the languages used by foreigners, Hyang muttered with a dejected face.

“It’s not ‘The sounds of our country’s language differ from Chinese,’ but ‘The sounds of our country’s language differ from the four seas (the world)’... You want me to organize all this and create example and vernacular explanation books?”

Faced with an unexpectedly enormous difficulty and volume, Hyang wore a dejected expression but soon shook his head with a wry smile.

“Really... I may be a cheat key, but that man is beyond standards...”

The time when he had acted as a purchasing agent was when the research institute and Area 51 were being established. It had been nearly 10 years.

Even though King Sejong had spent nearly 10 years, self-studying Chinese and Western phonology books to create an independent writing system was a miracle that made the impossible possible.

Of course, there were the papers he had scribbled on.

But even if the papers he had scribbled Hangul on were helpful, it was certain they couldn’t have been of great help. This was because ‘reverse engineering’ is impossible to even attempt without a similar level of technology or knowledge in the person attempting it.

Rather, without exceptional analytical and judgment skills, Hyang’s papers would surely have become a trap.

Therefore, Hyang couldn’t help but recall his habitual evaluation of “beyond standards” once again.

“Anyway, since I’ve taken it on, I have to do it... Tsk!”

Smacking his lips, Hyang reopened the books and began reading through them again.

As he read through the books again, Hyang chuckled when he reached the part explaining how to give examples related to pronunciation.

“Heh!”

The part that made Hyang laugh was as follows:

For explaining the pronunciation of ‘ㄱ’, it used ‘군(君)’ [gun, meaning ‘monarch’], and for explaining ‘ㄱ’, it used ‘규(虯)’ [gyu, meaning ‘baby dragon’].

If all the relevant parts were connected in this way, it would become ‘군규쾌업(君虯快業)’ [gun-gyu-kwae-eop, meaning “The king and the baby dragon worked joyfully.”]

Since ‘baby dragon’ usually referred to the Crown Prince, it could be paraphrased as follows:

-The king and the Crown Prince worked joyfully.

(Note 1)

In other words, King Sejong was telling Hyang this:

‘I’ve gilded it for you, so work hard!’

“Yes~. Yes~. I’ll work hard.”

Continually chuckling and muttering to himself, Hyang spread out blank papers and began his work.

A month later, Hyang visited Gangyeongjeon carrying two large bundles.

“Please review these.”

King Sejong, who had been silently looking at the bundles Hyang handed over, turned to Hyang.

“Well, the volume seems to have increased?”

“Ah, as I was organizing, I found some conflicting parts in the usage examples section, so I separately organized those parts and added suggestions for resolution. Also, I organized words that are good for composition but are rarely pronounced in reality. Please judge whether to remove or keep them after reviewing.”

As he listened to Hyang’s explanation, King Sejong opened the bundles and picked up a book to examine its contents.

After examining the dense red annotations – impertinently written in the script King Sejong had created – in both the original manuscript written by King Sejong and the newly transcribed copy, King Sejong glared at Hyang.

‘Is this deliberate? It’s definitely deliberate, right?’

“As you said, Father, I worked joyfully, so the volume increased a bit.”

At Hyang’s answer, King Sejong sighed.

“I understand. I’ll check and let you know the results.”

“Yes, Father.”

Note 1) <https://namu.wiki/w/훈민정음>

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BBCodes

[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.

Deathbringer, emphasis on [i]death[/i].

I'm totally [s]~~crossed-out~~[/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

[img]https://www.agine.this[/img]

[link]http://topwebfiction.com[/link].

[link=https://www.n.ot]clickbait[/link].

[quote]... me like my landlord![/quote]

[spoiler]Spanish Inquisition![/spoiler]

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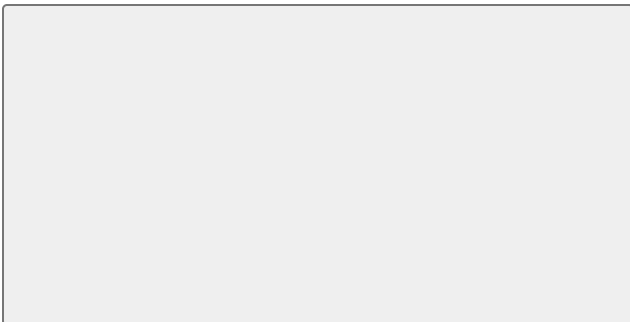
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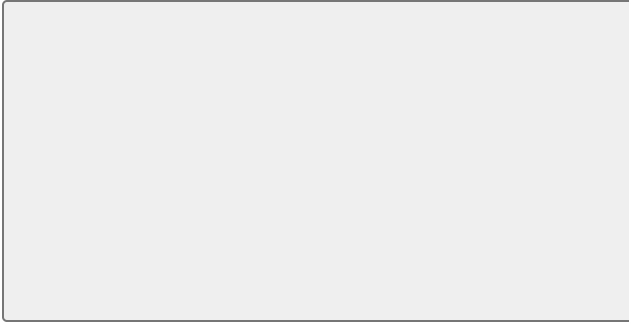
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Chapter 301 - 400

BCJ Chapter 363

Things That Multiply When Divided: Work and Curses

by *BlossomTL*Black Corporation: Joseon

With each exchange between King Sejong and Hyang, the bundles grew larger and larger.

This wasn't just because of the petty vengeance mixed into the work process.

The main reason for this gradual increase in volume was the problem of mindset and communication.

As Hyang became fully involved in the creation of Hangul, he introduced a large portion of 21st-century grammar and notation systems.

The use of the term "large portion" here was due to the unavoidable issues caused by the time gap between the 21st century and the mid-15th century.

In other words, it was a problem of mindset.

Another obstacle, the communication problem, was an unavoidable issue that arose from conducting everything through written correspondence rather than real-time conversation.

Even when looking at the same sentence, their understanding couldn't be exactly the same, leading to continuous conflicts. As related points, rebuttals, and counter-rebuttals continued, the volume gradually increased.

“This won't do! At this rate, we'll need to move it by cart!”

In the end, Hyang had no choice but to appeal this issue directly to King Sejong.

Putting down the bundle that had grown as large as his own body, Hyang immediately got to the point with King Sejong.

“Father, at this rate, we absolutely cannot produce proper results quickly.”

King Sejong nodded at Hyang's words.

“That's true. By now, we should have finished organizing and started creating the example book...”

“The work keeps getting delayed because there's a communication problem between you and me, Father. To be more specific, it's because misunderstandings arise as we exchange written messages like this.”

“Misunderstandings...”

As King Sejong stroked his beard and pondered Hyang's words, he nodded.

“That's probably the most accurate description. Well, even with the writings of ancient sages, people often come up with different interpretations...”

Recalling incidents from the royal lectures that he hardly held anymore, King Sejong nodded and turned to Hyang.

“Your words are correct. But there's a problem. Creating a writing system unique to our Joseon will be more than groundbreaking; it will be close to revolutionary. Even the ministers who are currently obedient might be likely to rise up. Therefore, we need to keep it secret until it's fully

completed. But won't meeting every night at Gangyeongjeon or the Crown Prince's palace draw the ministers' attention?"

While eunuchs and court ladies were not supposed to disclose what happened inside the palace to outsiders, there were always those with 'slightly' loose lips everywhere. So far, they had entrusted the work to carefully selected individuals, but they couldn't guarantee how long the secret would be kept.

As King Sejong's point was valid, Hyang racked his brain to think of a suitable method.

After a moment of consideration, Hyang soon recalled a useful entity.

"Father, how about using the secret guards?"

"The secret guards?"

"Yes, order the secret guards to find a suitable secret location."

"Hmm..."

At Hyang's suggestion, King Sejong stroked his beard and calculated the pros and cons. After weighing various possibilities, King Sejong soon made his decision.

"That seems good. I should tell them to find a suitable house within 2 *gak* (about 30 minutes) of Gyeongbok Palace."

"Yes, if you and I can work without misunderstandings for even 2 *shijin*, no, 1 *shijin* (2 hours), the work will become much easier. Working outside might draw attention, but in exchange, we can greatly increase the speed and shorten the time."

"I understand. I'll summon the captain of the Royal Guards tomorrow and have him proceed with this."

The captain of the Royal Guards, having received King Sejong's order, immediately relayed the command to the secret guards.

“His Majesty commanded that a tiled house might draw attention, so find a suitable thatched house.”

At the captain's words, the directors of the secret guards stared at him blankly.

“Why are you looking at me like that?”

“Do you think there's a thatched house suitable for His Majesty within 2 gak of Gyeongbok Palace?”

“Ah... Tsk!”

The captain of the Royal Guards smacked his lips and amended his order.

“Just find a suitable house. One where the inside isn't easily visible from the outside, and easy to guard. Also, a place where we can return to Gyeongbok Palace as quickly as possible in case of emergency.”

“Yes, understood. But why are we suddenly looking for a house? Could it be...?”

At the second director's question with a strange look in his eyes, the captain's face turned fierce.

“It's not what you're thinking. Don't make such baseless assumptions. If you do...”

The captain's eyes were full of killing intent as he trailed off, glaring. Seeing this, the second director immediately bowed his head.

“I won't even think about it!”

The secret guards lived up to their name. Within three days, they found a suitable house and acquired it through appropriate negotiations.

After cleaning the interior and furnishing it with the necessary furniture for work, the secret guards immediately reported to King Sejong.

From the night after receiving the report, Hyang and King Sejong put their heads together in that house to exchange opinions about the writing system.

The writing system born through this process ended up quite different from the Hunminjeongeum in the history Hyang had learned in the 21st century.

The first noticeable thing was that the writing system was divided into two parts.

Hyang completely separated the letters used to write the language commonly used by Joseon's people and those created to represent foreign language pronunciations – ㅏ, ㅑ, ㅓ, ㅕ, ㅗ, ㅛ, ㅜ, ㅠ, ㅡ, ㅟ, etc. (Note 1) – and explained the reason to King Sejong.

“These modified letters are for recording foreign sounds, so ordinary people don't need to know them. Therefore, it would be better to separate this part and have only interpreters or those learning foreign languages study them.”

“Wouldn't it be good for all people to be able to speak one or two foreign languages?”

At King Sejong's point, Hyang shook his head.

“If that were easy, you wouldn't have needed to create letters to replace Chinese characters, Father.”

‘Does he want to turn Joseon into the Netherlands?’

The Netherlands and nearby Northern European countries used English as fluently as their native languages. However, this was possible because their languages were all like branches spreading from the great root of the Roman Empire.

Hyang's argument continued.

“Why did you create a new writing system, Father? Wasn’t it to make it easy for the people to learn and use? Is there any need to make them put in unnecessary effort? And...”

Pausing briefly to wet his throat, Hyang continued.

“When our Joseon becomes strong, it won’t be us learning foreign languages, but foreigners learning our Joseon language and writing.”

King Sejong immediately responded to Hyang’s words.

“How wonderful would that be? No, we should make it so.”

“You will make our Joseon like that, Father.”

At Hyang’s words, King Sejong replied with a somewhat embarrassed expression.

“You’re gilding your father’s face.”

As Hyang and King Sejong directly put their heads together and exchanged opinions in real-time, the work progressed at an incredible speed. The work that had been dragging on for nearly three months since Hyang first took on the task was nearing its final stages after about two weeks.

Despite spending only an average of 1.5 shijin (about 3 hours) on the work each day, the speed was dazzling.

The last hurdles of the rapidly progressing work were three things.

The issue of spacing between words, the choice between vertical or horizontal writing, and the naming of this new writing system.

“Spacing between words... It looks good, but haven’t we been writing well without spacing until now?”

To King Sejong’s point, Hyang immediately replied.

“The same was said when punctuation marks were first introduced, but how is it now? Aren’t we using them so well that it would feel strange without them?”

From the time he first began to stand out, Hyang strongly advocated for the introduction of punctuation marks. In fact, he didn’t just advocate for them, but actively used them.

Although he was young, with the Crown Prince actively pushing and King Sejong’s support continuing, punctuation marks soon became established.

And these established punctuation marks quickly proved their usefulness, becoming a part of not only official documents but also letters and private documents among the people.

The ones who suffered the most in this process were those dragged into the Records Office. They had to use punctuation marks in the process of organizing, categorizing, and rewriting past records. This meant that they couldn’t simply transcribe old records, but had to examine each sentence and word carefully.

“That’s true, but won’t people say it’s a waste of paper?”

At King Sejong’s point, Hyang replied with an incredulous expression.

“With cheap paper already overflowing, who would say such nonsense?”

Hyang had transferred the technology for mass-producing yellow paper using pulp to the private sector. Of course, it wasn’t free. He collected a tidy sum in technology usage fees and sales of papermaking machinery.

This pulp papermaking technology released to the private sector led to mass distribution of paper and polarization.

Traditional Korean paper (Hanji) was sold as a luxury item, while yellow paper and bleached white paper made from yellow paper became established as low-cost products.

With their decent quality and low prices as weapons, yellow and white papers soon began to gradually dominate the paper markets in Ming and Japan.

In the end, after several rounds of debate, King Sejong accepted word spacing.

“The benefits outweigh the drawbacks, and it’s especially useful for understanding sentences, so it would be good to use it.”

After adopting word spacing, King Sejong and Hyang engaged in another heated debate over the issue of horizontal versus vertical writing.

“If we use metal pens, left-to-right horizontal writing wouldn’t be much of a problem. But this is only for metal pens. When writing with a brush, left-to-right horizontal writing is very inconvenient. For the simplest example, when dipping the brush in ink from the inkstone and moving to the paper, what if the ink drips? Also, we’ve been using right-to-left vertical writing all this time, so changing to left-to-right horizontal writing will face strong resistance.”

Hyang nodded at King Sejong’s point.

“You’re right. However, using left-to-right horizontal writing will make many things easier. For the simplest example, if you look at the reports created in the court, they contain many tables, formulas, and graphs. If we use left-to-right horizontal writing, it will be much more useful when using these. Of course, as you said, Father, if we force the government and people to use left-to-right horizontal writing right now, there will be strong resistance. We can start by having the government use left-to-right horizontal writing for documents created from now on.”

“There will still be considerable resistance. Do you have any good strategies or tools to persuade them?”

At King Sejong’s question, Hyang’s expression momentarily became enigmatic.

“Why that expression?”

At King Sejong’s question, Hyang quickly composed his expression and answered.

“Ah, it’s nothing. I just happened to think of a tool.”

King Sejong’s eyes sparkled at Hyang’s words.

“Oh? What is it?”

“It’s called a typewriter.”

After hearing Hyang’s explanation, King Sejong was very pleased.

“If it’s made properly, it will be very useful! Especially for those with poor handwriting!”

King Sejong really liked the idea of the typewriter. He often had headaches when reports or petitions written in poor handwriting were submitted.

Thanks to the hidden card of the typewriter, left-to-right horizontal writing was easily approved.

The last remaining issue was what to name this newly born writing system.

“Do you have a name in mind, Father?”

“At first, I thought of ‘Ija (易字)’ meaning ‘easy characters’, but I put it aside because it might be seen as the ‘Yi (易)’ of change and cause

unsavory rumors. So now I want to call it ‘Jeongeum (正音)’, meaning ‘correct sounds’. Because the people can correctly record their speech.”

As Hyang nodded at King Sejong’s words, he opened his mouth.

“How about adding ‘Hunmin (訓民)’ to that? Because the people can correctly understand your intentions, Father.”

“Hunmin... Hunminjeongeum...”

After repeating it a few times, King Sejong soon nodded.

“That’s good.”

Note 1) <https://namu.wiki/w/훈민정음>’s dental and palatal sounds

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BBCodes

[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.

Deathbringer, emphasis on [i]death[/i].

I'm totally [s]~~crossed-out~~[/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

[img]https://www.agine.this[/img]

[link]http://topwebfiction.com[/link].

[link=https://www.n.ot]clickbait[/link].

[quote]... me like my landlord![/quote]

[spoiler]Spanish Inquisition![/spoiler]

[ins]Insert[/ins] more bad puns!

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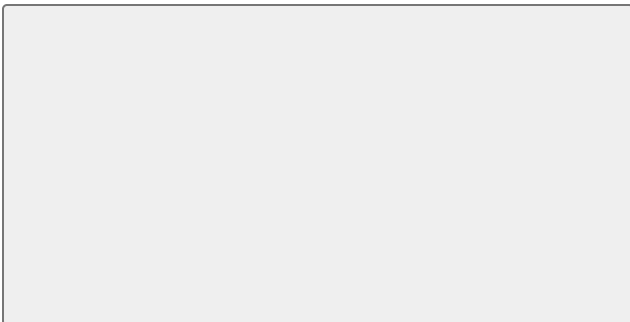
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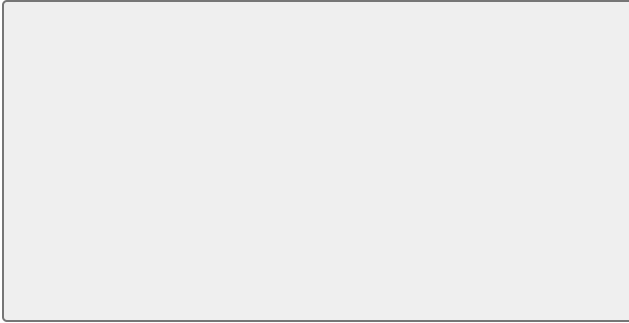
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Chapter 301 - 400

BCJ Chapter 364

Things That Multiply When Divided: Work and Curses

by *BlossomTL*Black Corporation: Joseon

With the naming of the writing system, the collaborative work of the father and son was completed.

The project, which started with over 40 volumes and grew to 70, ended with five slightly thick books. Of these five, three were for professionals dealing with foreign language pronunciation and recording – interpreters and translators for merchant groups. The remaining two were for the general public, with just over half a volume dedicated to the rules of the letters – spelling and pronunciation. The rest recorded examples of how to use them.

King Sejong looked at the pile of books on one side and the five volumes before him, then turned to Hyang.

“Somehow we’ve ended up completing the example book too, haven’t we?”

“It seems that’s how it turned out.”

Seeing Hyang’s smirking response, King Sejong asked briefly.

“You planned this, didn’t you?”

“How could I, Father?”

“You did plan it.”

More convinced by Hyang’s serious expression, King Sejong continued.

“I look forward to the vernacular translation. About five days should do, right?”

“... Yes.”

Having set a deadline, King Sejong looked again at the books on the desk.

“I wonder if it will really be used well.”

To King Sejong’s somewhat pessimistic words, Hyang immediately replied.

“It will be used well. It’s a writing system created for Joseon’s language, after all.”

“That’s exactly where there will be opposition. There will be those who object to using the same letters as the commoners. Saying it’s low class and such.”

“Wouldn’t it be better if more of them come out?”

“Huh?”

When King Sejong expressed doubt at this unexpected statement, Hyang continued with a smile.

“We’ll need many people to reorganize the records in the Records Office.”

“That’s true.”

“Father, you created Hunminjeongeum not only out of love for the people but also to break free from Ming’s shadow, didn’t you?”

King Sejong paused briefly at Hyang’s point, then smiled slightly as he responded.

“Your perceptiveness... Yes, that’s right. The shadow of the Central Plains is large and dense, but if we can’t break free from it, Joseon can’t grow. And these days, I’m as eager for the yellow dragon robe as you are.”

“So we need to stuff those who oppose it into the Records Office and make them work. We need to forcibly drill Hunminjeongeum into their bones to break their outdated thinking. Their skills are softer than an axe blade anyway. We should improve their constitution this way and make use of them.”

As Hyang mentioned the recent petition with axes incident, King Sejong nodded.

“That’s true. Although their skills are dull, we could use them in the Records Office.”

“Indeed.”

King Sejong and Hyang continued their conversation with smiles. However, the smiles on their faces looked more wicked than anyone else’s.

Though they seemed confident of success, King Sejong’s feelings were half worry and half expectation.

“I hope this writing system survives well.”

“It will survive.”

‘History proves it!’

Hyang asserted with a face full of conviction, then added his wish.

“If I have one wish, it’s that these words would be used for a long time without changing. When people’s lives become difficult, language is the first thing to become harsh.”

When Hyang lived as Jinho in the 21st century, his Korean language teacher had explained this aspect while teaching about the evolution of Hangul.

“As these old Hangul consonants and vowels disappeared, our language gradually became stronger and harder. So why did they disappear? The most plausible theory is that it was because people’s lives became harder. The period when old Hangul started to disappear was the latter half of Joseon, after experiencing two wars and suffering from famines. When survival itself became an issue, people’s temperaments sharpened, and as their temperaments sharpened, their language became sharper too.”

The students nodded at the teacher’s explanation. Similar content was recorded in their reference books.

The teacher, who had paused briefly, continued.

“And we actually experienced such a change. When? The most recent period would be that damned ‘IMF’ era. Until then, only rockers would say ‘ssarang’ instead of ‘sarang’ (love), but after the IMF crisis ended, even ballad singers started singing ‘ssarang’. Another example is the second-person pronoun ‘ne’. Subtitles clearly wrote ‘nega’, but people started saying ‘niga’, and before we knew it, even subtitles started writing ‘niga’.”

Hyang, briefly recalling the 21st century memory, repeated again.

“I only hope that the language of our Joseon will not become harsh for a long time to come.”

“That’s certainly true.”

Nodding strongly in agreement with Hyang’s words, King Sejong soon rose from his seat.

“Well! Now that we’ve finished, let’s get up.”

“Yes.”

Rising from his seat and slightly stretching his stiff back, King Sejong turned to Hyang.

“Five days. Don’t forget.”

“... Yes.”

A week later, King Sejong made a shocking revelation in a gathering of ministers.

“Today, I have something to tell you ministers.”

At King Sejong’s words, the ministers wore expressions that suggested the moment they had been waiting for had finally arrived.

They had known for months that King Sejong and Hyang had been busy coming and going, secretly planning something.

‘What on earth are they up to?’

Officials whose curiosity had built up over the months of secret activities had approached eunuchs they had befriended to casually ask questions.

However, the eunuchs who were questioned all consistently feigned ignorance.

This reaction from the eunuchs only piqued the ministers’ curiosity further.

“What on earth are they planning to do...”

Although all sorts of speculations were rampant, no one had the courage to ask King Sejong directly.

“Maybe Minister Hwang Hui could have done it.”

And today, King Sejong was revealing that secret himself.

With not only the ministers but also the court historians and scribes focused on King Sejong, he slowly continued speaking.

“For the past few years, I have been researching something alone. And today, I want to show you the results.”

“Gulp!”

At King Sejong’s words, the ministers swallowed dryly and stared at his mouth.

“Summon the Crown Prince.”

“Yes, Your Majesty.”

Shortly after, Hyang entered Geunjeongjeon with eunuchs. After paying respects to King Sejong, Hyang stood at the podium while the following eunuchs hung large charts on the hanging frames.

As Hyang’s preparations finished, King Sejong spoke again.

“What I want to show you today is a writing system unique to our Joseon.”

At King Sejong’s words, the ministers’ eyes widened as much as they could.

“Crown Prince, explain.”

“Yes, Father.”

Responding to King Sejong’s command, Hyang began speaking while turning over the cover of the chart with a pointer.

“I will now explain ‘Hunminjeongeum (訓民正音)’.”

Having somewhat recovered from their initial shock, the ministers soon focused on Hyang's explanation.

Hyang explained to the ministers the pronunciation of consonants and vowels, how they combine, and even simple examples.

“That concludes the explanation.”

As Hyang's explanation ended, King Sejong asked the ministers.

“What do you think?”

Though King Sejong asked, no ministers answered immediately. Eventually, Lee Jik stepped forward and addressed King Sejong.

“It seems we need to think about it a bit more, Your Majesty.”

“But surely you must have a first impression?”

At King Sejong's question, Maeng Sa-seong stepped forward.

“At first glance, it seems easy to write and read, but it's difficult to give a definitive answer before actually using it.”

King Sejong immediately responded to Maeng Sa-seong's answer.

“That's why Jinpyeong and Anpyeong started working on it yesterday. We should be able to see some results soon. For your reference, it took Jinpyeong and Anpyeong only about 1 *shijin* (about 2 hours) to learn this Hunminjeongeum.”

The ministers considered the meaning of the “1 shijin” King Sejong mentioned.

‘Is he bragging about his children? No... He's saying it's that easy.’

‘Is he emphasizing that it's easy to understand and use?’

While the ministers were struggling to find the hidden meaning in the words, the Chief Royal Secretary informed King Sejong that Anpyeong had arrived.

“Let him in.”

“Yes, Your Majesty.”

Shortly after, Anpyeong entered Geunjeongjeon and paid his respects to King Sejong.

“Well, what is it?”

“Following your command from yesterday, Father, I have recorded five vernacular songs and brought them.”

“Let me see.”

Receiving the papers through the Chief Royal Secretary, King Sejong carefully examined the contents. At the top of the papers were lyrics in Chinese characters, and at the bottom were lyrics written in Hunminjeongeum.

“Hmm...”

After comparing the lyrics written on the paper, King Sejong put down the papers and asked Anpyeong.

“So, how was it?”

“Hunminjeongeum was overwhelmingly useful for writing lyrics. Since I could write as it sounds, it greatly reduced the effort of finding the right Chinese characters for those words. Also, because I wrote the sounds directly, there was less risk of misrecording.”

“Is that so? I see. Ministers, please read it as well.”

“Yes, Your Majesty.”

The ministers read the lyrics Anpyeong had brought. Having just seen Hunminjeongeum, the unfamiliar ministers looked back and forth between the charts hanging on the frames and the papers to understand the sentences.

“G... Ga... Gat... Gasi... Gasiri...”

However, as they were unmatched in literary talent, they soon became accustomed and began to read the sentences.

“Gasiri gasiri itgo...”

“Nima nima...”

After confirming that the ministers had finished reading, King Sejong asked again.

“What do the ministers think?”

To King Sejong’s question, Lee Jik was the first to speak.

“Honestly, we could understand the meaning just from the sounds we read. It seemed somewhat useful, but it seems right to decide after testing it more in practice.”

At Lee Jik’s answer, King Sejong’s expression became unfavorable. Seeing that expression, Lee Jik’s heart sank, but he couldn’t agree right away.

‘I might end up like Minister Ryu Jeong-hyeon, but we’re talking about a writing system! A writing system! We need to examine it more carefully!’

Lee Jik continued speaking while repeatedly bowing his head.

“Is writing lyrics the only use for a writing system? I think it’s right to verify it in more applications and then decide.”

“If the results of Jinpyeong’s Hunminjeongeum report are good, will you concede?”

At King Sejong’s question, Lee Jik became very tense.

‘This is the final warning!’

Feeling his life was in danger, Lee Jik calculated as quickly as possible.

‘Prince Jinpyeong is in charge of official documents! If there are no particular problems with official documents...’

After calculating, Lee Jik made his decision.

“If so, this subject will concede, Your Majesty.”

“Then, let’s talk again at that time. Let’s end today’s court session here. I’m tired and need to rest.”

As King Sejong declared the end of the session, the ministers who left Geunjeongjeon all flocked to the Prime Minister’s Office (formerly the State Council).

Gathered in the meeting room of the Prime Minister’s Office, the ministers began to debate about Hunminjeongeum.

“His Majesty seems determined, so shouldn’t we follow?”

“That’s true, but a writing system unique to Joseon out of nowhere...”

“Still, it seems quite useful, what do you all think?”

Amidst various comments being exchanged, Kim Jeom showed a very positive reaction.

“I think it looks very useful. It’s not easy to transcribe our thoughts using someone else’s writing, is it? It seems like we might even be able to find hidden talents if we use it well.”

At Kim Jeom’s words, Maeng Sa-seong let out a long sigh.

“Huu~. Why wouldn’t I know that? The problem is that there’s an even bigger issue.”

“What issue?”

“A historical issue.”

At Maeng Sa-seong’s words, Kim Jeom thought for a moment, then nodded and looked at Lee Maeng-gyun.

“You’re going to be busy, Minister.”

At Kim Jeom’s words, most of the ministers except Lee Maeng-gyun nodded, and Lee Maeng-gyun grumbled with a very annoyed face.

“Ah! History is really...!”

It might be speculation to say so, but among the countries surrounding the Central Plains, there weren’t many countries with their own writing systems that had good relations with the Central Plains countries.

The Khitan Empire (Khitan script) was like that, the Jin Dynasty (Jurchen script) was like that, and the Yuan Dynasty (Mongolian script) was like that too.

If Joseon were to create and use its own writing system, there was a very high possibility that Ming would react nervously.

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[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.

Deathbringer, emphasis on [i]death[/i].

I'm totally [s]~~crossed-out~~[/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

[img]https://www.agine.this[/img]

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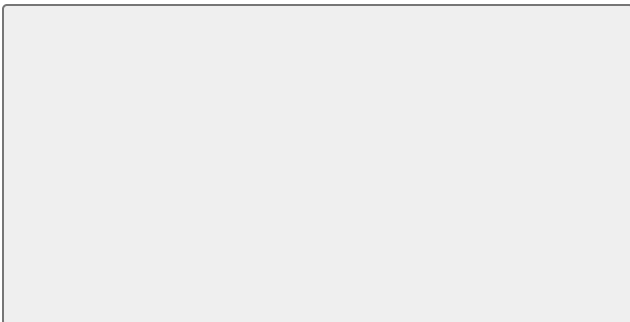
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Chapter 301 - 400

BCJ Chapter 365

Things That Multiply When Divided: Work and Curses

by *BlossomTL*Black Corporation: Joseon

Seeing Lee Maeng-gyun's reaction, Heo Jo interjected.

“Isn't it unavoidable? Using an independent writing system? In other words, it means the mind becomes independent. To put it another way, isn't it breaking the shackles of the mind? When that happens, one can look at the relationship between oneself and others more objectively.”

Following Heo Jo's words, Maeng Sa-seong continued.

“When you look at it objectively, you can reverse the relationship at any time. So about that...”

Pausing briefly, Maeng Sa-seong looked at Jo Mal-saeng.

“Minister, how is our Joseon's military power at present?”⁵⁵

“Military power... Doesn't the answer depend on what the goal is?”

At Jo Mal-saeng's counter-question, Maeng Sa-seong thought for a moment and said,

“In the case of marching towards Beijing, or in the case of defending against an invasion from Beijing.”

At Maeng Sa-seong's words, the faces of the surrounding ministers became serious. Maeng Sa-seong was now asking if it was possible to attack Ming, the suzerain state.

The ministers swallowed dryly as they waited for Jo Mal-saeng's answer.

After organizing his thoughts for a moment, Jo Mal-saeng gave his answer.

“In both cases, whoever initiates the offensive is destined to fail.”

“Why?”

“There are several reasons, but if I were to give the most important one, it's supply.”

As Jo Mal-saeng mentioned supply, the ministers nodded slightly. Seeing this, Jo Mal-saeng added more.

“Whether we go to Beijing or they come to our Joseon, the problem is that we have to pass through Liaodong. The supply line will naturally be lengthened, and cutting off that supply line would be the best tactic. There's no one in our Joseon or in Ming who doesn't know this. Naturally, forces will be dispersed, and the power participating in the attack will be further reduced.”

“What if we requisition locally?”

At Maeng Sa-seong's point, Jo Mal-saeng shook his head.

“If we show signs of local requisition, they will immediately use scorched earth tactics.”

At Jo Mal-saeng's answer, Kim Jeom interjected.

“What if we only bring food and use Ming's gunpowder?”

“The gunpowder used by Ming troops not only has lower potency, but it also severely corrodes muskets and cannons. Of course, the gunpowder

used by our Joseon troops also corrodes firearms and cannons, but Ming's is worse."

"How do you know that?"

"If you pay money, Ming merchants will find out everything for you. Thanks to that, we were able to experiment sufficiently in Area 51."

Jo Mal-saeng, who had been kindly explaining to the ministers' questions, suddenly asked with a fierce expression.

"By the way... We were discussing the Hunminjeongeum issue, so why did we diverge to this topic? And why are you all acting like people desperate to fight Ming?"

At Jo Mal-saeng's question, Lee Jik explained the reason.

"It's because of what Minister Heo said earlier. Even if we say it's just language, if we become independent even in writing, it's certain that our relationship with Ming will change from before."

At Lee Jik's words, Jo Mal-saeng sighed.

"Huu~. Let's talk about that when the time comes. We're continuously expanding our military power anyway, and we're still maintaining friendly relations with Ming. The young ones in the army and navy are already causing headaches with their excitement, so there's no need for the ministers to fan the flames, is there?"

"Huh? Are the young officers up to something?"

At Jo Mal-saeng's words, the ministers' faces became serious. They were worried that some might be dreaming of a military regime like Goryeo's.

To the ministers' questions, Jo Mal-saeng sighed again and continued.

"Huu~. The Land Defense Army is pestering me to remove the 'defense' from their name. They're saying if the navy is just called the navy, why

should they be called the Land Defense Army. If that's the case, they argue, the navy should also be renamed to the Maritime Defense Force."

"Oh my... tsk!"

At Jo Mal-saeng's words, all the ministers clicked their tongues. Removing 'defense' from the Land Defense Army's name could mean that Joseon's strategy might shift from defense-centered to offense-centered.

If that happened, many troublesome issues could arise.

In the end, Lee Jik had to urge Jo Mal-saeng.

"Tell the young ones to exercise restraint."

"I'm already doing that. So, ministers, please don't say strange things."

"Understood."

After sorting out the situation, Lee Jik looked around at the ministers.

"We've digressed a bit, but let's reach a conclusion first. We said we'd decide after seeing Prince Jinpyeong's report, but wouldn't it be better to conclude in favor of accepting the use of Hunminjeongeum?"

At Lee Jik's question, all the ministers nodded.

"His Majesty strongly desires it, and it seems useful in its own way, so wouldn't it be good to accept it?"

The ministers nodded at Kim Jeom's assessment. Amidst this, Lee Maeng-gyun muttered without realizing it.

"If Minister Ryu Jeong-hyeon and others were still here like before, there would have been quite an uproar..."

"Shh! Why are you mentioning that person again!"

At Maeng Sa-seong's rebuke, Lee Maeng-gyun closed his mouth with an 'oops' expression.

Watching this, Heo Jo stroked his beard and muttered.

“Come to think of it, isn't it a bit strange?”

“What is?”

“When those stubborn ones from the Hall of Worthies submitted their resignation... Doesn't it feel like His Majesty dealt with the matter angrily, more than necessary?”

“Hm? Now that you mention it...”

At Heo Jo's point, all the ministers began to have the same doubt.

To say it now, King Sejong's response to the mass resignation incident of the Hall of Worthies scholars was quite extreme.

If it had been the usual King Sejong who cherished talent, he would have tried to persuade them more, or accepted their resignations but called them back not long after. However, King Sejong approved all their petitions and then banned not only their grandchildren but even their great-grandchildren from submitting petitions or entering government service.

Not only that, but he also dismissed Choi Man-ri, the Chief Scholar of the Hall of Worthies, who was recognized as an incorruptible official with outstanding abilities, holding him responsible.

“Certainly, at the time, we only thought those stubborn ones had provoked His Majesty's wrath, but thinking about it now, it does seem excessive.”

At Lee Jik's words, Maeng Sa-seong turned to Heo Jo.

“What do you think, Minister?”

“We could say it went too far, but I think His Majesty might have cleared them out in advance, just in case.”

“Huh? Nah~.”

“Come on, isn’t that going too far?”

At Heo Jo’s words, everyone waved their hands in denial, but in their minds, they were all thinking similarly.

‘It’s possible if it’s His Majesty and the Crown Prince!’

‘Those two could do it!’

That’s what they were thinking in their minds. However, the ministers didn’t voice these thoughts aloud. No, they couldn’t.

The moment they uttered those words, it felt like they wouldn’t be able to consider King Sejong and Hyang as people like themselves anymore.

While the ministers were murmuring in the State Council, King Sejong, having sent the court historians and scribes far away, was talking with Hyang in Gangyeongjeon.

“Pushing out those stubborn ones from the Hall of Worthies like that seems to have been a great help.”

At King Sejong’s words, Hyang asked with an expression that seemed to say, “Really?”

“Was it a coincidence?”

“It was a coincidence. A coincidence...”

King Sejong, who had been emphasizing that it was a coincidence, suddenly shouted.

“Crown Prince! What do you take your father for?”

“You planned it in advance to proceed smoothly with this matter...”

“You brat, get out!”

Three days later, Jinpyeong’s report was submitted. With Jinpyeong standing to one side with a very tense face, King Sejong and the ministers read the report and then shared their opinions.

“How do the ministers find the report written in Hunminjeongeum?”

To King Sejong’s question, Lee Jik stepped forward to answer.

“Although it takes time because we’re not yet familiar with how to read it, we can understand its meaning as soon as we read it, so I think it’s useful.”

“Then, do you agree to promulgate this and have all the people use it?”

“We will follow Your Majesty’s will.”

At Lee Jik’s answer, King Sejong’s voice hardened.

“I’m not asking if you’ll follow, but if you agree.”

At King Sejong’s question, Lee Jik finally waved the white flag.

“We agree, Your Majesty.”

As Lee Jik waved the white flag, King Sejong turned to the other ministers.

“What do you think, ministers? Do you agree?”

To King Sejong's question, the ministers had no choice but to give the same answer as Lee Jik.

"We agree, Your Majesty."

Once the ministers agreed, one way or another, King Sejong talked about future plans.

"It will take time to educate the teachers of the public and secondary schools, and to compose and create educational books for use in schools. So, I would like to set the formal promulgation to educational institutions and announcement to the people to start from the school term beginning next year. What do you think?"

"It seems appropriate, Your Majesty."

"Good. However, let's have the court, research institute, and Hall of Worthies start using it from next month to identify and fix any problems."

At King Sejong's words, the ministers' faces turned pale.

"But we have many ongoing tasks, Your Majesty."

"That's why we adjusted things last time, isn't it? Now that we have a bit more leeway, it shouldn't be too difficult."

At King Sejong's words, the ministers answered with tears in their eyes.

"We receive your command."

The court historian who recorded all this added the following:

-Thus, when His Majesty asked, all the ministers, great and small, agreed.

The historian says:

The intention of His Majesty in creating the writing system is truly beautiful, but the way of implementing it uses expedient measures, which is not beautiful.

If the intention is beautiful but the action is not beautiful too often, it can lead to tyranny.

As he has ordered us to learn the newly created writing system, it seems we won't be able to go home for a while.

The life of an official is really hard.

Although a rough schedule was set like this, King Sejong couldn't give up his ambition.

“How can we best ensure that Hunminjeongeum quickly takes root among the people?”

“Well... How about having all official documents use Hunminjeongeum first?”

“Wouldn't it be too slow if we rely only on official documents?”

“...”

At King Sejong's point, the ministers closed their mouths and pondered other methods.

Seeing this, Hyang stepped forward.

“Father, how about using popular tales?”

At Hyang's suggestion, King Sejong made a slightly troubled expression.

“Aren't there problems with popular tales, as many have frivolous language and disorderly content?”

“Although the language is said to be frivolous, it's that much easier to read, so it will be easy for people to learn Hunminjeongeum. And if the content is disorderly, can't we just write popular tales with proper content? In simple terms, it's using the form of popular tales to educate the people.”

“Hmm...”

At Hyang’s suggestion, King Sejong stroked his beard in thought and then looked at Jo Gye-saeng.

“What does the Minister of Education think?”

At King Sejong’s question, Jo Gye-saeng thought for a moment and gave the most orthodox answer.

“It would be right to consider it more, but thinking briefly, it doesn’t seem bad. Popular tales are short, so people won’t be burdened reading them, and while many have disorderly content, there are also those with moral lessons, so it might be good to select ones that serve as good examples, compile them into a book, and distribute it.”

“It seems good. Please think about it more and submit a report.”

“I receive your command.”

Jo Gye-saeng, who had unexpectedly been given additional work, answered with a voice full of moisture.

After exchanging opinions on various proposals, King Sejong instructed the ministers.

“For a while, we will experience a situation where there’s a lot of work but little result, due to lack of people and the need to learn and use the new writing system. However, don’t become negligent because we’ve reached this stagnant period. Instead, use this as an opportunity to closely examine and fix deficient and problematic areas.”

At King Sejong’s admonition, the ministers all bowed their heads and answered in unison.

“We will engrave it on our bones and hearts!”

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[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.
Deathbringer, emphasis on [i]*death*[/i].
I'm totally [s]~~crossed out~~[/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

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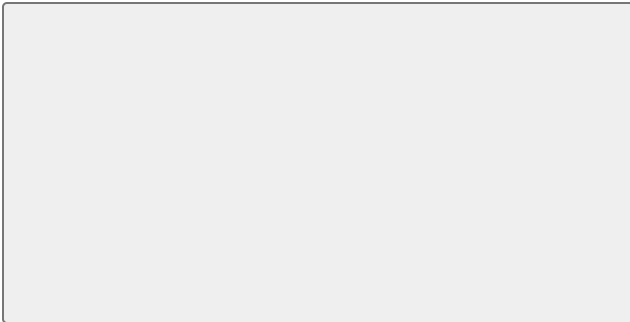
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Chapter 301 - 400

BCJ Chapter 366

Things That Multiply When Divided: Work and Curses

by *BlossomTL*Black Corporation: Joseon

After finishing the morning assembly at Geunjeongjeon Hall, the ministers hurried en masse to the State Council meeting room.

As soon as they settled in their seats, Minister Jung Yeok of the National Land Development Department let out a long sigh.

“Phew... His Majesty emphasizes that it’s a period of stagnation, but is it really so?”

As the Reformation Plan were nearing their end, Joseon’s development was starting to become strained. As a result, most departments were adjusting the priorities of their ongoing policies, giving the impression of stagnation. However, the National Land Development Department was the only one without a single such policy.

In fact, King Sejong went as far as to urge:

“The ongoing transportation network improvement project is crucial in determining Joseon’s future. Therefore, do your utmost to ensure there are no delays.”

Jung Yeok could only bow his head and reply to King Sejong's request.

"I will engrave it on my bones and keep it in my heart."

In response to Jung Yeok's lament, Jo Gye-saeng burst out:

"At least Your Excellency is maintaining the status quo! For me, it's not just maintaining, but the work has increased!"

"Ah..."

"I can see that Hunminjeongeum is useful, but to prepare to teach it from next year... What is this..."

"Still, isn't it generous that they've given you a year? In other times, they would have ordered immediate implementation. Surely His Majesty has taken that into consideration?"

At Kim Jeom's colorless words, Jo Gye-saeng's eyes blazed with anger.

"No, this man is really...!"

"Hmph! You complain about being swamped with work, but would you like to take over the Minister of Finance's duties instead?"

At Kim Jeom's words, the fire in Jo Gye-saeng's eyes slowly subsided.

In the process of adjusting policy priorities, King Sejong had not mentioned the Minister of Finance even once.

"Your Majesty, shouldn't our Minister of Finance also adjust the priorities of some policies?"

Kim Jeom, unable to stand by, stepped forward, but Sejong firmly refused.

"The Minister of Finance manages the nation's finances and is primarily responsible for the people's livelihoods. How can there be any order of

priority or relative importance in such crucial matters? Rather, it would be right to find and review issues before the people petition for them.”

Sejong’s order was simple:

‘Find work to do, even if you have to search for it.’

“I will do my best, Your Majesty.”

If anything, Kim Jeom had taken on more homework before withdrawing.

Watching Kim Jeom, Jung Yeok, and Jo Gye-saeng express their frustrations, Lee Jik turned to Maeng Sae-seong.

“The bar tab is going to be hefty today.”

At Lee Jik’s words, Maeng Sae-seong muttered quietly with a pale face.

“Your Excellency! Have you forgotten what happened last time?”

“We’ll have to sneak out as quietly as possible.”

As the grumbling of the three ministers subsided somewhat, the officials resumed their discussion.

“His Majesty calls it a period of stagnation, but I truly wonder if it’s accurate to call it so.”

As Jung Yeok questioned again, Maeng Sae-seong picked up the conversation.

“On the surface, it might seem like stagnation, right? New policies were being created and implemented almost daily, but now such cases have decreased for the time being.”

“Ugh...”

As Jung Yeok groaned in response to Maeng Sae-seong's answer, Heo Jo continued the conversation.

“To be precise, ‘period of reorganization’ would be a more fitting term than ‘period of stagnation’.”

The ministers nodded at Heo Jo's observation.

The current situation was indeed closer to a period of reorganization, as Heo Jo had said, rather than stagnation.

And the biggest reason for this reorganization period was the explosive population growth.

The population, which had drastically decreased during the chaotic period from the end of Goryeo to the early days of Joseon's founding, had exploded as the Reformation Plan progressed.

Although Joseon's government organization had continuously expanded until now, it was clear that if the population continued to grow at the current rate, it would be difficult to manage properly.

Therefore, both King Sejong and the ministers had chosen to take a moment to catch their breath.

Nodding at Heo Jo's response, Jung Yeok asked again.

“Then how long do Your Excellencies think this period of stagnation will last? I'm expecting at least 10 years.”

At Jung Yeok's statement, the ministers calculated and estimated in various ways. After a long deliberation, Heo Jo spoke up.

“Five years at the shortest, ten years at the longest?”

“That seems the most likely.”

“Indeed.”

Jung Yeok sighed at the ministers’ comments.

“Phew... Five years, huh... As expected, the Hansu Bridge will determine everything.”

The ministers all nodded at Jung Yeok’s words.

Everyone agreed that the very last part of the Reformation Plan was the land transportation network currently being reorganized. And the crown jewel of this land transportation network reorganization was the bridge to be built over the Hansu River.

During this transportation network reorganization, bridges were being built over large and small rivers across Joseon. The process of building bridges using reinforced bamboo concrete was a new challenge.

Therefore, the trading company in charge of construction started by gaining experience with smaller streams. All the trial and error that occurred in the process was documented and transferred to the research institute and Area 51. Through this process, construction technology was continuously improving, and newly improved techniques were immediately applied to new sites.

As a result of this process, bridges built later had wider spans between piers and were built more sturdily.

And at the end of this chain reaction, bridges began to be built over other large rivers, excluding the Hansu, two years ago.

These bridges had a significant characteristic: two bridges were always built simultaneously over large rivers that were crucial for transportation.

One was a bridge for people and ox carts to pass, and the other was a bridge for iron horses to cross.

“The iron horse will become the core of Joseon’s land transportation in the future!”

Agreeing with Hyang’s assertion, King Sejong’s decision led to ongoing intensive improvement work on the iron horses. As a result, larger and more powerful iron horses were being researched in Area 51.

And following Sejong’s decision after observing this progress, the construction of bridges for iron horses was implemented first.

“It will be too late if we build the bridges after a suitable iron horse is completed! We must build them in advance!”

At Sejong’s instruction, Jung Yeok immediately opposed.

“Building bridges is not difficult, Your Majesty. The difficult part is deciding how sturdy to design the bridges. The size and weight of the iron horses are increasing. In a situation where we can’t predict that aspect, building in advance could lead to waste.”

“Your words are right.”

Eventually, this homework was passed on to the research institute and Area 51. After Hyang, along with Jeong Cho, Jeong Inji, Lee Soonji, and others put their heads together and calculated, the conclusion was as follows:

-Initially, 12,000 gwan (approximately 45 tons) would be commercially viable. However, it will eventually increase to 24,000 gwan (about 90 tons). (Note 1)

However, this figure is for the iron horse alone. When loaded with coal and water, it could increase up to 37,900 gwan (about 140 tons).

“This is calculated for the iron horse alone? Then what if passenger cars or freight cars are attached?”

“At least double that.”

At Hyang's answer, Jung Yeok's face, who was listening nearby, turned pale.

Seeing Jung Yeok's face, Sejong gave an order to Hyang.

“Design the bridge based on the final expected product.”

“I receive your command.”

Thus, the design for the railway bridges to be built over the four major rivers was completed.

And as a result of this continued challenge, calculation formulas for designing bridges to be built over the Hansu—which excited Kim Dam and Western scholars—were created.

Because it was an enormous symbol connecting Joseon's capital, Hanseong, with other regions, those in charge of designing the bridge over the Hansu poured their hearts and souls into it.

And according to the design thus created, construction was scheduled to begin from this dry season.

As an aside, while this bridge, going through such a process, should have been a masterpiece for the designers, the parties involved were full of complaints.

“Ah! We could have reduced the number of piers!”

By order of Hyang, who received the initial draft, they had to reduce the spacing between piers slightly and increase the number of piers.

“I understand you've put your heart and soul into it, but reduce the spacing between the piers here a bit and increase the number of piers. Make it a little safer.”

“The current design already guarantees sufficient safety, Your Majesty.”

“I’m sure it does. But isn’t this the bridge over the Hansu? Let’s make it a little safer.”

“Minimum five years to maximum ten years... If we consider the time until those who have learned Hunminjeongeum are deployed in practical work, the amount of work will increase tremendously.”

The other ministers looked at Jung Yeok with peculiar expressions at his words.

“Why are you all looking at me like that?”

In response to Jung Yeok’s question, Heo Jo asked back.

“Your Excellency, do you plan to live and work until then? Haha... It seems we should diligently prepare some medicine for you.”

“Ah...”

Jung Yeok, who let out a small exclamation at Heo Jo’s words, muttered with a mixed expression.

“Our age has already come to this.”

Most of the ministers in the meeting room now were those who had been active in politics since the late Goryeo period.

Now, more than 30 years after Joseon’s founding, they had reached an age where it wouldn’t be strange if they held their funeral tomorrow.

Maeng Sae-seong also continued with a similar expression.

“Our job is to prepare for the future using this period of stagnation. The next generation will take care of what comes after. The regrettable points are that we’ve become old just as we’ve been blessed with work, and it’s certain that we won’t be able to properly see the results before we go.”

The ministers nodded quietly.

This is how the period later called the “Period of Stagnation” came to be.

Scholars studying Joseon’s history evaluated this period as follows:

‘A novice historian would simply evaluate it as a period of stagnation, but a proper historian despairs when looking at this period of stagnation.’

The Joseon government, which confirmed the explosive population growth evaluated as ‘the world’s first officially recorded baby boom,’ entered into a large-scale reorganization. This was an effort to minimize the shock when the baby boom generation became adults and entered society.

Therefore, on the surface, the period of stagnation seemed quiet. It appeared even more so when compared to the periods before and after, which were full of all sorts of new policies, events, and incidents.

However, scholars who studied this period of stagnation firmly denied such thoughts.

They were convinced that this period of stagnation was the most important period that determined the era of great leap forward.

As a result, there were even scholars who devoted their entire lives to studying just this ‘period of stagnation.’

And there were no scholars who denied that the most important event in this period of stagnation was the creation and dissemination of Hunminjeongeum.

The point that the power dynamics among the three Northeast Asian countries began to change greatly as the first generation familiar with Hunminjeongeum was produced, breaking away from the Hanja culture.

No, the creation and dissemination of Hunminjeongeum was a mega-event that caused even Western countries to be greatly shaken by the butterfly

effect caused by the changes in Northeast Asia.

As a result, scholars studying Joseon during this period had to examine not only the history of Ming and Wa (Japan) but also European history, and the intensity of their labor was beyond imagination.

This led to the following joke circulating among historians:

“Recommend studying post-stagnation Joseon history to someone you dislike.”

Note 1) Based on the Korean National Railroad 900 series steam locomotive.

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BBCodes

Bold of you to assume I have a plan.

Deathbringer, emphasis on *death*.

I'm totally ~~crossed-out~~ by this.

- Listless I'm counting my bullets.



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... me like my landlord!

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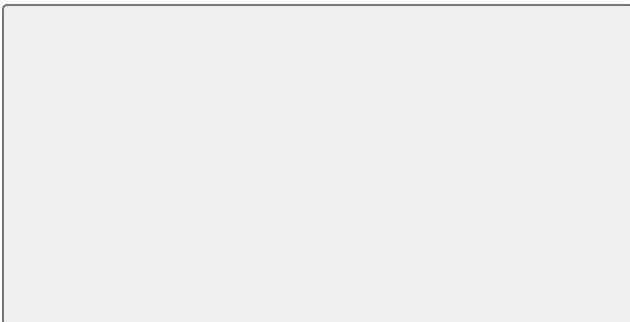
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Chapter 301 - 400

BCJ Chapter 367

The Period of Stagnation - Motion in Stillness

by *BlossomTL*Black Corporation: Joseon

Thus, Joseon entered a period of stagnation, rolling busily along in its own tranquility.

Many merchant ships were diligently traveling between Shandong in Ming and Jemulpo. In Dongnae, merchant ships were busily traveling to and from the Joseon trading posts in Tsushima Island and mainland Japan.

And from Mokpo, merchant ships were traveling to and from the territories of Ouchi and Gendojin (Shibukawa Mitsuyori). The ships coming from Ouchi were loaded with silver ore, while those from Gendojin's territory were full of cotton.

Gendojin, who had attacked the Shoni clan in alliance with Ouchi, was able to recover his lost territory.

After recovering his territory, Gendojin began cultivating cotton, accepting Joseon's proposal to cover the war expenses he had incurred and to secure funds to rebuild his territory.

And from this year, cotton in commercially significant quantities began to enter Joseon.

This cotton from Japan was transformed into plain cotton cloth through the hands of merchant groups in Joseon and was being sold not only to Ming,

Jurchen, and Japan, but also as far as Arabia and Europe.

This became the occasion for the phrase “Florence’s wool, Joseon’s cotton” to be born in Europe.

In this process, Mokpo Naval Base began to develop from a simple naval port into a trading port.

Challenger-class warships regularly traveled between Alexandria and Mokpo, and merchant ships belonging to the Mansur merchant group also frequented busily.

Moreover, merchant ships from Ryukyu and Siam (Thailand), having heard the rumors, also visited Mokpo Naval Base.

In this process, the merchant ships from Siam, or more precisely, the Siamese Kingdom of Ayutthaya, stood out.

It was a country that had visited once during King Taejo’s era, but had not maintained diplomatic relations as it was thought there would be no particular benefit.

Thailand’s main products were raw logs and resin of sappanwood and agarwood.

Sappanwood was used as a raw material for red or purple dye, agarwood logs were used to make incense, and its resin was a material used in fragrances and medicines.

Until now, these were mainly obtained through intermediary trade via Ming merchants, but direct trade was established as Siam sent merchant ships directly.

These foreign merchant ships visiting Joseon were good prey for pirates. However, there were no pirates who dared to approach within two days’ distance from Joseon and Kyushu.

That inner area was the domain of the Haeung-class high-speed warships.

Therefore, pirates waited for opportunities on the outskirts of this domain. However, the captains operating the merchant ships were not to be underestimated.

They moved in sync with the departure times of Joseon's Challenger-class ships.

As long as the Challenger-class warships were holding the line, pirates could not recklessly touch the merchant ships.

While Joseon's West Sea and South Sea were bustling with activity, the East Sea region of Joseon was relatively quiet.

At *Dongbinghang* – the place that would have been called Vladivostok before Hyang's intervention – Challenger-class warships and Haeung-class warships were being built using timber harvested from nearby coniferous forests.

The nearby conifers had hard and dense wood, making them optimal materials for shipbuilding.

Moreover, as most of them grew straight, they were also excellent as building materials.

Soon, the newly built Challenger-class and Haeung-class warships' first mission became heading to Wonsan, fully loaded with timber.

In this process, Joseon recorded another 'world first'.

-The first country in the world to start a 'systematic' afforestation project.

“Although the scale of those coniferous forests is enormous, if we log indiscriminately, we will soon see their end. Therefore, we must raise healthy saplings to fill the places where trees have been cut down. This is for our future generations, so it must never be done carelessly.”

Following King Sejong's order – of course, with Hyang laying the groundwork – a systematic afforestation project was initiated.

It wasn't that there were no afforestation projects before Sejong.

Efforts had been made to preserve forestry resources since the Three Kingdoms period. These were artificial afforestation areas called Imsu.

However, Sejong's policy received the title of 'world's first' because it was the first to publicly declare that its purpose was the preservation of resources.

Apart from the active movement between Dongbinghang and Wonsan, the East Sea had become quite quiet.

Other than Haeung-class warships patrolling up to the vicinity of Mureungdo (Ulleungdo) and Usando (Dokdo) to prevent the entry of Japanese fishermen or pirates, there was only the regular ship traveling to and from Daeseoldo (Hokkaido in the history before Hyang's intervention).

Exploration of the north and east beyond that had been temporarily suspended due to manpower shortage.

“For now, let's focus on fully incorporating Daeseoldo into Joseon's territory.”

King Sejong concluded with a face full of regret, and there were no ministers opposing this.

There was considerable difficulty in naming Daeseoldo.

The first candidate name was 'Apwaedo' (Island Suppressing the Japanese), proposed by Heo Jo.

It was a name given with the meaning of ‘pressing down on the heads of the Japanese’, but soon other ministers expressed their disapproval.

“It’s a name that feels satisfying, but it’s problematic diplomatically. Let’s choose another name.”

“Do we have to consider the feelings of those Japanese bastards?”

“It’s because those bastards won’t just sit quietly!”

“Huh~. Now we even have to consider the feelings of those Japanese bastards!”

“We should teach them a lesson when the time comes, but let’s not give them an excuse!”

After such a heated debate, King Sejong made the decision.

“I don’t like the Japanese either, but there are many Japanese who maintain good relations with our Joseon, so I think it’s better to avoid too aggressive a name.”

Following Sejong’s decision, the island was named ‘Daeseoldo’ (Great Snow Island) as a kind of conciliatory measure.

To fully incorporate Daeseoldo into Joseon’s territory, what Joseon chose was the ‘government monopoly store’.

The Ainu people, the native inhabitants of Daeseoldo, were in a situation where everything was lacking.

Hunting, gathering, and primitive agriculture alone could not meet all their needs.

Therefore, the government monopoly store located in the Joseon residential area was a dream place for the Ainu people.

An official dispatched from Joseon told an Ainu who could communicate through writing about the conditions for using the government monopoly store.

-You can use it if you become a subject of Joseon.

-What does it mean to become a subject of Joseon?

-You need to obey the orders of His Majesty and follow Joseon's laws.

-Are there any other conditions besides that?

-Customs that violate etiquette are prohibited.

-I will discuss this with my clan.

Through this process, a small number of Ainu gradually pledged allegiance to Joseon.

Ainu who pledged allegiance to Joseon were issued identity tags, and in this process, many laughable incidents occurred.

It was in the process of recording the names of the Ainu.

It was not an easy task to transcribe names created in the native Ainu language into Chinese characters phonetically.

In any case, the absorption of the Ainu through the medium of the government monopoly store proceeded smoothly.

This was because not only did the Ainu who had pledged allegiance suffer no particular harm, but other Ainu also began to pledge allegiance to Joseon after seeing them freely use the government monopoly store.

Hyang, who had been listening to the report beside Sejong, muttered with an evil smile in his own room.

“Rule by virtue is good, but rule by money is even better... It’s no wonder the Chinese called it ‘the capitalism of all evils’.”

What the Ainu bought at the government monopoly store were not luxury items, but necessities such as cloth, grains, salt, and sugar.

In the process of obtaining these necessities, the Ainu experienced a powerful culture shock, and the item that caused this shock was salt.

“I’d like to buy some of that salt...”

When an Ainu visiting the government monopoly store stated his business in halting Korean, the store official asked a question.

“You want salt? What kind of salt?”

At the official’s question, the Ainu asked back with a puzzled expression.

“What kind of salt?”

Seeing the Ainu’s expression, the official guided him to one side.

Moving to a counter on one side, the official stretched out his arm and asked again.

“What kind of salt do you want?”

“Eh?”

The Ainu blinked his wide-open eyes and looked again at the scene before him.

There were at least 10 different types of salt of various colors displayed. Looking at the Ainu, the official continued speaking.

“If you’re simply looking for a salty taste, you can buy the cheapest sun-dried salt over there, and if you want a more sophisticated taste, you can

buy this boiled salt here. We have everything from the most basic clear roasted salt to medicinal salt used in porridge for patients with stomach aches or colds. Which one do you want?”

The Ainu could only open and close his mouth at the official’s explanation and the spectacle before his eyes.

The diversification of Joseon’s boiled salt was, of course, due to Hyang’s obsession.

In the early days of his reign, Sejong had decided to convert all private salt production to government salt production and was strongly pushing for this.

This was because the profits that salt makers were making from selling salt, one of the necessities for human life, were enormous.

Therefore, it was to secure finances while converting private salt to government salt.

Naturally, the resistance from salt makers was fierce.

Many salt makers fled from their designated workplaces and frequently made and sold salt secretly.

However, Sejong consistently pushed for government salt production.

Watching this scene from the side, Hyang had to ponder with a troubled face.

“It’s a cliché, but you know... I’m reluctant about sun-dried salt too.”

When living as Jinho in the 21st century, Jinho’s family used refined salt and rock salt.

They used refined salt for making kimchi and rock salt for other cooking.

When Jinho asked the reason, his mother had said with an embarrassed smile:

“Well? These days, I just don’t feel attached to sun-dried salt. There was a lot of talk about salt farm slaves and such for a while, wasn’t there?”

Perhaps because of that, Hyang felt considerable aversion to sun-dried salt, both when living as Jinho and now as Hyang.

“But boiled salt has many problems too...”

According to Hyang’s research, boiled salt was being made all along the coast of Joseon.

In the West Sea and South Sea, they made it by trapping seawater in tidal flats, then evaporating it, and then mixing the mudflat soil with seawater again to increase the salt concentration before boiling the brine. In the East Sea, they simply mixed seawater fetched from the sea with soil or sand, went through a similar process, and then boiled it.

The problem was that the method using mudflat soil was difficult to escape from the issue of impurities.

Especially in the case of the West Sea, with the influx of water from the Yellow River, there were many impurities and the salt concentration was low, making it a product that required a lot of work.

However, the East Sea was more free from the impurity problem.

If you went out on a boat for just 15 minutes, you could fill it with as much clear seawater as you wanted.

Even without going out on a boat, if you went out just a little, you could obtain clear, high-salinity seawater in abundance.

The biggest problem with boiled salt from the East Sea was that to be sold in large markets, it had to cross the Baekdudaegan mountain range.

Naturally, it could only be expensive with added transportation costs, and in other regions, only those with means could obtain and use boiled salt from the East Sea.

“There are many problems here and there, but still, boiled salt suits my taste better. If we use coal, the fuel problem can be solved too. Of course, if we consider cost-effectiveness, sun-dried salt would be the clear winner, but...”

Hyang trailed off, seemingly unsatisfied with something.

“This cost-effectiveness is bothering me... Should we go for a two-track approach with this too? Oh! We could entrust sun-dried salt production to suitable people, make it an ultra-low-price product for really struggling people, and sell it abroad to Japan or other places to make money. Then we could use that money for boiled salt... as a mid-to-high-end product. Yes... This would be good.”

Hyang smiled contentedly, having planned to sell sun-dried salt abroad and focus on boiled salt with the money earned.

The truth was that Hyang preferred boiled salt because there were more things to obsess over compared to sun-dried salt.

Note 1) Historical study on the exchange with Thailand around the founding of the Joseon Dynasty. Jo Heung-guk. Assistant Professor at the Graduate School of International Studies, Pusan National University.

Note 2) Encyclopedia of Korean Culture. Forestry entry.

http://encykorea.aks.ac.kr/Contents/Index?contents_id=E0047546

Note 3) The basis for referring to Usando as Dokdo is referenced from this material.

The Truth about Dokdo. Sejong University Dokdo Research Institute.

http://www.dokdoandeastasia.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/독도의-진실-1_우산국과-우산도.pdf

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[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.
Deathbringer, emphasis on [i]*death*[/i].
I'm totally [s]~~crossed out~~[/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

[img]https://www.agine.this[/img]
[link]http://topwebfiction.com[/link].
[link=https://www.n.ot]clickbait[/link].

[quote]... me like my landlord! [/quote]

[spoiler]Spanish Inquisition! [/spoiler]
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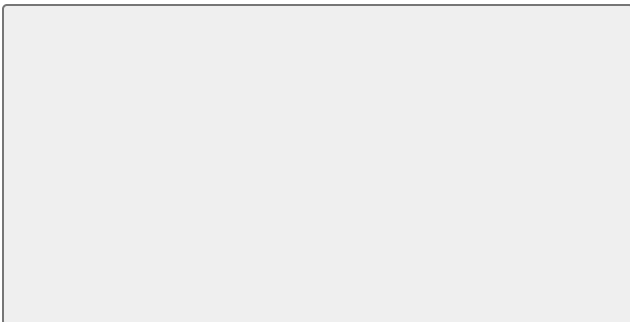
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Chapter 301 - 400

BCJ Chapter 368

The Period of Stagnation - Motion in Stillness

by *BlossomTLBlack Corporation: Joseon*

Having made his decision, Hyang immediately drafted a proposal and submitted it to King Sejong.

After reading Hyang's proposal, Sejong began to question him.

“Sun-dried salt? Judging by the name and content, it seems to be making salt using the sun's rays, but is this possible?”

“I believe it's entirely possible. As I've written in the latter part, I've even conducted experiments.”

To convince not only Sejong but also the ministers, Hyang had attached records of the experimental process and its results.

“When paper soaked in brine was dried in the sun, salt remained on the paper' ... How did you come up with such an idea?”

“When cleaning the research institute and Area 51, I thought of it while watching water sprinkled on the ground dry up.”

“Hmm...”

After carefully examining the report once more, Sejong looked at Hyang.

“While it could be beneficial in reducing the effort of making brine in tidal flats and cutting fuel costs, the costs of constructing facilities and labor are considerable. Weighing these pros and cons, do you really think sun-dried salt will be useful?”

“We’ll need to verify it in practice, but I believe it’s entirely possible.”

At Hyang’s assertion, Sejong brought this up at the morning assembly.

“Indeed, boiled salt requires a lot of labor and fuel. It seems there would be no loss in trying to verify this in practice.”

At Lee Jik’s statement, summarizing the ministers’ opinions, Sejong firmed his resolve.

“Since you all think so, let’s give it a try.”

Thus, an experimental sun-dried salt field was created on Ganghwa Island.

About two weeks after the salt field was created and seawater was drawn into the primary reservoir, the first results arrived at Gyeongbok Palace along with a report.

“I will taste it, so bring it here.”

Following Sejong’s order, a porcelain plate heaped with white salt was brought into Geunjeongjeon Hall.

Tasting a bit with his fingertip, Sejong’s expression soured.

“It’s salty, but the bitter taste is even stronger. You all taste it too.”

Following Sejong’s order, the ministers who tasted the sun-dried salt all made similar expressions to Sejong.

“Hmm...”

Having read the report that came with the sun-dried salt, Sejong fell into contemplation. No, not just Sejong, but all the ministers had similar expressions.

To their palates, accustomed to boiled salt all this time, sun-dried salt was not a good product.

The report also pointed out this issue as the most serious problem. Of course, there was a sentence following stating “It is said that the taste improves after aging for a few years to remove the bitterness,” but somehow it didn’t resonate. It was because of the bitter taste that had left such a strong first impression.

However, sun-dried salt had a powerful advantage that offset this drawback.

It was its overwhelming cost-effectiveness.

The process of producing boiled salt required skilled artisans to be involved from start to finish. Due to the wages of these artisans and fuel costs, boiled salt was quite an expensive item.

However, sun-dried salt didn’t require as many of these artisans. Sun-dried salt was a product that could be produced without any issues even with a composition of a few artisans and many unskilled workers.

“Call the Crown Prince.”

“Yes, Your Majesty.”

Eventually, Sejong called for Hyang.

Entering Geunjeongjeon Hall at Sejong’s summons, Hyang tasted the sun-dried salt and slightly furrowed his brow. Seeing this, Sejong spoke.

“As you can tell from tasting it, its flavor is much inferior to boiled salt. No, the saltiness isn’t less, but the bitterness is too strong. Do you still insist that we should produce and sell this?”

“Yes.”

At Hyang's firm answer, Sejong couldn't hide his curiosity.

“Why? No matter how precious salt is, the people will complain.”

To Sejong's point, Hyang explained the reason.

“The very fact that salt is precious is the reason why we should produce and sell sun-dried salt. Isn't the name 'salt' itself meant to mean 'white (素) gold (金)'? Although the people's livelihoods are gradually improving through the Reformation Plan that Your Majesty is implementing, there are still many struggling people. To allow even such people to taste salt, sun-dried salt is absolutely necessary. And this sun-dried salt will stimulate people's desire for improvement.”

“Stimulate desire for improvement?”

At Sejong's question, Hyang answered with a slight smile.

“Yes. What is the biggest reason people accumulate wealth? Isn't it to live in luxury? Even if it's just to eat better salt, people will work hard.”

At Hyang's words, Sejong and the ministers unknowingly nodded.

‘That might be true!’

Hyang continued to emphasize the necessity of sun-dried salt.

“This sun-dried salt is not only for the struggling people who can't even afford to buy salt properly, but we should also target those Japanese.”

“The Japanese...”

As Hyang mentioned 'the Japanese', Sejong pondered for a moment and then nodded.

“I see. The Japanese need to eat salt too.”

“Yes. We can't compete with Ming, which already overflows with all kinds of salt including rock salt, but it's not the same with the Japanese, is it? It

will be a sufficient market.”

“I see.”

Nodding, Sejong asked Hyang again.

“Then we should go with a dual system of sun-dried salt and boiled salt?”

“Yes. It seems good to guide consumption so that the struggling people use sun-dried salt, while those who are somewhat better off use boiled salt.”

At Hyang’s explanation, Sejong turned to Kim Jeom.

“What do you think?”

At Sejong’s question, Kim Jeom immediately answered.

“I think it’s an excellent method, Your Majesty!”

Thus, it was concluded to produce both sun-dried salt and boiled salt.

As soon as one agenda was decided, Hyang, as if he had been waiting, presented another agenda.

“Since we’re on the topic of boiled salt, there’s something I’d like Your Majesty’s approval for.”

“What is it?”

As soon as Hyang’s words came out, Sejong and the ministers tensed up but soon resigned themselves.

As with the case of sun-dried salt, none of the policies Hyang presented were easy. They wanted to refuse because of this, but they had experienced that they eventually had to accept them because their effectiveness was certain.

“Salt can only be obtained through government monopoly stores anyway. Then, how about gathering salt makers from all over Joseon in one area?”

“Gather them in one area?”

“Yes, if we gather salt makers in one area and have them produce, it will be easier to manage production, storage, and transportation. Also, we can create jobs for people by creating a salt production complex in areas where people are struggling due to harsher environments compared to other regions.”

“Hmm...”

Mulling over Hyang’s words, Sejong asked him.

“Gangwon Province would be good, wouldn’t it?”

“I recommend Gangwon Province and Hamgil Province. Both regions have harsh environments, making people’s livelihoods difficult. Moreover, they are close to coal mines, making fuel supply easy.”

At Hyang’s words, Sejong started to make various calculations.

‘Not bad.’

When it came to harshness, Gangwon Province was second to none.

Gangwon Province was the first place where news of starvation deaths was heard when there was a bad harvest.

Hamgil Province was in a similar situation.

Finally, Sejong made a decision.

“The Crown Prince’s plan seems good, so devise policies based on this.”

“I receive your command!”

Following Sejong's decision, salt makers from all over Joseon moved to Gangwon Province and Hamgil Province.

“There's no space to make salt fields...”

The salt makers were perplexed by the East Sea's environment, different from the West Sea and South Sea with their wide tidal flats, but they soon adapted.

It wasn't unfamiliar to make salt by directly boiling seawater.

In addition, Hyang created and distributed new tools for roasting salt.

The new tools Hyang created were a wide, flat pot made of steel and a rake powered by animal strength.

When large jars filled with clear seawater from the East Sea were poured into the pot, the artisans lit fires in the furnace. The fuel used to boil the seawater in the pot was anthracite coal. Although it was difficult to light at first, once properly lit, anthracite provided strong heat. And true to its name of “smokeless”, it produced little smoke.

When the seawater began to boil in the wide, flat pot with a diameter of almost 3 meters, the artisans tied an ox, horse, or donkey to a large cogwheel in the yard to move it.

As the cogwheel turned, the power transmitted through the connected axis began to slowly turn the rake.

Salt crystals gathered along the slowly turning rake, and the artisans collected this salt and moved it to the drying room.

Through these tools created and distributed by Hyang, the productivity of boiled salt also began to increase greatly.

While monopolizing salt through government monopoly stores, Sejong abolished the public salt system. Although sales were through a single

channel of government monopoly stores, the salt makers held the right to set prices. And to prevent misunderstandings between the monopoly stores and salt makers, trademark registration followed.

Salt makers registered trademarks individually or in groups, set prices, and then supplied to the monopoly stores.

Although there were various trademarks, all products were the same clear boiled salt, so the quality was similar, and the prices were also similar.

Therefore, after some time passed, salt makers who were pondering how to gain more profit began to appear.

“No matter how much I, an ignorant person, think...”

Unable to find a suitable answer no matter how much they thought, the salt makers blamed their own hard heads and sought out officials – connections made during the supply process – with whom they had built friendships.

“You want to earn more money?”

“Yes, sir.”

“Hmm...”

Most of the officials who received inquiries from the salt makers gave similar answers.

“Wouldn’t the orthodox way be to make the salt pans a bit bigger?”

“Aren’t salt pans money-eating monsters, sir? And if everyone increases their size, the price of salt will become cheaper.”

“It’s not easy...”

The officials, who were contemplating with troubled faces, soon found a method.

“I’ll ask His Highness the Crown Prince.”

At the officials' words, the salt makers turned pale.

“What? His Highness the Crown Prince? Won't we be punished for being presumptuous, us lowly people? No! It's fine!”

At the salt makers' reaction, the officials smiled slightly and soothed them.

“If it's His Highness, he'll probably be pleased and find it interesting.”

“Really?”

When the salt makers asked with dubious faces, the officials trailed off.

“Probably...?”

Receiving the salt makers' petition through the officials, Hyang smiled with satisfaction.

“This is what I've been waiting for!”

Hyang immediately wrote an answer and sent it back with the officials.

The officials who received the answer from Hyang gathered the artisans.

“His Highness the Crown Prince has given an answer. Let's see... His Highness wrote, ‘Give boiled salt a unique character.’ “

“A unique character?”

“That's right. He said you could mix things that are good for people or that help with flavor into the salt. He even gave an example. Pine flower salt?”

“Aha!”

The artisans immediately understood the official's words.

When salt was roasted while pine pollen was flying, the pollen mixed in. This created a salt with a sweet flavor, which could be sold at a higher price than ordinary boiled salt.

“That’s right! Thank you, sir!”

“Don’t thank me, thank His Highness the Crown Prince.”

“Yes. Thank you, Your Highness the Crown Prince!”

Thus, the salt makers began to make all sorts of attempts to increase added value.

They added pine pollen collected when pine flowers were flying, or added mugwort or minced garlic when boiling seawater.

The salt made this way began to sell at higher prices due to its unique flavor.

Encouraged by these positive results, the salt makers made even bolder attempts, such as roasting salt with water boiled with medicinal ingredients prescribed for common ailments like stomachaches or colds.

The boiled salts released into the market through this process became popular. It became commonplace for even the poorest households to have at least a little of this functional salt.

As a result, by the end of the Reformation Plan, there were over 10 different types of boiled salt.

And these functional salts became a big hit not only in Joseon but also in Ming and Japan.

“Bravo!”

It was such a big hit that Kim Jeom, upon receiving the report, unknowingly shouted “Bravo!”

Note 1) The etymology of ‘salt’ (소금). Jungbu Maeil Newspaper.
2003.12.01.

<http://www.jbnews.com/news/articleView.html?idxno=95305>

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-

BBCodes

[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.
Deathbringer, emphasis on [i]*death*[/i].
I'm totally [s]~~crossed out~~[/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

[img]https://www.agine.this[/img]
[link]http://topwebfiction.com[/link].
[link=https://www.n.ot]clickbait[/link].

[quote]... me like my landlord! [/quote]

[spoiler]Spanish Inquisition! [/spoiler]
[ins]Insert[/ins] more bad puns!
[del]~~Delete~~[/del] your browser history!

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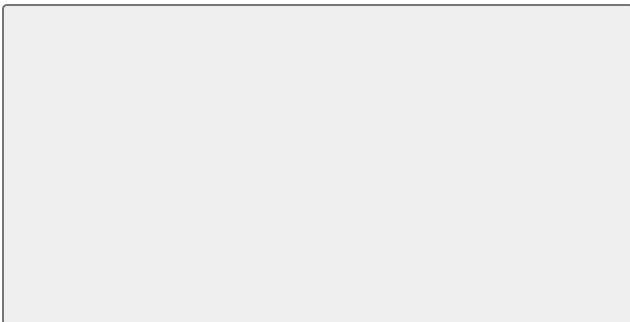
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Chapter 301 - 400

BCJ Chapter 369

The Period of Stagnation - Motion in Stillness

by *BlossomTL*Black Corporation: Joseon

Although it was decided to officially use Hunminjeongeum from the fall semester of the following year, there were quite a few who started using it early.

Those who pioneered the early use of Hunminjeongeum were officials from the General Affairs and Education Departments, as well as those working in the research institute and Area 51.

The reason officials from the General Affairs and Education Departments learned and used Hunminjeongeum was to prepare for its official promulgation, education, and use next year.

“We need to prepare personnel to educate officials in local government offices, and identify and supplement potential problems that may arise from early use...”

“The problem is that we now have more work to do because of this...”

“Living on a government salary is really...”

“At least it’s fortunate that learning and using it is easy. If it were difficult, I would have submitted my resignation. Really...”

While grumbling and complaining like this, the officials worked on supplementing issues that arose from using Hunminjeongeum.

Of course, it was inevitable that both exclamations of admiration and curses would slip out during this process.

The admiration came from the fact that Sejong had already predicted such problems would occur, and the curses came from the fact that he had left the choice of solutions to the officials.

The easiest example was the problem of ‘homonyms’ (words that sound the same but have different meanings).

When drafting official documents, there were often cases where words with the same pronunciation but different meanings came together. Or, there were cases where the meaning of a sentence could change completely depending on how a word was interpreted.

“How should we solve this problem...”

To find a solution, officials either flipped through the Haerye edition or racked their brains.

Just in case, officials who were flipping through the Haerye edition cursed when they saw the table of contents – something that hadn’t been in books until then – on the page right after the cover.

“Damn it!”

‘Chapter 4. Problems of Composition and Comprehension’

And right below that, ‘Homonyms’ was clearly written as an item.

The officials who hurriedly found the relevant section had to frown once again.

-Hunminjeongeum, being a phonetic script, has the problem of homonyms. A simple example is that even if it’s written as ‘jeonjinhada’, the meaning of the entire sentence changes depending on whether it means ‘前進 (moving forward)’ or ‘轉進 (changing course and advancing)’.

There are several ways to solve this.

One, always write in Hanja.

Two, write both Hunminjeongeum and Hanja together.

Three, use only Hunminjeongeum as the meaning can be understood from the context of the sentence.

Choose one of these three options or consider if there is a better option. Those who come up with a better option, I (余) will remember.

Seeing the last sentence, the officials shouted simultaneously.

“What the hell!”

They were flabbergasted by the words so casually written by a king who didn't even seem to be the same kind of human as them.

‘He found all the potential problems, even made choices, and now he’s telling us to come up with new solutions?’

The deflated officials unknowingly muttered.

“What sin did I commit in my past life...”

The officials who were grumbling with lost energy suddenly lit up their eyes and started transcribing documents.

‘If by any chance! If I get it right, it could be a life-changing opportunity!’

However, no matter how hard they tried, this was a situation where King Sejong – with Hyang as an option – had deliberately created it and prepared for expected problems with appropriate choices.

The officials who encountered Hunminjeongeum desperately racked their brains, but they couldn't get out of the range Sejong had envisioned.

“So in the end, we have to choose one of the alternatives His Majesty suggested?”

“Probably...”

Although they reached a conclusion, the officials couldn't easily make a choice.

This was because they couldn't be confident that the alternative they chose would be the 'correct answer' Sejong had in mind.

It was the same for the ministers. If they made a wrong judgment and chose the wrong answer, they were sure to hear that unpleasant tongue-clicking sound.

Eventually, the ministers sought out Hyang.

When he heard the ministers' business, Hyang unknowingly clicked his tongue.

“Tsk!”

At Hyang's tongue-clicking, the ministers momentarily felt upset, but there was nothing they could do.

‘Ah! That damn tongue-clicking sound!’

‘This father and son really... I might really quit!’

Although they were cursing all sorts of things inside, outwardly the ministers were bowing their heads.

“No matter how much we think about it, they all seem like correct answers.”

“They are all correct answers, though?”

“Pardon?”

Hearing Hyang's answer, all the ministers looked at him with wide eyes.

Seeing the ministers like this, Hyang continued.

“Hunminjeongeum is a newly created writing system. So we can't know what's right and what's wrong. The various ministers and officials need to use it, the people need to use it, and we need to revise it as we go. The problems His Majesty pointed out are what he expected to occur in the process of moving away from the familiar Hanja, and those are just alternatives. So how could there be a correct answer?”

“Ah...”

“If we apply and use all the given alternatives, the most suitable method will naturally be selected. Or a completely unexpected new alternative might appear. His Majesty wrote that way because he wants the officials to do their best in learning and using Hunminjeongeum.”

“Ah...”

‘Was it bait? Were we hooked?’

As if knowing the ministers' thoughts, Hyang immediately added.

“Of course, if someone actually comes up with a new alternative or finds a problem, His Majesty would take a deep interest.”

Finally, having learned through Hyang what Sejong wanted, the ministers bowed and retreated.

“Wait, it might be presumptuous of me, still young, to say this, but there's a saying among those Westerners: ‘The only real failure is the failure to learn from failure.’”

At Hyang's words, the ministers bowed their heads and replied.

“We are grateful for such valuable advice.”

After leaving Hyang's office, all the ministers sighed.

“Hah~. That father and son...”

Anyway, the ministers informed their subordinate officials of Hyang’s advice. The officials who heard the advice began to use Hunminjeongeum more actively. As they used Hunminjeongeum more actively, their understanding rapidly increased, and they gradually found solutions to problems arising from transcribing Chinese texts.

As the system of Hunminjeongeum was settling in this way, places began to appear where Hunminjeongeum was used more actively than Hanja.

One was the military, another was among the Jurchen people and in Daeseoldo, and the last was the research institute.

All three had reasons why this had to be the case.

First, in the case of the military, it was the place with the lowest level of humanities education. Of course, there were people like Choi Hae-san or Lee Chun who had considerable humanities knowledge – with science or engineering knowledge as an option – in addition to military capabilities, but excluding those who had transferred from civil service – typically Jo Mal-saeng – the level of humanities education was poor.

Of course, high-ranking military officers who had passed the military service examination were somewhat okay as they had to read military books, but the humanities education of mid to low-ranking officers like Gapsa, who had entered through talent selection, was terrible.

Therefore, Hunminjeongeum was very welcome to these people. There was almost no inconvenience in writing reports, drafting orders, or reading received orders.

In the end, those who had suffered various grievances – especially in terms of promotion – due to character problems raised both arms towards Hanseong and shouted “Long live!”

“Long live His Majesty! Long live! Long live!”

Besides easing the grievances of these less educated military officers, Hunminjeongeum showed its power in another area, which was communication.

The combination of the light communication network installed thanks to Hyang’s obsession and Hunminjeongeum was like “giving wings to a heavenly horse”.

With the existing number code, the amount of information that could be transmitted was limited.

However, as soon as Hunminjeongeum appeared, Hyang created a Hangeul code. By assigning 4 digits each to initial consonants, vowels, and final consonants, the combined light signals could transmit slightly more detailed information faster than before.

Of course, it was still the same that truly detailed and accurate information was handled by relay runners, but still, they could receive urgent news in more detail compared to before.

The case of the Jurchen people was a bit unusual. The Jurchen people had Jurchen script created during the old Jin dynasty era.

However, as it was a script based on Chinese characters, it wasn’t a script that could be used comfortably. In the end, by the present day, only a few Jurchen nobles were learning it.

In this situation, ordinary Jurchen people found Hunminjeongeum easier to use and had no reluctance in accepting it.

“We’re Joseon people anyway, so what!”

In the process of using Hunminjeongeum to record the Jurchen language, a chain reaction occurred: the Jurchen people who had submitted to Joseon learned the Korean language more quickly.

It was a chain effect brought about by the advantage of being able to read with their eyes, not just hear and speak.

The same was true in Daeseoldo.

The situation was even worse for the Ainu people of Daeseoldo, as their history and myths had all been passed down orally.

Of course, there were attempts to record documents using hiragana, katakana, or Chinese characters used by the Japanese, but most ended in failure.

It was impossible to accurately record Ainu pronunciations with hiragana or katakana. Using Chinese characters failed because there weren't people with good enough Chinese character skills to that degree.

In this context, Hunminjeongeum, which Joseon people had been using recently, was the best script for recording their traditions in writing.

It could transcribe their language almost without error, and Ainu people who knew Hunminjeongeum could understand properly just by reading those sentences.

As a result, Ainu people who had submitted to Joseon couldn't help but show more favor towards Joseon.

“What interesting people.”

Hakumakkuru, who had bought salt and some medicinal ingredients from the government monopoly store and came out, muttered as he watched Joseon people passing in front of him.

Since Joseon set foot on Daeseoldo, the number of Joseon people had been gradually increasing.

Most of these were soldiers and miners, and their families.

Having learned that the natural environment of Daeseoldo was not easy to deal with, Joseon was cautious about population relocation.

After observing the Ainu people, the Joseon court learned that agriculture was possible and recruited those who would serve their military service as garrison farmers in Daeseoldo.

‘Income from garrison farms cultivated while serving in Daeseoldo will be recognized as additional income, not as part of the salary.’

At the court’s announcement, many soldiers volunteered for service in Daeseoldo. Since military deployment was essential now that Daeseoldo had become Joseon territory, they aimed for additional income.

These people could live as garrison farmers in Daeseoldo during their mandatory military service period and then return home, or they could settle in Daeseoldo. If they settled, they could receive tax benefits and rent – after the Giyou Rebellion, Joseon nationalized most of its land based on the concept of royal land – overwhelmingly larger lands than those who had relocated to Jurchen areas.

While these dispatched soldiers and their families formed one axis, the other axis was the miners.

The miners who entered Daeseoldo were extracting sulfur and coal.

Among the information obtained from the Ainu people of Daeseoldo, Hyang immediately ran to Sejong when he confirmed information about sulfur hot springs.

The survey team, which began investigation by Sejong’s order, was able to find a large sulfur hot spring in a place the Ainu people called Hell Valley.

Seeing the sulfur heavily coagulated on the rocks near the hot spring, the survey team hurriedly wrote a report and returned to Joseon.

After confirming the survey team's report, Sejong sent miners to Daeseoldo without a second word.

This was because they could solve the sulfur shortage problem that had remained unsolved until then.

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[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.

Deathbringer, emphasis on [i]*death*[/i].

I'm totally [s]~~crossed out~~[/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

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[quote]... me like my landlord! [/quote]

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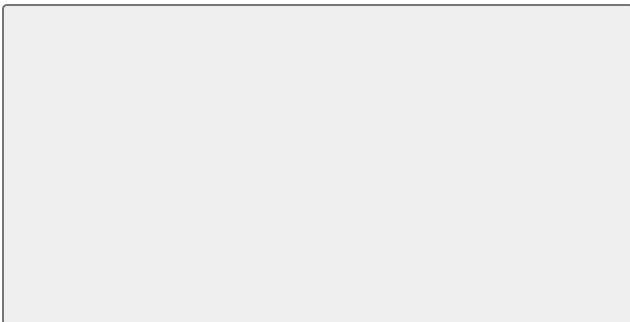
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Chapter 301 - 400

BCJ Chapter 370

The Period of Stagnation - Motion in Stillness

by *BlossomTLBlack Corporation: Joseon*

Coal was discovered by chance during these investigations.

Prospectors were dispatched to Daeseoldo to determine if there were any economically viable sulfur hot springs or sulfur mines other than Hell Valley.

The prospectors, accompanied by a considerable escort force to guard against predators and hostile Ainu tribes, began to search various parts of Daeseoldo.

Among these, a coal vein was discovered near a place called Otaornai (Otaru) in the Ainu language.

‘The quality is excellent, and coal extraction is somewhat easier compared to Gangwon Province.’

Upon receiving the report, Sejong immediately summoned his ministers to gather opinions.

“As more and more coal is needed for various industries, including iron manufacturing, and coal is used in large quantities for heating homes, I think it’s right to mine it.”

As the ministers’ opinions converged on development, Sejong ordered the development of the mine.

Consequently, many miners began crossing the sea to Daeseoldo. Although the perception was poor due to most serious criminals serving labor in mines, the salary that properly employed miners received was quite high, so the number of people who left for Daeseoldo was considerable.

Before long, a significant number of Ainu people began working in the mines of Daeseoldo. This was because working in the mines provided a steady income compared to dangerous hunting or low-yield farming. And since the pay was not meager but equal to that of Joseon people, the families of miners could live much more abundantly compared to other Ainu people.

In this process, the relationship between the Ainu people and Joseon people began to grow closer little by little.

The Ainu people and Joseon people observed each other with curious eyes.

In this process, Joseon people evaluated the Ainu people like this:

“They’re innocent and kind, but not very interesting.”

On the other hand, the Ainu people’s evaluation of Joseon people was almost identical to Hakumakkuru’s.

“What interesting humans.”

The Joseon people that the Ainu saw were truly interesting.

When working, they worked truly diligently, but when playing, they played wildly and excitedly. When necessary, they were politely respectful, but when they became close, they were rudely disrespectful to the point of almost provoking anger.

Joseon soldiers were the same. Usually, they lived gently, but when Japanese pirates invaded or hostile Ainu tribes attacked, they fought with ghost-like faces.

Every time the iron clubs, seemingly imbued with the energy of lightning struck by Kandakorokamui (the sky god), spewed fire, the blood of enemies

formed streams.

The Joseon soldiers with these terrifying iron clubs and ghost-like faces drove the enemies until they all died or surrendered.

Watching the behavior of these Joseon people, all the Ainu people came to a similar conclusion.

“They’re just like bears.”

The Joseon people were like bears, seemingly gentle and docile usually, but once they turned ferocious, they transformed into messengers of death.

To add, among the reasons they were seen as bear-like was also the Joseon people’s big appetite and crazy preference for meat.

“They eat like bears too.”

The government monopoly store official burst into laughter when he heard this story from an Ainu person he had become friendly with.

“Hahaha! That sounds plausible? Maybe we are bears. We have the blood of Ungnyeo (Bear Woman) mixed in, after all!”

“Ungnyeo?”

The government monopoly store official explained the Dangun myth to the Ainu person.

After hearing the official’s story, the Ainu person nodded.

“That really does sound plausible.”

At that very moment, a loud bell rang from the watchtower on the bamboo-reinforced concrete wall surrounding the village.

Ding ding ding!

“It’s here~!”

At the shout of the sentry in the watchtower, soldiers standing guard around the gate grabbed their muskets and ran out.

A moment later.

Bang! Ratatang! Bang!

Loud gunshots rang out. And not long after, a large cart went out.

Soon after, a bear carcass with an enormous body was brought in on the cart.

The body was so big that only the trunk was on the cart, with the head and legs drooping outside the cart. Around the bear carcass, soldiers with muskets slung over their shoulders were walking along with grinning faces.

The most common and dangerous predator in Daeseoldo was the bear. Therefore, since setting foot on Daeseoldo, Joseon troops had to hunt many bears.

When the number of bears caught like this quickly approached a hundred, Sejong issued a royal order.

-Bear hunting is prohibited except for bears coming down to civilian houses!

For Joseon people, living in harmony was not just about humans. Just as they left persimmons at the top of persimmon trees as “magpie food,” wild animals and plants were also included in the category of this harmony.

Therefore, the policy regarding predators was not to actively hunt them unless they came down to civilian houses and caused harm. However, if harm was received, they hunted the predators with full force.

This is why the saying arose that “For half the year in Joseon, tigers hunt people, and for the other half, people hunt tigers.”

Of course, Sejong issued this order not only out of concern for indiscriminate overhunting but also to prevent negligence in defense due to being preoccupied with hunting.

Anyway, because of this order, an implicit rule was created that in cases like this where a bear appeared, it was handled by the soldiers on duty at the entrance of the village.

And it was also an implicit rule that if money was made in this way, a certain reward was given to the soldiers who alerted the situation from the watchtower.

“Wow! Look at the size!”

“With that size, the gallbladder must be huge too!”

“Is the gallbladder the only issue? For bears or tigers, everything from the skin to the claws is money, money!”

“Those guys are going to make a fortune!”

The Joseon people and soldiers watching from around all looked at the lucky protagonists with envious eyes.

The Ainu person, who had been watching the bear carcass moving on the cart and the Joseon soldiers, turned to look at the government monopoly store official.

“Didn’t you say they were descendants of bears?”

Lastly, the research institute, where Hunminjeongeum was also welcomed, had unavoidable circumstances as well.

The most internationalized place in current Joseon was the research institute.

Not only were there Joseon researchers, but also people from Arab countries, Italy, and Greece gathered there, so it was natural that communication problems arose due to language.

In the case of Arab people, like Hassan, they had resided in Joseon for a long time, so there wasn't much problem with language communication, but the researchers from Italy and Greece who had most recently entered Joseon were the problem.

“First, learn Joseon's language and Chinese characters.”

Because of Hyang's order, they started learning Korean and Chinese characters, but it wasn't easy to learn a foreign language where everything was different, starting from the grammar book.

Therefore, Hyang had to propose a compromise to lower the hurdle a bit.

“Learn only the minimum etiquette necessary for conversation. And for writing... do your best.”

Due to Hyang's measure, the monks and alchemists could work with only minimal etiquette learned, pushing back etiquette related to honorifics and titles starting with the rule of respecting superiors.

However, Chinese characters, which were essential for document writing, couldn't be like that. The number of advanced Chinese characters that go into theses and reports, not just simple letters, was no joke. For reference, even the Arab people who were said to be familiar with Korean and Chinese characters were having difficulties in this area.

Therefore, even though monks and alchemists had arrived, progress was inevitably slow.

When a discussion on some mathematical point was held, the discussion could proceed with formulas and dialogue. However, proper discussion

couldn't proceed with just scattered words and formulas, and a well-expressed thesis organizing thoughts was absolutely necessary.

Because of this, at first, Hyang had to translate theses organized in Latin.

“Damn! I have so many things to obsess over, but I have to keep translating!”

Annoyed, Hyang mobilized newly trained interpreters for translation.

However, the translations by interpreters with shallow mathematical knowledge were full of errors.

Therefore, this kind of saying circulated among Joseon people in the research institute and Area 51.

“Which would be faster, for them to learn Korean and Chinese characters, or for us to learn Latin?”

It was in this situation that Hunminjeongeum appeared.

Joseon researchers who encountered Hunminjeongeum through Hyang and Jinpyeong cheered greatly!

“Now we can escape the trouble of looking up dictionaries!”

Even for those accustomed to writing, it wasn't easy to find accurate Chinese characters and write with them. Hunminjeongeum, which allowed them to record their familiar words as they were, was the best gift that could prevent unnecessary mental exhaustion.

This Hunminjeongeum was also welcomed by monks and alchemists. First of all, they were accustomed to phonetic writing systems. Although the arrangement of words composing sentences was different, they could soon adapt to that part. Being able to record the Korean language they had become quite familiar with, although still awkward, directly, and being able

to read and immediately understand documents written by others was also welcome to them.

As both sides became familiar with Hunminjeongeum, the work of interpreters gradually decreased. And finally, the interpreters were able to leave the research institute.

On the day they heard the order that ‘You no longer need to come to the research institute,’ the interpreters rushed to a gisaeng house as a group and held a feast.

As a postscript, these trained interpreters later played active roles in Alexandria and Europe.

And they became notorious old fogies.

“Listen! In my day! We had to translate mathematical theses! Don’t whine about mere contracts!”

Thus, it seemed that peace had come to the research institute and Area 51, but not long after, a major accident occurred where the entire research institute was split in two and collided.

It started with ‘time difference’.

In the process of sailing to Alexandria, measuring the position of the ship was a very important task. Various measuring devices were needed to measure the exact position, but the most important was the clock.

Well aware of this, Hyang instructed Jang Yeong-sil to develop a precision clock – chronometer – that moved with a spring. Until then, the clocks used by Joseon used weights and pendulums, and these types of clocks had errors due to the rocking of waves and such. That’s why he ordered the creation of a spring-driven clock.

Jang Yeong-sil, who had been deeply versed in precision technology to the extent of creating a water clock where dolls struck drums and bells to tell

time and a self-moving royal palanquin – with a spring as the power source, no less – in the history before Hyang’s intervention, was able to create clocks at the level Hyang wanted by working through his subordinate craftsmen.

And these precision clocks thus created began to be loaded onto Challenger-class and Haeung-class warships.

And it was in the sailing records of these Challenger-class warships that embarked on ocean voyages with these clocks that the time difference problem began to be officially recorded.

Hyang, who confirmed the time difference problem through the sailing records, smiled wickedly.

“Shall we start setting up the board? There’s a lot more to do besides this, but if we don’t sort this out properly, there’s a high chance of problems when crossing the Pacific in the future. We need to change the seat from religion to science.”

Having made up his mind, Hyang gathered the researchers and proceeded with the work.

“Looking at the records of sailing to Alexandria, there’s a common mention that ‘the time indicated by the clock on the ship is different from the local time.’”

“Are you referring to time difference, Your Highness?”

Hyang nodded at Jeong Cho’s words.

“Yes. From what I’ve observed, if we divide the route from our Joseon to Alexandria at appropriate intervals, it seems we can calculate the time difference.”

Thinking for a moment at Hyang’s words, Jeong Cho soon nodded and continued.

“It seems possible.”

And so the research proceeded.

And as Hyang wanted, a fire pit was created.

‘Spherical Earth Theory vs. Flat Earth Theory’

‘Heliocentric Theory vs. Geocentric Theory’

It was the start of a war.

“We need popcorn, popcorn!”

Note 1) Encyclopedia of Korean Culture. ‘Ungnyeo’

<http://encykorea.aks.ac.kr/Contents/Item/E0040541>

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BBCodes

Bold of you to assume I have a plan.

Deathbringer, emphasis on *death*.

I'm totally ~~crossed-out~~ by this.

- Listless I'm counting my bullets.



<http://topwebfiction.com>.

[link=https://www.n.ot](https://www.n.ot) [clickbait](#).

... me like my landlord!

Spanish Inquisition!

Insert more bad puns!

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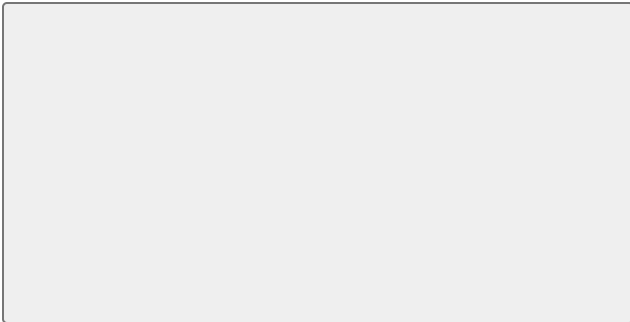
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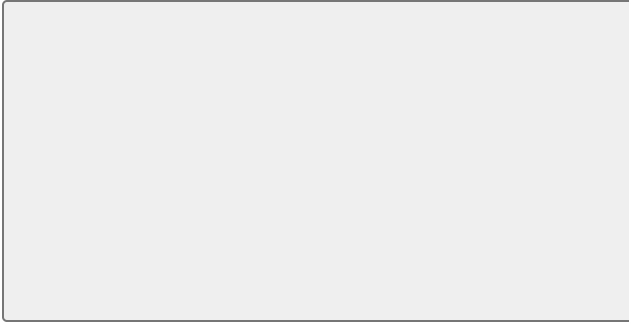
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Chapter 301 - 400

BCJ Chapter 371

The Period of Stagnation - Motion in Stillness

by *BlossomTL*Black Corporation: Joseon

In the debate that ensued, the first to be eliminated were those who advocated the 'Flat Earth Theory'.

Those who had recently entered the research institute and a group of alchemists argued for the 'Flat Earth Theory'.

“Since ancient times, it has been said that ‘the sky is round and the earth is square.’ Isn’t the world naturally flat?”

Lee Soonji stepped forward to refute their claim.

“Don’t you remember the words of Zengzi recorded in the ‘Da Dai Liji’? Don’t tell me you haven’t read it yet?”

“Well...”

“Oh dear...”

Shaking his head, Lee Soonji continued as if admonishing them.

“The ‘Da Dai Liji’ says, ‘If the sky were truly round and the earth square, the sky would not be able to cover the four corners of the earth.’ And didn’t the Huntian theory already emerge during the Later Han dynasty?”

“That...”

“Why do you think the armillary sphere is called the Huntian Yi?”

“But didn’t the Huntian theory also state that the earth is flat?”

To the researcher’s point who argued for the flat earth theory, Lee Soonji briefly went out and came back in with dozens of books.

“These are the records we made when we first climbed the Baekdudaegan mountain range for astronomical observations. We confirmed it while observing the arc-shaped horizon of the East Sea, and not satisfied with just that, we recorded and examined the shape while documenting solar and lunar eclipses.”

As Lee Soonji’s rebuttal silenced the Joseon researchers, Marcos, an alchemist, countered.

“The ancient Greek philosopher Thales said that this world is like a round disc in the shape of a shield.”

In response to Marcos’ words, Angelo stepped forward to object.

“Thales? Have you forgotten that the great Aristotle refuted that theory? What about the illustrious Pythagoras? Didn’t those great men already prove that the earth is spherical?”

“It’s not empirical evidence!”

“Empirical evidence? Didn’t Eratosthenes already calculate the diameter of the earth? Shouldn’t we consider that empirical evidence has already been completed?”

After such an exchange, Hyang intervened.

“Then why don’t we empirically verify it ourselves?”

“Pardon?”

And so, the empirical verification proceeded. The verification was nothing more than reviewing the data accumulated so far – data from observing the

horizon when climbing high mountains for astronomical observations, observational data obtained during civil engineering works such as road construction, and so on. However, the researchers debated and calculated fiercely. And as a result, a conclusion was reached.

“This world is spherical!”

Once those arguing for the ‘Flat Earth Theory’ were eliminated, now the fight between the ‘Geocentric Theory’ faction and the ‘Heliocentric Theory’ faction began.

It started, of course, with the time difference issue.

“In my opinion, the time difference problem seems to be because this world rotates.”

At Hyang’s opening statement, all researchers, both Joseon and foreign, nodded.

“That’s the most likely explanation.”

“Based on calculations centered on navigation records, if we divide the time zones at regular intervals, it will be easier to grasp the time of the corresponding regions. Of course, there will be some margin of error.”

The researchers put forward their opinions one after another based on the research results they had conducted so far.

‘Now the stage is set, and I need to throw in the spark!’

Hiding his dark intentions deep inside, Hyang continued his act nonchalantly.

“But you know, doesn’t rotation require a center?”

“Y-yes, that’s right?”

The researchers stammered in response to Hyang's question. As they answered, the same question arose in all the researchers' minds.

'Why suddenly bring up the center?'

Knowing the researchers' doubts, Hyang pointed out the main problem.

"Then where is that center? Is it this world? Or is it somewhere else?"

"What?"

"Huh?"

At Hyang's question, the researchers momentarily fell into confusion. Shortly after, Angelo and Lee Soonji, who had escaped from the momentary cognitive dissonance, answered simultaneously.

"Of course, isn't this world the center?"

"Of course, isn't the sun the center?"

"Huh?"

"What?"

The two who answered looked at each other.

"Did you say the world is the center?"

"Did you say the sun is the center?"

Hearing the other's statement that differed from their own, both shouted simultaneously.

"You're wrong!"

And Hyang, who had caused this commotion, was doing his best to hold back his laughter.

‘It’s finally exploded!’

Thus began a fierce debate as the researchers split into factions supporting the geocentric theory and those supporting the heliocentric theory.

The researchers at the institute were divided into two factions engaged in a heated argument.

Of course, they weren’t exactly divided into just two factions. Besides the two large factions, there were also minority factions.

One was the observing faction represented by Jeong Cho and Jeong Inji.

“If we support one side, it will become a political issue, so we’ll just observe until the results come out.”

Another was the fence-sitting faction. These people moved between the two factions whenever they thought one side sounded plausible.

Another was the indifferent faction. The main proponent of this faction was Jinpyeong.

“What does it matter whether the earth rotates or the sky rotates? Just shut up and lay down railroads and research iron horses!”

Hyang gave a bitter smile at Jinpyeong’s reaction.

“This consistently single-minded guy...”

Lastly, there was Hyang.

The researchers from all factions gave Hyang a nickname.

‘The Arsonist.’

This was because he calmly observed the situation and occasionally threw in controversial topics, and each time, the two factions flared up more

fiercely.

In this fierce debate between the two factions, the central focus was the ‘orbit of the sun’s movement’.

“When comparing the winter solstice and summer solstice, the sun’s altitude is extremely different. If the sun revolves around this world, this orbit cannot be explained. It’s too unreasonable.”

To Lee Soonji’s argument, Angelo immediately responded.

“According to the law discovered by the great Ptolemy, the orbit in which the stars move is...”

Angelo explained Ptolemy’s theory.

Thanks to being refined for nearly 1,300 years since Ptolemy systematized it, it showed considerable completeness.

As Lee Soonji’s side seemed to be pushed back by Angelo’s explanation, Hyang subtly intervened.

“I’ve heard your explanation well. But as I was listening, I became curious about something.”

“What are you curious about?”

To Angelo’s question, Hyang threw in another spark.

“Looking at not only the records of our Joseon’s Bureau of Astronomy but also the records of the previous dynasty...”

Hyang posed a question about ‘apparent retrograde motion’.

To Hyang’s question, Angelo answered without delay.

“Ah! That is... According to Ptolemy’s research...”

Angelo explained using the concept of epicycles. After hearing Angelo's explanation, Hyang still wore an expression of incomprehension.

“Why is it so complicated?”

“Pardon?”

At Hyang's question, Angelo felt confusion and wariness.

The reason Angelo became wary was that Hyang's tone had changed.

The king and crown prince of this country called Joseon had a very peculiar speech habit.

They maintained polite manners when their subjects were working properly. However, when work wasn't done properly, the politeness in their speech disappeared.

To be precise, they maintained basic courtesy, but respect disappeared.

As a result, it was customary for the officials of this country to immediately turn pale and check their assigned tasks when the tone of the king and crown prince changed.

For this reason, looking at Angelo's tense face, Hyang continued.

“As far as I know, I've heard that truth and providence are never complicated. The ancient sages said the same thing. But the theory you're talking about now is too complex. Isn't this rather moving away from providence?”

‘ $E=mc^2$, how simple and nice!’

To Hyang's point, Angelo stammered in response.

“But, Ptolemy's theory is like that, and the doctrine is also...”

“As far as I know, this Ptolemy was a person from more than 1,000 years ago. How much has the world changed since then, and how much has

knowledge increased? Isn't it right to examine everything from the beginning again?"

Feeling rather rebellious at Hyang's point, Angelo said to Hyang.

"If that's the case, what is Your Highness's thought?"

At Angelo's words, Hyang looked at Lee Soonji and continued.

"It's a thought I had while watching the discussions so far, it's not an exact theory but more like a concept."

Hyang erased one side of the blackboard and picked up a chalk.

"Instead of complicating things with eccentric circles and epicycles, what if the orbit isn't a perfect circle but an ellipse, and we place the sun at one of the two foci of this ellipse..."

As Hyang quickly drew the diagram, Lee Soonji jumped up from his seat and shouted.

"Then the problem is solved! We can create a very simple formula without epicycles or eccentric circles!"

True to his character who had argued for the spherical earth theory and heliocentric theory even in the history before Hyang's intervention, Lee Soonji immediately grasped the core.

However, Angelo couldn't easily agree.

"But if it orbits in an elliptical path, the orbital speed must constantly change. This means that even the same 1 hour should keep changing."

To Angelo's point, who still couldn't let go of the classical uniform circular motion orbit, Lee Soonji interjected.

"What if this orbit doesn't revolve once a day, but once a year, and instead this world itself rotates once a day?"

“Then...”

At that moment, Angelo closed his mouth. If the concept of rotation was introduced, the problem of uniform motion could be solved. Looking at Angelo who suddenly closed his mouth, Lee Soonji turned to Hyang and shouted.

“This world rotates while revolving! Then everything falls into place! And if it’s an elliptical orbit! Even the parts that were difficult to explain when revising the calendar before become possible to explain and calculate!”

Lee Soonji excitedly wrote his theoretical formula all over the blackboard.

As numbers, formulas, and diagrams filled the blackboard, Lee Soonji continued his explanation with an extremely excited voice.

“...and this is how we place the sun at one of the two foci of the elliptical orbit, and this world revolves around that elliptical orbit!”

Having finished his explanation, Lee Soonji looked at Angelo.

Angelo, analyzing the formula, felt a bitter taste in his mouth.

Rationally, Hyang’s concept and Lee Soonji’s theory were more reasonable. However, emotionally, it was hard to accept.

The moment he accepted it, he felt like his belief in God that he had held until now would crumble.

In the end, Angelo had to keep finding fault.

“It’s difficult to explain the occurrence of seasons and solar terms with that theory.”

To Angelo’s point, Hyang intervened.

“What if the axis of rotation of this world isn’t standing straight but is tilted?”

“Pardon?”

To Angelo’s question, Hyang rolled a paper into a cylinder and pierced it with a gold needle.

“It’s a bit crude, but let’s say this paper is the world and this gold needle is the axis. And let’s say my left fist is the sun. If this axis rotates like this...”

Hyang explained while spinning the gold needle around his left fist.

In the end, Angelo had to concede.

“The opinion that this world revolves around the sun seems more reasonable, but according to the doctrine...”

As Angelo mentioned the doctrine, Hyang cut him off.

“Can you be certain that the providence of the God you believe in aligns with the doctrine?”

“Pardon?”

“From the scriptures and books of yours that I’ve read, it seems that what was originally passed down orally was recorded in the language of a different race, and then transcribed into Latin. Can you be confident that there wasn’t a single mistranslation in that process?”

“That...”

Angelo couldn’t answer Hyang’s question with certainty.

Seeing Angelo like this, Hyang drove the final nail.

“Let’s say the providence of the God you believe in is infallible. Can you be confident that your scriptures and doctrines are also infallible?”

In the end, Angelo and the monks had no choice but to answer that they would positively review the heliocentric theory.

Note 1) A story about 'Round Heaven, Square Earth' and money. Seoul Today. 2019.01.11.

<http://www.sultoday.co.kr/news/articleView.html?idxno=55970>

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-

BBCodes

[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.
Deathbringer, emphasis on [i]*death*[/i].
I'm totally [s]~~crossed out~~[/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

[img]https://www.agine.this[/img]
[link]http://topwebfiction.com[/link].
[link=https://www.n.ot]clickbait[/link].

[quote]... me like my landlord! [/quote]

[spoiler]Spanish Inquisition! [/spoiler]
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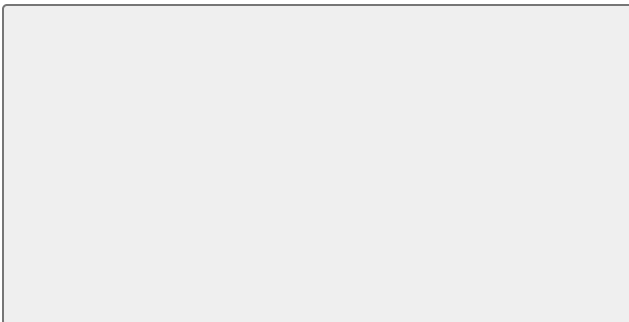
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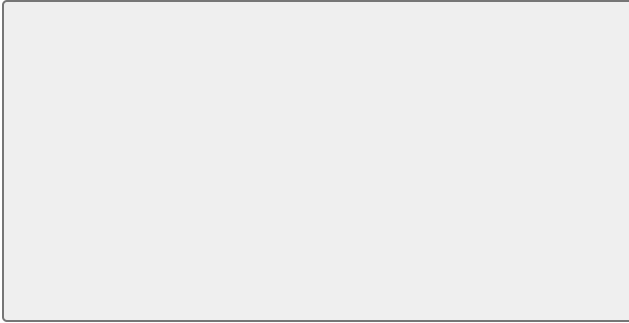
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Chapter 301 - 400

BCJ Chapter 372

The Period of Stagnation - Motion in Stillness

by *BlossomTL*Black Corporation: Joseon

A small Franciscan monastery on the outskirts of Florence.

“Brother Giovanni. A letter has arrived from Brother Angelo.”

“Is that so? Thank you.”

Giovanni, taking the letter, returned to his room and sat at his desk.

Seeing the thick envelope, Giovanni sighed softly and muttered.

“I wonder how much has been redacted this time...”

The letters his friend Angelo consistently sent from Joseon gave him both joy and pain.

The stories of daily life in Joseon and its people written in the letters were full of the strangeness of a foreign land he couldn't visit himself.

This strangeness and the academic stories obtained while researching at the institute gave him joy.

However, any sentences that might have contained even slightly important formulas or information were mercilessly blacked out.

And these blackouts gave him a thirst.

“What on earth could have been written in these hidden sentences?”

This wasn't just Giovanni's curiosity. The intellectuals residing in nearby Florence were the same.

After Angelo's first letter was read at the Vatican, the intellectuals of Florence awaited Angelo's letters as much as Giovanni did.

The letters sent by Angelo crossed the sea from Alexandria, passed through Florence, and then arrived at the monastery.

Therefore, the intellectuals of Florence knew well when a letter had arrived. As a result, about three days after the letter came into Giovanni's hands, scholars would flock from Florence and the monastery would become bustling.

“I'm sorry for disturbing the monastery that should be quiet.”

To Giovanni's apology, the abbot shook his head with a bitter smile.

“Aren't they at least courteous enough not to open the seal of the letter first? We should endure this much. And... I'm curious about the contents of the letter too.”

Sighing softly, Giovanni broke the wax seal and opened the envelope.

“My dear friend Giovanni. I am still doing well, receiving the Lord's protection...”

The front part of the letter was densely filled with content about how he was wrestling fiercely with numbers and formulas every day at the research institute in Joseon.

Reading the content full of complaints, Giovanni smiled slightly.

“This friend, he’s enjoying it.”

However, as soon as he turned to the next page, Giovanni’s eyes widened.

“They created their own script?”

-A script unique to this Joseon has been created. It’s a script that the king himself created, the crown prince assisted, and the second and third princes verified for ease of use.

I have tried using it myself, and its convenience is such that Latin cannot keep up.

This Joseon alphabet and its usage method are....

However, after that, it was densely blacked out, and the reason was written in red ink.

-The alphabet named ‘Hunminjeongeum’ has not yet been officially promulgated. Therefore, it is planned to declassify after official promulgation.

“This damn...!”

Giovanni, who unknowingly blurted out a curse, hurriedly made the sign of the cross.

After calming his mind, Giovanni examined the next page of the letter. The entire next page was blacked out.

Seeing the paper that had become completely ink-stained, Giovanni sighed and grumbled.

“Huh~. If they’re going to do this, they might as well remove it entirely... It’s not like they’re mocking people... Really, these Joseon people are diligent even in unnecessary parts...”

Grumbling, Giovanni flipped through the ink-stained papers and focused again when text reappeared.

-Ah! And we had a debate about the time difference issue confirmed as Joseon's ships frequently traveled to Alexandria and various other countries.

In the end, after a heated debate, it was concluded that 'the earth is round.'

"Of course it's round. Why state the obvious..."

As Giovanni had a similar level of knowledge as Angelo, he made an expression that suggested this part was nothing special, or rather, "Only now?"

"They say Joseon's scientific level is considerable, but it doesn't seem like much."

With a slightly deflated expression, Giovanni continued reading, but his face turned pale.

The following content was shocking and terrifying in itself.

-However, a heated argument broke out over the question the Crown Prince of Joseon posed next.

'The fact that there is a time difference means that this world rotates. But what is it rotating around? Is this world the center? Or is the sun in the sky the center?'

Due to this problem, the people in the research institute were almost evenly divided, and a debate broke out.

To tell you the result first, based on astronomical records observed in Joseon, the astronomical records we brought, and data on the occurrence of solar terms and seasons, etc., after calculations...

We had to conclude that the earth rotates on its own while orbiting around the sun.

"This is insane!"

He blurted out a curse unconsciously, but Giovanni couldn't even think of making the sign of the cross.

The content written in the letter was that shocking.

Gathering his thoughts, Giovanni carefully read the following content.

The following content detailed the process of verifying the heliocentric theory based on recorded astronomical knowledge, related formulas, and the process of debate.

After reading the contents of the letter, Giovanni picked up the pen and paper placed beside him and began to calculate the formulas.

After two days of calculation, forgetting to eat or sleep, Giovanni finally put down his pen and let out a long sigh.

“Huh~. It's hard to refute.”

Having barely escaped from the shock of the concepts he had known until then crumbling, Giovanni tried to continue reading the letter.

Knock knock!

At that moment, the sound of knocking on the door broke Giovanni's concentration, and he got up from his seat with an unpleasant face to open the door.

“What is it?”

Seeing Giovanni's unpleasant expression, the young monk hurriedly stated his business.

“The abbot is worried because you've been skipping meals and prayer times.”

“Ah... I had something to think deeply about. Tell the abbot I'm sorry.”

“And guests have also come from Florence.”

“Tell them I’m not feeling well now and to come back in a few days. Also, convey my apologies.”

“Yes...”

After telling the young monk what to say, Giovanni immediately closed the door and sat at his desk to continue reading the letter.

Two days after that commotion, Giovanni sought out the abbot.

“Are you feeling better? I hope it’s not an illness that requires long-term treatment?”

To the abbot’s meaningful words, Giovanni also gave a meaningful answer.

“Well... I need your opinion, Father Abbot.”

“Is it that serious?”

At the abbot’s question, Giovanni took out Angelo’s letter from his bosom and held it out.

“Please read it and prescribe a treatment.”

At Giovanni’s request, the abbot’s face became serious.

Giovanni was as well-versed in the philosophy and scientific knowledge of ancient Greece and Rome as Angelo. However, there was a difference from Angelo, who had to leave Florence almost forcibly: Giovanni had political sense that Angelo lacked. That’s why Giovanni could remain in Italy.

As he read through the letter left by Angelo, the abbot’s face gradually turned pale.

The abbot, who put down the letter with slightly trembling hands, let out a long sigh.

“Huh~.”

Seeing this, Giovanni spoke up.

“The unique script of Joseon itself is not much of a problem. The problem is the theory that follows, stating ‘the earth revolves around the sun.’”

At Giovanni’s words, the abbot shook his head.

“No, that might not be a big problem either. We can just say it’s a theory from a different perspective. The problem is the sentence attached to the very last part.”

The abbot tapped his finger on the very last page of the letter.

-What the Crown Prince of Joseon said to me was shocking.

‘Are you certain that your God said the orbits of stars must be perfect circles? I’ve read your scriptures, but I couldn’t find the part where God said so.’

‘Are you confident that there isn’t a single error in the records of your God’s words during the process of oral transmission, then writing it down, and then translating it into Latin?’

‘The providence of God you believe in might be infallible, but can you be confident that the doctrine is also infallible?’

-When the Crown Prince of Joseon asked me this, I couldn’t answer confidently even once.

And neither Giovanni nor the abbot who read the letter could answer this confidently either.

“Huh~.”

Sighing deeply once again, the abbot burst out in frustration while looking at the letter.

“They blacked out other things so well! Why didn’t they black this out!”

In the letter Angelo sent this time, there were also points he felt while observing Hyang during the verification process.

-Now that I think about it, the Crown Prince of Joseon is...

And after that, nearly half a page was blacked out. That’s what the abbot was grumbling about.

With the problematic letter sent from Joseon placed between them, Giovanni and the abbot pondered a solution.

“The biggest problem is the scholars who will flock from Florence. If they know about this, there will be an uproar.”

“We can block those people with the excuse of illness, but the problem is the Vatican.”

Every time a letter from Angelo arrived, Giovanni would go to the Vatican to read it aloud.

This reading session was a mandatory event for the Pope, high-ranking priests, and leaders of nearby city-states to attend.

This was because there was tremendous interest in Joseon, which was said to be even further away than India, not to mention the Islamic countries across the sea.

“If we’re not careful, it could be seen as a serious challenge to traditional doctrine.”

“That’s right. But we can’t just skip the reading session either.”

“Should we black it out?”

“That would be a good method, but what if it’s found out?”

It would have been best if they blacked it out and kept quiet on their own, but if it was discovered, they could be put on the stake for trying to hide heresy.

The reason they couldn't rule out the possibility of discovery was because of the scholars in Florence and the Vatican.

They were as curious about the blacked-out parts as Giovanni was. To solve this curiosity, they made every effort to erase the blacked-out parts. In the process, they had become the best forgery detectors when it came to letters sent from Joseon.

In the end, after much deliberation, the abbot had no choice but to choose the next best option.

“Let's consult with the Bishop.”

The next day, the abbot and Giovanni immediately sought out the Bishop of Florence.

“Welcome. So, a letter has come from the country of flowers?”

The abbot and Giovanni, who paid their respects to the Bishop welcoming them, immediately got to the point.

“Yes, we have something to consult with you about that matter.”

“Hm?”

After hearing the whole story from the abbot and Giovanni, the Cardinal's face became troubled.

“This issue is beyond my ability to decide.”

And so, the letter sent by Angelo gradually went up to higher-ranking officials, and finally reached the Pope.

In the conference room of the Vatican Papal Office.

Pope Eugene IV and the cardinals were sitting around with serious faces.

In the middle of the conference table they were sitting around was the letter sent by Angelo.

“There certainly is a problem.”

At Eugene IV’s words, the cardinals all nodded.

“Should we incinerate it?”

One cardinal suggested incineration, but another cardinal came forward to object.

“Half of Italy already knows that the letter has arrived. And we’re going to incinerate it? The matter will only grow bigger.”

No sooner had those words ended than another cardinal expressed support for the opposing opinion.

“If we handle it that way, the council won’t stay quiet. Aren’t they already making a fuss at every little thing they can find fault with?”

Since last year, the Council of Basel and the Pope had been in serious conflict. The point of contention was which was superior between the council and the Pope.

Eugene IV, who had been pondering for an appropriate solution, finally reached a conclusion.

“Let’s incinerate it.”

“Yes.”

Bang!

“Wait!”

At that moment, with a loud noise, a group of men entered the conference room.

“The council orders the letter to be made public!”

“The professors of the University of Florence petition for the letter to be made public!”

“The professors of Venice also...”

“The professors of Genoa also...”

Not only the council, but professors from universities located in major Italian cities flocked to request the letter be made public.

Under this pressure, Eugene IV finally decided to make Angelo’s letter public.

It was the beginning of ‘Angelo’s Letter Incident’, which caused an earthquake in 15th century European humanities and science, and became the spark for the Renaissance.

And Hyang, who heard the story through Mansur and others traveling to and from Alexandria, expressed slight regret.

“It’s more fun to watch the fire pit in real-time...”

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BBCodes

[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.

Deathbringer, emphasis on [i]death[/i].

I'm totally [s]~~crossed out~~[/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

[img]https://www.agine.this[/img]

[link]http://topwebfiction.com[/link].

[link=https://www.n.ot]clickbait[/link].

[quote]... me like my landlord! [/quote]

[spoiler]Spanish Inquisition! [/spoiler]

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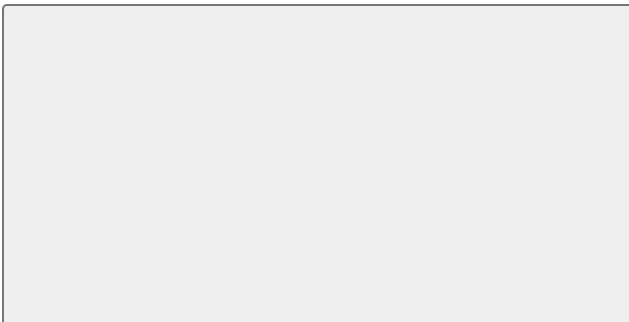
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Chapter 301 - 400

BCJ Chapter 373

The Period of Stagnation - Motion in Stillness

by *BlossomTLBlack Corporation: Joseon*

The impact of Angelo's letter spread like wildfire as it was made public.

Among renowned Italian university professors, a process of verification and recalculation based on Angelo's records was underway.

After an intense verification process, the scholars all sighed.

"It checks out."

"There are a few parts that don't quite fit, but compared to existing theories, they're very few. We'll need to review these parts again when more precise celestial observations become possible."

"Above all... the words attributed to Joseon's First Prince resonate: 'Truth must be simple.' Honestly, hasn't Ptolemy's law long since lost its original simplicity?"

The academic community was moving towards accepting the theory from Joseon.

What followed was the 'Revival Movement'.

'Let's return to our roots and revive the scholarship of ancient Greece and Rome!'

‘Truth is simple!’

Under these claims, the ‘Revival Movement’ began to unfold, which would soon lead to the ‘Renaissance’.

It was at least a generation earlier than in the history before Hyang’s intervention.

While the academic world was experiencing a revival movement, the religious world was in great turmoil.

Since the ‘Great Schism’ of the 11th century that split the church into Catholic and Eastern Orthodox, the Western Catholic Church had been experiencing discord, knowingly or unknowingly.

This discord in Catholicism had already caused quite a stir with the ‘Western Schism’ during the ‘Avignon Papacy’.

It was finally resolved through the Council of Constance from 1414 to 1418. However, barely a generation later, discord erupted again.

But it wouldn’t be accurate to say that Hyang’s observations, conveyed through Angelo’s letter, were the sole cause of this.

The situation had already been on the brink of explosion before that.

When Eugene IV ascended to the papacy in 1431, he had made a written agreement with the cardinals to secure his position.

-Half of all church revenues would be shared with the cardinals.

-Spiritual and secular matters would be discussed with the cardinals.

In other words, Eugene IV’s reign began as a form of oligarchy.

Eugene IV worked to weaken the power of the Colonna family, which had produced his predecessor, Pope Martin V.

It was only natural that the Colonna family, who had secured many castles and territories through the influence of the previous pope, would resist this.

However, the two opposing forces soon reached a truce.

This was due to the emergence of a powerful enemy: the ‘Council’.

To be precise, the ‘Ecumenical Council’ (Concilium Oecumenicum) was a grand assembly where clergy and theologians gathered to discuss matters of doctrine, ritual, and norms.

The previous pope, Martin V, had convened the council for church reform. However, shortly after Martin V’s death, the council endorsed by Eugene IV showed hostility towards the papal faction.

This was because the council advocated for ‘Conciliarism’, while the papal side asserted the ‘Papal Primacy’.

In this situation, a single remark from Hyang ignited the fire.

‘While divine providence is infallible, can one be certain that doctrine is infallible?’

This question sparked numerous debates, bloodshed, and alliances and divisions among the young and old factions, conciliarists and papalists, progressives and conservatives.

Of course, Hyang had somewhat foreseen this situation.

“From what I remember, the Reformation was almost a century later, but that was when it exploded after reaching a critical point. There must be many dissatisfied factions even now. Historically, the most persistent groups are found in religion and politics. If things go well, they’ll be too busy with internal strife for a while. That will buy time for Joseon.”

Though he had his plans, Hyang couldn’t help but worry a little.

“Could this be a controlled burn to prevent a larger fire?”

But Hyang soon dismissed the thought.

“Que Sera, Sera. (Whatever will be, will be.) When you start a fire, you don’t think about the aftermath. Are they going to come all the way to Joseon to argue?”

With this very irresponsible statement, Hyang finished smearing ink on Angelo’s letter.

However, this statement caused unrest in an area Hyang hadn’t even anticipated.

That area was the Islamic region.

Hyang’s words, transmitted through merchants trading with European merchants and politicians keeping a close eye on the movements of European countries, stimulated many Islamic imams (إمام, religious leaders).

“Are we truly living according to the teachings of Muhammad and the Quran?”

As a result of this self-reflection movement, many sects emerged besides the representative Sunni and Shia denominations.

Naturally, the ruling Sunni and Shia factions suppressed these new sects.

Consequently, countries within the Islamic sphere of influence had to endure serious internal strife.

In this process, some unexpected beneficiaries emerged, most notably the Eastern Roman Empire. The Ottoman Empire, on the verge of destroying the empire, halted due to internal strife, giving the Eastern Roman Empire time to catch its breath.

Later, historians studying this period made the following remarks about Angelo's letter:

'The fact that just a few lines of text caused such events is evidence of how much discontent had accumulated among the people of that era.'

Even as they wrote these papers, scholars ground their teeth.

"This Hyang, couldn't he just have stayed put in Joseon! Why did he have to run his mouth! Should we limit this to Korean history, or should we include it in world history?"

"The one who wrote it down and sent it as a letter is worse than the one who spoke!"

"The worst one is the guy who didn't censor that part!"

Although Hyang personally censored most of these letters due to issues with the interpreters' qualifications, this wasn't officially recorded. As a result, historians could only blame the innocent interpreters.

And regarding this matter, many European historians commented:

There have been several instances where movements from the East greatly influenced the West.

Famous examples include the migration of the Huns, the large-scale Mongol expeditions, and the Black Death.

However, considering the events triggered by 'Angelo's letter', Lee Hyang, who was the First Prince of Joseon at the time, should be viewed as the most significant. Due to this single individual, Europe and the Islamic regions had to endure nearly a generation of tremendous chaos.

Because of this, some extreme historians described Hyang as:

"The greatest villain in history."

And when such statements were officially made, the Korean government would respond with their usual:

“Do you want to die? Do you want to perish? Do you want to kick the bucket?”

While Hyang was observing the commotion happening outside, an unexpected place was brewing its own storm.

Anseong, Gyeonggi Province.

“My lord. Someone has come from Hanseong.”

Choi Man-ri, who was studying scriptures in the guest room, rose from his seat and went outside at his servant’s words.

As Choi Man-ri stepped out, a man carrying a bundle bowed deeply and spoke.

“How do you do, my lord?”

“Yes, I don’t recognize you. Who are you?”

“I’ve come from Ilhyangdang in Bukchon.”

At the man’s words, Choi Man-ri’s face lit up with joy.

“You were sent by that friend? How is he doing?”

“Yes, the master works late every day, but he’s doing well.”

“I see, I see...”

Smiling at the news of his acquaintance’s well-being, Choi Man-ri got to the point.

“So, what brings you here?”

At Choi Man-ri's question, the man untied his bundle and took out a large package and a letter.

"I was ordered to deliver these."

"Is that so? Bring them here."

The man respectfully placed the package and letter on the floor of the guest room porch. Holding the letter, Choi Man-ri ordered the man:

"I'll provide a room and meals, so rest for the night before you leave."

"Thank you, my lord."

Returning to the guest room with the package and letter, Choi Man-ri opened the envelope.

"To the Wanderer of Rivers and Lakes..."

Choi Man-ri began reading the letter, humming. However, as he read further down, his voice grew quieter, and his expression became serious.

-His Majesty has created a writing system unique to our Joseon. Although it seemed unfamiliar at first, it's easy to learn and convenient to write, making it incomparably useful.

So, I've sent you a handwritten copy. Please take a look.

With your excellence, I'm sure you'll understand its utility without me explaining at length. Please use this well and return to Hanseong.

Isn't your age and literary talent too precious to be spent living in seclusion in the countryside?

To summarize the contents of the letter:

-The writing system created by the king is very good. So praise it, earn some points, and come back.

“Huh~. Are you asking me to act like a sycophant? I must have misjudged you.”

Choi Man-ri put down the letter irritably and glared at the package. He wanted to order a servant to burn it in the fireplace right away. But he was curious too. And although he had retired to the countryside, he still had ambitions.

“Well, let’s see how well it’s made.”

Choi Man-ri untied the package and placed the books on the writing desk.

Two hours later.

“What a terrifying writing system!”

Choi Man-ri stared at the books with eyes that had moved beyond surprise to fear.

The writing desk and its surroundings were covered with papers full of sentences written in Hunminjeongeum.

It took less than an hour after turning the cover of the first book to learn how to read and write, and in just over an hour, he could compose sentences freely.

That’s why Choi Man-ri was not just surprised, but terrified.

“Although I was stuck in Hall of Worthies rather than Geunjeongcheon, I wasn’t unaware of the palace’s movements. But I never heard news of something like this being created. Which means...”

As Choi Man-ri searched his memories, he lamented:

“As I thought! His Majesty and the Crown Prince did everything themselves!”

He remembered the Crown Prince acquiring phonology books and foreign books through envoys.

He and the other scholars of Hall of Worthies, along with other officials, had dismissed them as useless miscellaneous books, but it was clear that His Majesty was involved in this matter.

“That means this started simultaneously with the reforms. They created a writing system of this level of completion in nearly 10 years, not just one person, but two?”

After reviewing his conclusion, Choi Man-ri shook his head.

“Are those two even human?”

However, there was something Choi Man-ri couldn't have predicted – that Hyang was a reincarnator.

In the history before Hyang's intervention, the Hunminjeongeum created by King Sejong was an excellent writing system from its inception, but it was still in its raw state. It was refined over time to become the Hangeul of the 21st century.

However, with Hyang's intervention, the modified Hunminjeongeum achieved a high level of completion.

Examining the papers with terrified eyes, Choi Man-ri soon bit his lip.

“We must stop this! This mustn't be used!”

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BBCodes

[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.
Deathbringer, emphasis on [i]*death*[/i].
I'm totally [s]~~crossed out~~[/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

[img]https://www.agine.this[/img]
[link]http://topwebfiction.com[/link].
[link=https://www.n.ot]clickbait[/link].

[quote]... me like my landlord! [/quote]

[spoiler]Spanish Inquisition! [/spoiler]
[ins]Insert[/ins] more bad puns!
[del]~~Delete~~[/del] your browser history!

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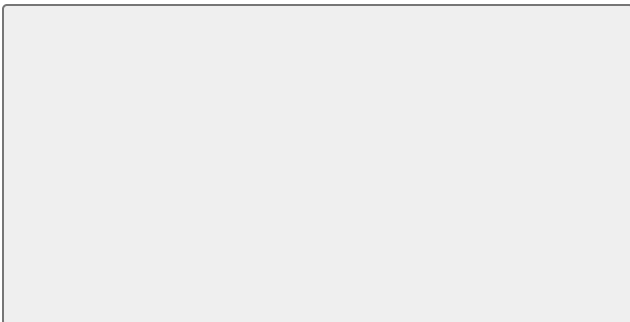
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Chapter 301 - 400

BCJ Chapter 374

The Period of Stagnation - Motion in Stillness

by *BlossomTL*Black Corporation: Joseon

While Sejong and his ministers were in the midst of a meeting in Geunjeongjeon, a group of eunuchs and officials entered.

“What is the matter?”

At Sejong’s question, the Chief Secretary approached a eunuch. After receiving a whispered report, he carefully relayed the situation to Sejong.

“Choi Man-ri is now outside Gwanghwamun, kneeling on straw mats and presenting a petition? For what reason?”

“It’s because of the Hunminjeongeum you’ve created, Your Majesty.”

Sejong’s face momentarily turned fierce upon hearing the Chief Secretary’s report. However, a sneer soon took its place.

“Hah! Choi Man-ri... His insight and integrity are indeed admirable. Yes, indeed they are.”

After uttering words that could be either praise or sarcasm, Sejong rose from his seat.

“I should go out to see. Let’s all go together. We should at least hear what he has to *bark* about, shouldn’t we?”

At Sejong's use of "bark," the ministers momentarily hesitated and looked at him.

"Why are you all acting like that?"

"Your Majesty, that expression doesn't befit your status..."

As Lee Jik trailed off, Sejong instead looked back with an expression of incomprehension.

"I said 'speak' (말) for someone with lofty insight. What's the problem?"

"Ah... It's nothing! It's nothing!"

At Sejong's words, the ministers hurriedly rose from their seats. Seeing this, Sejong clicked his tongue.

"I wonder what they were thinking... Tsk!"

The court historian who recorded all of this quickly added a note as he stood up:

-The historian says:

It doesn't seem right...

"Your Majesty! Please reconsider! The promulgation of Hunminjeongeum must never happen!"

As they approached Gwanghwamun, Choi Man-ri's shouts could be heard. Hearing these cries, Sejong chuckled and muttered.

"What a good set of lungs he has."

"Loyalty!"

"Well done, all of you."

Receiving the salutes of the soldiers guarding Gwanhwamun, Sejong crossed the threshold and surveyed the scene spread out before Gwanhwamun.

Choi Man-ri was prostrated on a straw mat, continuing to raise his voice, while the residents of Hanseong were gathered thickly around.

Although many had gathered during the previous petition incident, even more had gathered now.

The reason for this difference was Choi Man-ri's reputation.

-Former Chief Scholar of Hall of Worthies and a renowned man of integrity.

People had gathered because someone of a completely different caliber from the previous rabble was presenting a petition.

“Your Majesty! I, Choi Man-ri, former Chief Scholar of Hall of Worthies, risk my life to inform you! The promulgation of Hunminjeongeum must never happen! Please reconsider!”

Seeing Sejong, Choi Man-ri raised his voice even more.

Observing this, Sejong glanced around subtly.

Not only were the ministers who had followed him out visible, but also Hyang, who had rushed over from working in Area 51.

Seeing Hyang's slightly worried expression, Sejong muttered quietly.

“With my child watching, I can't show an unseemly appearance as a father.”

After taking a small breath, Sejong ordered the Chief Secretary.

“Go and bring a desk and chair.”

“Yes, Your Majesty.”

A moment later, when the eunuchs brought a desk and chair, Sejong pointed with his finger to the area in front of Choi Man-ri.

“Place them there.”

After the eunuchs placed the desk and chair and withdrew, Sejong sat down. With his elbows on the desk and his chin resting lightly on his interlocked hands, Sejong asked Choi Man-ri.

“Why shouldn’t Hunminjeongeum be used? It’s not such a poor creation, is it?”

Choi Man-ri immediately answered Sejong’s question.

“Not at all. The Hunminjeongeum Your Majesty has created contains extremely profound principles. Therefore, anyone who can think and act like a human being should be able to learn it easily and use it proficiently.”

“Then why do you say it shouldn’t be used?”

“That is precisely why it must not be used. If I may explain the reasons...”

“Wait.”

Interrupting Choi Man-ri, Sejong ordered the ministers.

“This seems like it will be quite a long story. You are all elderly, so bring chairs and sit down.”

“Your grace is boundless.”

“The Crown Prince should do the same.”

“Your grace is boundless, Father.”

“The people may sit comfortably on the ground if they’re tired, or leave if they wish.”

“Your grace is boundless!”

The residents of Hanseong, who had been lying flat on the ground according to etiquette and law, responded loudly to Sejong's order.

After settling the situation thus, Sejong turned back to Choi Man-ri.

“Where were we in the conversation?”

“Well... Ahem! Ahem!”

Choi Man-ri, who had been sitting dazed, soon gathered his wits, cleared his throat, and continued speaking.

Seeing this, all the ministers muttered inwardly.

‘He’s already mastered the art of handling people!’

Choi Man-ri explained to Sejong why Hunminjeongeum should not be used. It was an incredibly long explanation, but summarized, it was roughly as follows:

-The Hunminjeongeum created by Sejong is a writing system that is very easy to learn and use.

However, it will cause many significant problems, so it is right not to use it.

-Since its founding, Joseon has followed Ming and adhered to Chinese systems. Although the newly created writing system is said to have derived its form from ancient seal script, its sounds and usage differ, which may cause issues with Ming.

-Throughout history, only barbarians have created and used their own languages instead of Chinese characters. Given that our Joseon's culture and rituals are comparable to those of China, how can we take the path of barbarians?

-Although Idu, created by Seol Chong of Silla, is vulgar vernacular, it requires the use of Chinese characters, so one must learn Chinese characters. The new writing system doesn't require Chinese characters at all, which will cause problems in learning scholarship. If an official

becomes proficient in Hunminjeongeum without Chinese characters, future generations will think they can achieve success with Hunminjeongeum alone and abandon Chinese characters. There will be no one to learn the teachings of the sages.

-It was said that Hunminjeongeum could be used to resolve injustices in criminal cases, but this is not a matter of writing systems. This is a separate issue that depends on the fairness of the prison officials.

-In the case of Hunminjeongeum, it suddenly appeared and was decided to be used without discussion with the ministers, which is not right. Although the current trend is to make quick decisions and see quick results, it is absolutely unacceptable to do so with such a crucial matter as a writing system.

-Looking at the creation process of Hunminjeongeum, we can see that even the Crown Prince participated. Who is the Crown Prince? He is the future leader of Joseon. He has been exceptionally intelligent from a young age, but it is regrettable that he is now immersed in miscellaneous studies and not diligent in his main studies. In this situation, it is not right to continue assigning Hunminjeongeum-related tasks to the Crown Prince.

-If Hunminjeongeum is used, the people will be able to learn and write sentences easily. However, being able to read and write sentences easily is a separate issue from having deep knowledge.

If someone with evil intentions uses deceptive words and sentences to mislead the people, it will cause even greater harm than when only Chinese characters were used.

“...Therefore, the promulgation and use of Hunminjeongeum must never happen! Please reconsider!”

Even after Choi Man-ri’s explanation ended, Sejong did not immediately open his mouth.

“Hmm...”

Making a small nasal sound as he organized his thoughts, Sejong soon spoke.

“It seems right at first glance, but it is not.”

Sejong refuted Choi Man-ri’s opinions point by point.

-Respecting Ming is not an etiquette that must be followed, but a diplomatic choice. To act as you say is not to show respect, but to submit. This very act blurs the intent of respecting Ming that has continued since King Taejo.

-As you say, our Joseon’s culture and rituals are comparable to those of China. What is the meaning of ‘comparable’? It is to weigh the merits of two different things. In other words, isn’t it natural that Joseon’s writing system should be different since its culture and rituals are different from China’s? Isn’t that why Idu came about in the first place? Wasn’t Idu used because we had different language and culture but no proper writing system?

-Your statement that the fairness of criminal cases depends on prison officials is not wrong. However, if laws are written in simple text, and the people can easily read and understand them, wouldn’t it be easier to avoid injustices?

-You say there was no discussion with the ministers, but after its creation, all the ministers gave positive evaluations. It was also evaluated as convenient for writing official documents. Moreover, have you forgotten the existence of the remonstrators? Do you think they would have remained silent if I had done something wrong?

-You also mentioned the Crown Prince, but his participation is almost over. Even if you point out past events, can’t they be revisited? Isn’t this criticism for the sake of criticism? And you said the Crown Prince is only focusing on miscellaneous studies and neglecting his main studies, but the Crown Prince has already mastered them long ago. And many people are enjoying the results of the Crown Prince’s miscellaneous studies, so what is your arrogance in taking this lightly?

“...And you said that Chinese characters would be abandoned, neglecting the teachings of the sages, and that people would be deceived, causing harm. Let me ask you this.”

Choi Man-ri, thoroughly refuted by Sejong point by point, answered in a tired voice.

“Please ask, Your Majesty.”

“Are Chinese characters the only vessel that can contain the profound meanings of the sages? What do you value more: the meanings of the sages, or the Chinese characters that are merely the vessel containing those meanings?”

“That, that is...”

“What is the problem with changing the vessel so that more people can easily understand the meanings of the sages? And about deception? Looking back at history, there have always been those who cause trouble by deceiving people. Was that because people didn’t use Chinese characters then?”

“That’s not it...”

Sejong persistently tore into Choi Man-ri.

“Yes, it’s six of one and half a dozen of the other... The uneducated and those with shallow knowledge are equally susceptible to being deceived. But let me ask you this. Do you think those who have discovered the joy of learning through simple writing will be satisfied with shallow knowledge?”

“But the people are naturally reluctant to learn...”

At Choi Man-ri’s words, Sejong shouted angrily.

“Are your eyes blind? Can you say that even after seeing the children flocking to the Commoner’s School right now? Nine out of ten children discovering the joy of learning at the Commoner’s School are commoners!”

At Sejong's rebuke, Choi Man-ri's head dropped to the ground.

Sejong's reprimand continued to fall on Choi Man-ri's ears.

“Wasn't the greatest duty of the scholar-officials to educate the people? If there were difficulties in educating the people due to the lack of a writing system, it was only natural to devise all sorts of methods to solve this! And now that a solution to this problem has emerged, what nonsense is it to block it!”

In the end, Choi Man-ri had to surrender.

“My thinking was short-sighted. Please forgive my sin.”

At Choi Man-ri's response, the ministers breathed sighs of relief.

‘Choi Man-ri, that stubborn man has waved the white flag. What a relief.’

‘That was close. If he had gone a little further, His Majesty would have had his head.’

Whether aware of the ministers' thoughts or not, Sejong glared at Choi Man-ri silently for a long time.

“What should I do with someone as obtuse as you?”

At the word ‘obtuse’, Choi Man-ri gritted his teeth. However, he was in no position to argue against such an assessment now.

After staring at Choi Man-ri for a long time, Sejong turned his head.

“Prime Minister”

“Yes, Your Majesty.”

“I think I need to reverse one of my previous decisions. Would that be alright?”

“It depends on the matter, but Your Majesty's will takes precedence.”

“Is that so? Hmm... Choi Man-ri, listen.”

“Yes, Your Majesty.”

“The Office of Correct Sounds will soon be established. You will take charge as its head and be responsible for transcribing this country’s law books into Hunminjeongeum. And not just simply transcribing, but rewriting them in a way that anyone can easily understand their meaning! You, who recognized the advantages of Hunminjeongeum in just a few days, should be capable of this, right?”

“My abilities are insufficient...”

Choi Man-ri, terrified, tried to back out, but Sejong didn’t let him.

“You have no right of refusal. And...”

Pausing briefly, Sejong approached Choi Man-ri and whispered so that only he could hear.

“Thank you. Thanks to your reputation, many people of Joseon will become even more interested in Hunminjeongeum.”

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 - Text shadows
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-

BBCodes

Bold of you to assume I have a plan.

Deathbringer, emphasis on *death*.

I'm totally ~~crossed-out~~ by this.

- Listless I'm counting my bullets.



<http://topwebfiction.com>.

[link=https://www.n.ot](https://www.n.ot) [clickbait](#).

... me like my landlord!

Spanish Inquisition!

Insert more bad puns!

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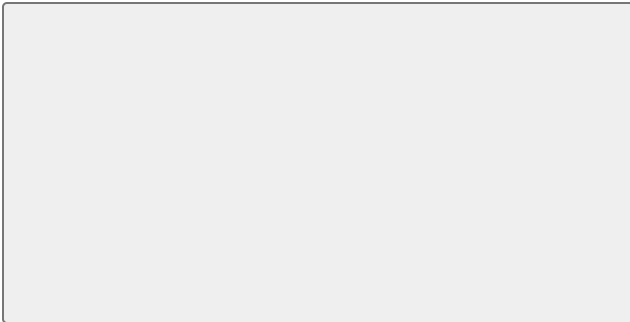
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Chapter 301 - 400

BCJ Chapter 375

A Brief Interlude

by *BlossomTL*Black Corporation: Joseon

Late in the evening of the day Choi Man-ri was appointed as the head of the Office of Correct Sounds.

In a gisaeng house in Dadong, Sejong and Hyang were having a private drinking session between father and son.

“It’s truly surprising to have a drinking session with Father outside of the palace or hunting grounds.”

Sejong smiled at Hyang’s words and responded.

“It gets tiresome to always eat in the palace, and going out hunting is bothersome.”

Hyang’s face changed slightly at Sejong’s words.

‘Oh! This man, really!’

Whether aware of Hyang’s thoughts or not, Sejong immediately continued.

“If you’re going to start with that ‘not rising’ nonsense again, I’ll make you regent right away. Don’t worry, this father of yours is still doing everything he needs to do.”

“... Yes.”

Having silenced Hyang, Sejong ordered the gisaengs.

“The cups are empty. Fill them up.”

“Yes.”

As the cups were filled, Sejong raised his cup and ordered Hyang.

“Come, let’s drink.”

“Yes.”

After several rounds of drinks, Hyang asked Sejong.

“By the way, what’s the occasion for this drinking session today?”

“Didn’t we catch a big fish today?”

At Sejong’s words, which mixed jest and seriousness, Hyang asked with slightly surprised eyes.

“Was it planned?”

“A bigger fish than expected was caught.”

“How did you anticipate it?”

“What’s the most lacking thing in the court right now?”

Hyang immediately answered Sejong’s question.

“People.”

Sejong nodded at Hyang’s answer.

“That’s right. We’re short on people. Aren’t the current court officials those who are accustomed to working late nights and overnight? I expected they would spread bait here and there just to survive.”

Hyang nodded unconsciously at Sejong's explanation.

“Ah... So that's why you didn't issue an order prohibiting handwritten copies?”

“They would do it even if told not to. And don't they know capable people through various academic and regional connections, like that Han Myeong-hoe boy from before? I thought it would be a good opportunity to catch those who slipped through my net, and it was successful. A bigger fish than expected was caught.”

At Sejong's words, Hyang muttered unconsciously.

“Are you the Fishing King of the East Sea?”

“Ha, that's a good nickname. Hahaha!”

Sejong, who burst into laughter at Hyang's words, continued speaking with a grin.

“Thanks to catching this big fish, it seems we'll be able to see those stubborn fellows again soon.”

As Hyang searched his memories at Sejong's words, he asked Sejong.

“By stubborn fellows, do you mean the dismissed scholars from Hall of Worthies?”

“That's right. They're stubborn, but they're talents too good to be left idle. We should put them to use.”

At Sejong's words, Hyang thought for a moment and asked with a worried expression.

“Will they return? No, is it possible given Your Majesty's previous royal decree? If we're not careful, some impudent fellows might call it a flaw in Your Majesty.”

Sejong drained his cup lightly and answered Hyang's words.

“That’s why I asked the Prime Minister earlier, wasn’t it? Since the Prime Minister answered like that, even if some nonsense comes out, he’ll step up to block it first.”

Hyang nodded at Sejong’s words, but he hadn’t completely erased his worries.

In the end, Hyang continued his questions.

“But will those stubborn fellows really come back? Weren’t they the stubborn ones who threw in their resignations even before they were dismissed?”

Sejong’s smile deepened at Hyang’s observation.

“I’m thinking of giving Choi Man-ri temporary authority over personnel and appointments. However, with the condition that for officials already working in the court, permission must be obtained from the head of the relevant department. What do you think will happen then?”

Hyang immediately answered Sejong’s question.

“It will be impossible to secure those already working as officials. The ministers will absolutely not let them go. In the end, he’ll have no choice but to exercise his appointment authority... So, to properly run the Office of Correct Sounds, he’ll have no choice but to bring in the dismissed scholars. But will Chief Choi Man-ri be able to easily bring in those stubborn fellows?”

Sejong emptied his cup and answered Hyang’s question.

“One of the things that scholar-officials must absolutely uphold is loyalty. They have loyalty built up from Hall of Worthies, so they’ll have no choice but to come.”

“Ah...”

At Sejong’s words, Hyang momentarily recalled a variation of a movie scene.

‘We Hall of Worthies scholars! Eui!’

“Thanks to this, we’ll be able to put those stubborn fellows to good use under Choi Man-ri’s responsibility. This is all thanks to you.”

Hyang’s eyes widened at Sejong’s words.

“Pardon? What did I...”

“Have you forgotten what you said before? The words that the king of the Western barbarians said to the prince who would inherit the throne. ‘Become the bee that sucks the sweetest nectar from all flowers.’ Wasn’t that a good saying?”

“Ah...”

Nodding at Sejong’s words, Hyang muttered inwardly.

‘It’s a thousand blessings that there’s no court historian here. If there had been, I might have been recorded as some kind of shadowy figure... By the way, this man is really out of the ordinary... How can he apply things so terrifyingly well?’

While the drinking session continued like this, the head gisaeng entered.

“What is it?”

“Some of the girls from the gisaeng house say they have a request for His Majesty and the Crown Prince, so this lowly woman has come in.”

“A request, you say?”

At the head gisaeng’s words, Sejong’s expression filled with curiosity.

“A request from the gisaengs... Well, let’s hear what kind of request it is.”

“Yes.”

As soon as Sejong's permission was given, the door to the room adjacent to where Sejong and his son were seated opened.

As the door opened, the waiting gisaengs made a deep bow to Sejong with nimble movements.

Seeing this, Sejong nodded his head with a constant smile.

“Hahaha! Truly swallow-like swift movements. Well, what is your request?”

At Sejong's question, the gisaeng sitting at the front carefully opened her mouth.

“Please teach us lowly women a new song.”

“Huh?”

“What?”

At this unexpected request, Sejong and Hyang tilted their heads. After observing the gisaengs for a moment, Hyang exclaimed when he saw the gisaeng sitting at the front.

“Ah! You're that girl from before!”

The gisaeng sitting at the front was the one who had previously asked Hyang to teach her “The Virgin Boatman.”

When Hyang recognized her, the gisaeng raised her head gently and answered with a seductive smile.

“Yes, this lowly woman is that gisaeng from before.”

Seeing this, Sejong opened his mouth with a slightly regretful expression.

“Oh my, it was the Crown Prince, not me. Anyway, a new song... You, tell me more about it.”

At Sejong's command, the gisaeng elaborated more on her story.

"The Virgin Boatman," which Hyang had taught while shouting "A cliché is a cliché," spread throughout the eight provinces of Joseon in an instant. The trend was so fierce that even the residents of the Nakdong River were bewildered.

However, like any popular song, the craze cooled down quickly. But the cooling of the trend meant that people were tired of "The Virgin Boatman," not of adult songs in general.

As a result, as time passed, songs with different lyrics set to the tune of "The Virgin Boatman" circulated, but none of them achieved the same hit status as "The Virgin Boatman." It felt like wearing ill-fitting clothes.

In the end, the gisaeng who had first learned the song from Hyang desperately wished to meet him again.

'If all else fails, I'll have to enter the palace! Sheesh! Those stuck-up Ming envoys never come at times like this!'

While she was waiting for an opportunity like this, Sejong and Hyang happened to visit the gisaeng house.

At the gisaeng's request, Sejong looked at Hyang with eyes full of expectation.

"I'd like to hear a new song too."

"Yes..."

Hyang, who answered briefly, racked his brains hard.

'What would be good...'

As Hyang searched through the songs he had memorized while diligently serving as a source of joy for the elderly in 21st century Yangsan, and songs he had heard and memorized from various places, he soon chose one.

‘We started with a river, so let’s continue with a river!’

The new song Hyang chose was “The Maiden of Soyang River.”

“Ahem! Ahem!”

After clearing his throat for a moment, Hyang soon began to sing.

“As the sun sets~”

After the song ended, Hyang asked Sejong for his opinion.

“How was it?”

Sejong nodded at Hyang’s question and answered.

“The sorrowful emotions of a young woman anxiously waiting for her departed lover were well conveyed. It was a good song.”

“Thank you.”

“By the way, you must never become like that bad fellow in the song. One must not give affection carelessly, and if affection is given, one must take responsibility, whether man or woman.”

Grasping the hidden meaning in Sejong’s words, Hyang answered with a bitter smile.

“Even three is difficult for me.”

“Huh? Already? Should I call for a royal physician...”

At Sejong’s words, Hyang waved his hands.

“I’m still in top shape!”

After ending this brief interlude, Hyang asked the gisaeng.

“How was it?”

“Please, you must teach us! We will do our best to learn it!”

And so, a new popular song began to spread, starting from Hanseong.

And the residents of Chuncheon began to grumble.

“Is it Soyang River this time?” (Note 1)

Meanwhile, at the public debate between Sejong and Choi Man-ri, there were also some merchants from Ming.

Through them, information about Hunminjeongeum and the content of the debate was transmitted to Beijing.

Upon receiving the report, the Cabinet Secretary immediately rushed to the Xuande Emperor to report and add his opinion.

“I believe we must immediately send an envoy to Joseon to question them!”

“What is there to question?”

At the Xuande Emperor’s question, the Cabinet Secretary immediately answered.

“There are two things, Your Majesty. One is the creation of an independent writing system. The other is about their respect towards the superior country.”

“Hmm...”

After pondering for a moment at the Cabinet Secretary’s words, the Xuande Emperor reached a conclusion.

“Not permitted.”

“Your Majesty! You must strongly question them! Right now, there are unspeakable words circulating in both the court and among the people. To quell this...”

“Enough.”

Raising his hand to stop the speech, the Xuande Emperor looked at the Cabinet Secretary and ministers and opened his mouth.

“Unspeakable words, you say... They’re saying I’m not the Emperor of Ming, but the Emperor of Joseon? Who would spread such words? The common people naturally like to talk, so that’s understandable, but who in this court has spread such treasonous words?”

The Xuande Emperor spoke in a leisurely tone, but as soon as his words ended, the interior of the Wénhuà Palace froze solid.

“Hmm... I wonder who it could be... Cabinet Secretary, you said both the court and the people, so you must know who in the court has been talking. Would you tell me?”

As soon as the Xuande Emperor’s words ended, the Cabinet Secretary prostrated himself on the ground and shouted.

“Your Majesty! It was not me! My loyalty remains unwavering!”

“I’m not doubting your loyalty, I’m just curious about who has been talking.”

“I do not know, Your Majesty!”

At the Cabinet Secretary’s cry, the Xuande Emperor muttered softly.

“Well, we’ll find out if we investigate.”

The Xuande Emperor spoke in a calm voice, but the officials and eunuchs turned pale. Since the Emperor had spoken, the Eastern Depot would

investigate the officials, and the Embroidered Uniform Guard would investigate the eunuchs. And a bloodbath would ensue.

“I’m not unaware of what the Cabinet Secretary is worried about. Most of those with independent writing systems are indeed barbarians. But can we view Joseon as barbarians? The relationship between Joseon and Ming is one of lips and teeth. And the current king of Joseon said, ‘Respecting the superior country is a diplomatic method.’ Is that statement wrong? And when I send envoys to Joseon or when Joseon’s envoys come here, have they ever been disrespectful? Have they shown any selfishness in performing rituals? Why do you keep trying to worsen relations with Joseon? Etiquette should not be forced, but should come from the heart. Have you forgotten that emphasizing etiquette only breeds resistance? Is that your loyalty?”

At the Xuande Emperor’s rebuke, all those led by the Cabinet Secretary prostrated themselves on the ground.

“Your Majesty! Please forgive our oversight!”

“Please forgive our narrow-mindedness!”

Looking down at such ministers, the Xuande Emperor continued.

“My empire is like a roc. Just as a roc does not move carelessly, the movements of the empire should have weight. So why are you trying to make the empire move like a mere sparrow? Don’t you know that the more you act like this, the more countries will raise flags against the empire?”

“We are deeply sorry!”

Hearing such answers from the ministers, the Xuande Emperor concluded.

“I had been turning a blind eye to the sudden disappearance of some eunuchs recently. But if you act like this, I can no longer ignore it. Keep that in mind.”

“We will engrave it on our bones and hearts!”

“Therefore, regarding the recent events in Joseon, it is not permissible as it could be seen as interference in internal affairs. This is an imperial decree.”

“We receive your command!”

Note 1) It is not known exactly when the name Soyang River began to be used. However, given that Soyang River Granary was established on Soyang River during King Sejo’s reign, it is assumed to have been used from the late Goryeo or early Joseon period for the purpose of this writing.

Soyang River Granary. Korea Creative Content Agency.

http://www.culturecontent.com/content/contentView.do?search_div=CP_THE&search_div_id=CP_THE010&cp_code=cp0616&index_id=cp06160041&content_id=cp061600410001&search_left_menu=2

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BBCodes

Bold of you to assume I have a plan.

Deathbringer, emphasis on *death*.

I'm totally ~~crossed-out~~ by this.

- Listless I'm counting my bullets.



<http://topwebfiction.com>.

[link=https://www.n.ot](https://www.n.ot) [clickbait](#).

... me like my landlord!

Spanish Inquisition!

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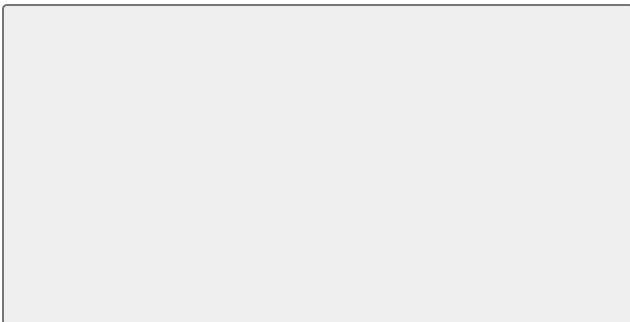
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Chapter 301 - 400

BCJ Chapter 376

A Brief Interlude

by *BlossomTL*Black Corporation: Joseon

Choi Man-ri, who had been caught by Sejong, reported for duty from the next day.

The Office of Correct Sounds had been assigned one of the newly constructed buildings added to the Records Office.

Therefore, as Choi Man-ri crossed the threshold of the Records Office to go to the Office of Correct Sounds, his face became even more gloomy.

“Was there no other place available?”

A lower-ranking official from the Office of Correct Sounds answered Choi Man-ri’s question.

“Yes, as the government structure changed and personnel increased, there was no space left.”

“Hall of Worthies...”

Choi Man-ri couldn’t finish saying ‘Hall of Worthies’. Although he and many others—to be honest, almost all—had been dismissed, the positions had been filled.

And now it existed as a specialized agency for policy research.

In the end, Choi Man-ri sighed deeply and moved on.

“Where should I go?”

“This way, sir.”

Following the lower-ranking official who went ahead, Choi Man-ri continued to mutter softly.

“Of all places... Of all places...”

“Hah...”

Choi Man-ri let out a long sigh as he entered the building with the sign ‘Office of Correct Sounds’, which clearly looked newly made.

The interior of the large building, surrounded on all sides by a corridor between the outer and inner walls composed of glass-paned sliding doors and pillars, was completely open with nothing blocking the view except the pillars supporting the roof.

“It seems to be over 8 jang (about 24m) at least...”

The lower-ranking official immediately answered Choi Man-ri’s observation.

“It’s exactly 9 jang (about 27m) from the eastern inner wall to the western inner wall. Including the corridor and outer walls, it’s 10 jang (about 30m).”

“Whew~.”

Sighing again, Choi Man-ri surveyed the interior once more.

At the farthest end from the western entrance where he stood, there was a separate large desk. In front of it, towards the west, several long desks were placed, and behind these desks, bookshelves stood in rows.

At the western entrance, smaller desks were placed. And officials who seemed to be of similar rank to the lower-ranking official who had guided him were standing in front of these desks, paying their respects to him.

“Where is my seat?”

“This way, sir.”

The seat the lower-ranking official guided him to was, as expected, the one Choi Man-ri had anticipated.

After sitting in the guided seat, Choi Man-ri looked at the long desks stretching out in front of his desk and asked the lower-ranking official.

“What are those seats for?”

“They are seats for those tasked with transcribing Chinese texts into Hunminjeongeum, but...”

The lower-ranking official paused briefly, then carefully continued while gauging Choi Man-ri’s reaction.

“Currently, they are vacant.”

“Vacant?”

Surprised by the unexpected explanation, Choi Man-ri glared at the lower-ranking official.

“Then what do you all do?”

“We belong to the General Affairs Department and assist with the work carried out in the Office of Correct Sounds. If you need documents, we find and bring them from other departments, including the Records Office, and provide support for the convenience of your work.”

“Hah.”

Choi Man-ri, letting out a long sigh, noticed an envelope on the desk and looked at the lower-ranking official.

“What is this?”

“It was brought by a eunuch this morning. It contains work instructions from His Majesty.”

At the lower-ranking official’s words, Choi Man-ri adjusted his official attire, straightened his posture, and opened the envelope.

“...”

After opening the envelope and confirming Sejong’s work instructions, Choi Man-ri could only open and close his mouth.

-Fill the positions as quickly as possible. For this purpose, personnel and appointment authority is temporarily granted.

However, when exercising personnel authority, the head of the original department must agree for personnel transfers to be possible. This does not apply to new appointments.

-The priority for translation into Hunminjeongeum is the law books, including the Joseon Gyeongguk-jeon.

However, the vernacular translation must be simple. The level of simplicity should be such that even someone who has barely learned Hunminjeongeum can understand without difficulty.

Also, the vernacular translation should not only cover the law books but also include case precedents.

-Along with the vernacular translation of law books, proceed with the vernacular translation of ‘Samgang Haengsildo’ used in the Commoner’s School. As Hunminjeongeum will be taught in the Commoner’s School

from the fall semester of next year, Gyeochuk year, the translation must be completed at least two months before that.

-After completing the above process, proceed with the vernacular translation of the Four Books and Five Classics .

However, for the Four Books and Five Classics, from the 5th year after the promulgation of Hangul, orders will be given for private vernacular translations as well. Afterwards, the translations from the Office of Correct Sounds and private translations will be compared, and the one judged superior will be adopted as the official version.

-Along with the vernacular translation of the Four Books and Five Classics, proceed with the vernacular translation of agricultural texts, medical texts, and military texts like Sun Tzu's Art of War.

-When the progress of the above tasks exceeds halfway, begin the production of a vernacular dictionary.

-The dictionary should not only provide vernacular translations of Chinese characters but also record and include dialects from across the country. This is to ensure that anyone from any part of Joseon can easily understand.

-If necessary, you may start with the dictionary translation as soon as the translation of law books and textbooks is completed.

At the end of the instruction document listing these enormous tasks, it was written:

I (the king) trust in your ability and reputation, and expect good results. I hope that your name will be honorably recorded in the annals of Joseon's history.

Choi Man-ri, who had been staring blankly at the work instructions, let out a long sigh.

“Whew~. Will I be able to finish this before I die?”

It was an overwhelming amount just to read.

After examining the work instructions and the empty seats, Choi Man-ri asked the lower-ranking official who was still standing beside him.

“You said you assist with work. Is sending urgent messages also possible?”

“If you need it, it’s available, sir.”

“I see. Return to your post. I’ll call if I need anything.”

“Yes, sir.”

After sending the lower-ranking official back, Choi Man-ri crossed his arms and glared at the work instructions. After staring at the paper for a long time with tightly clenched lips, Choi Man-ri shook his head and uncrossed his arms.

“There’s no choice...”

Placing some paper in front of him and dipping his brush in ink, Choi Man-ri muttered softly.

“I’m sorry... But I can’t die alone, can I?”

A few days later, urgent messengers arrived at the homes of the dismissed Hall of Worthies scholars who had returned to their hometowns.

“This is from the head of the Office of Correct Sounds.”

“The head of the Office of Correct Sounds? Who’s that?”

“It’s Lord Choi Man-ri.”

“The Chief Scholar sent it? No, when did he become the head of the Office of Correct Sounds?”

The scholars who received the letters from the messengers went into their rooms and opened the envelopes.

The content of the letter inside the envelope was simple.

-Return to Hanseong and help me a bit.

“Huh?”

Upon receiving Choi Man-ri’s request for help, a considerable number of scholars packed their bags and came up to Hanseong.

“If the Chief Scholar asks for help, I must go! Yes! There’s the loyalty of scholar-officials!”

However, there were not a few who didn’t respond even after receiving Choi Man-ri’s letter.

“Hmph! I won’t listen to someone who has bent the principles of a scholar-official!”

Those who stubbornly refused like this soon had to receive a royal order sent by Sejong.

“Royal order!”

The scholars who hurriedly rushed out at the herald’s cry adjusted their official attire and received Sejong’s royal order.

The content of Sejong’s royal order was as concise as Choi Man-ri’s.

Respond immediately to Choi Man-ri’s request. This is the extent of my goodwill.

In the end, even the scholars who had refused until the end had to lift their heavy bottoms off the ground and move.

The first task of the Hall of Worthies scholars who gathered again at the Office of Correct Sounds was to learn Hunminjeongeum. Indeed, it seemed they hadn't earned the name of Hall of Worthies scholars for nothing, as they were using Hunminjeongeum proficiently within three days of education.

When the preparations were complete, Choi Man-ri said to the scholars.

“Now, let's begin.”

As soon as Choi Man-ri's words ended, the lower-ranking officials in charge of work support entered carrying an enormous amount of books.

Seeing the tremendous amount of books that kept coming in, Choi Man-ri said in surprise to the lower-ranking officials.

“I'm only planning to do the vernacular translation of law books now! So bring only those related to law books!”

The official who had first guided Choi Man-ri stepped forward and answered.

“Everything coming in now is related to law books, sir. These are the law books: Joseon Gyeonguk-jeon, Gukheon, Gyeongje Mungam, Gyeonguk Yukjeon, Gyeongje Yukjeon, Sok Yukjeon, Gyeongje Yukjeon Sokjip Sangjeol, Sin Sok Yukjeon, Yukjeon Deungrok, Sinchan Gyeongje Sok Yukjeon, and the records of judgments since the founding of the country.”

At the official's explanation, Choi Man-ri and the scholars unconsciously let out curses.

“Oh, fuck...”

“Bloody hell...”

And so, Choi Man-ri and the scholars fiercely proceeded with the vernacular translation work.

The vernacular translation work carried out by Choi Man-ri and the scholars was a war. Heated debates often broke out over how to interpret sentences written in Chinese characters.

It was so intense that it was not uncommon for yesterday's friend to become today's enemy, and then become a friend again tomorrow.

However, as time passed, the scholars reached the state of enlightened beings—or in Hyang's words, human translation machines—who enjoyed their work.

While doing the vernacular translation work like this, the scholars began to worry gradually.

“Chief.”

“What?”

“Didn't you say Hunminjeongeum would be promulgated next autumn?”

“That's right.”

“There will be not a few who will rise up against it.”

“So?”

“We're just getting our hands and feet to work together, won't it become difficult if newcomers join?”

At the scholars' worry, Choi Man-ri smiled and pointed his hand towards the Records Office.

“There's more to translate over there. Don't unnecessarily meddle and just do your work. Shouldn't we try leaving work on time for once?”

“Yes, sir.”

In the autumn of the Imja year, Lee Jik passed away.

He was 70 years old.

The last words he spoke before dying were as follows:

“Although it’s regrettable that I couldn’t see the completion of the reforms, it’s good that I can now rest in peace.”

Hyang came to pay condolences on behalf of Sejong, and the chief mourner, Lee Jik’s eldest son Lee Sa-hu, was deeply moved by Hyang’s visit.

The ministers who gathered for the condolence were immersed in emotion and talked.

“Now they’re starting to go, one by one.”

“Indeed.”

The ministers felt mixed emotions as a person who had been bustling about together since the founding of Joseon had passed away.

However, they couldn’t know that in the history before Hyang’s intervention, Lee Jik had died a year earlier, in the Sinhai year.

It was the butterfly effect created by Hyang’s intervention.

The ministers who were immersed in such emotions soon returned to reality.

“Now that the Prime Minister has passed away, who would you recommend for that position?”

At Maeng Sa-seong’s question, the ministers thought for a moment and unanimously pointed to one person.

“Lord Hwang Hui would be the most suitable.”

Two weeks later, at the entrance of Heunginjimun (current Dongdaemun).

Looking at the wide-open Heunginjimun, Kim Jong-seo shouted with overwhelming emotion.

“I’m finally back! Hanseong! I’m back!”

“Shut up, you fool! Come here right now!”

At Hwang Hui’s scolding, Kim Jong-seo made a sulky face and grumbled.

“Tch... Always picking on me... Maybe I should just resign.”

“Talking about resigning. Listen, you, the moment you submit a resignation letter, I’ll send you to either Hamgil Province or Daeseol Island.”

“My lord, only His Majesty can make personnel decisions!”

“Have you forgotten that His Majesty listens to my words?”

At Hwang Hui’s point, Kim Jong-seo pursed his lips and followed behind Hwang Hui.

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[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.
Deathbringer, emphasis on [i]death[/i].
I'm totally [s]~~crossed out~~[/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

[img]https://www.agine.this[/img]
[link]http://topwebfiction.com[/link].
[link=https://www.n.ot]clickbait[/link].

[quote]... me like my landlord! [/quote]

[spoiler]Spanish Inquisition! [/spoiler]
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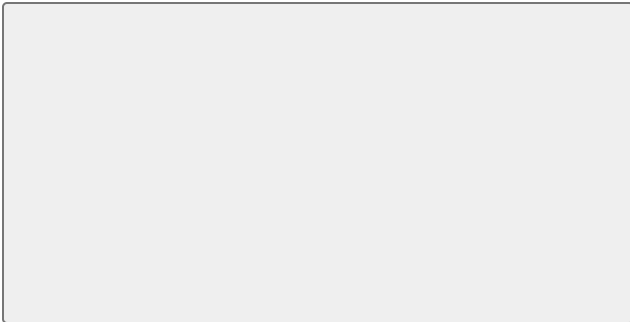
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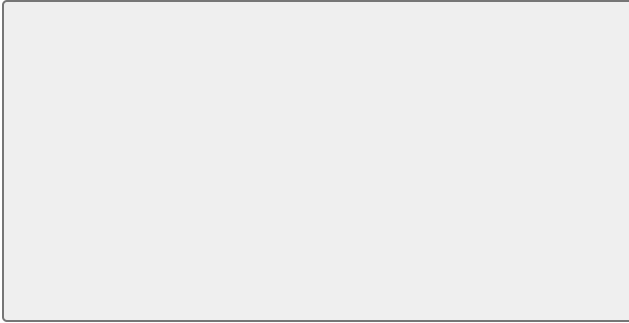
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Chapter 301 - 400

BCJ Chapter 377

A Brief Interlude

by *BlossomTL*Black Corporation: Joseon

Upon returning to Hanseong, Hwang Hui reported his return to Sejong. At that meeting, Sejong appointed Hwang Hui as Prime Minister.

“Now, I’m entrusting you with a great responsibility. I hope you’ll do your best as the Prime Minister of the court.”

At Sejong’s request, Hwang Hui bowed his head and answered.

“I will devote my life to it.”

After leaving the court that day, the ministers took Hwang Hui to a gisaeng house.

“Congratulations, my lord!”

“Congratulations, my lord.”

“Prime Minister, what a great promotion!”

Hwang Hui, receiving congratulations from his fellow ministers, looked at them with a strange expression.

“Why are you looking at us like that?”

“No matter how I think about it, it feels like I’ve been set up as a scapegoat...”

“Ahem!”

“Cough!”

As the ministers cleared their throats and turned their heads at Hwang Hui’s words, Maeng Sa-seong intervened.

“How could that be? It’s simply that your capabilities best suit that position, which is why we recommended you.”

At Maeng Sa-seong’s words, Hwang Hui let out a small sigh and raised his cup.

“Let’s believe that.”

With Hwang Hui becoming Prime Minister, Sejong’s “Second Cabinet” began to move.

Some historians dismissed it as “just a change of one Prime Minister,” but most historians disagreed with this opinion.

This was because Hwang Hui’s capabilities were so outstanding.

Looking at those who served as ministers and cabinet members during Sejong’s reign, it was an unprecedented gathering of brilliant individuals in Joseon’s history.

It was evaluated that Hwang Hui’s merit should be recognized for coordinating policies between these individuals and Sejong, and for stably advancing Joseon’s expansion, and that it was natural to recognize it as the “Second Cabinet”.

“You’re right, and you’re right too.”

There was much talk about Hwang Hui's way of handling affairs, expressed by the above sentence, but Hwang Hui was also someone who would stand up to Sejong when necessary.

And Hwang Hui also garnered a lot of sympathy votes.

This was because, due to his and his children's "unseemly incidents," he was one of the "few people whose day of death was the day of resignation," and in fact, the first such person.

With Hwang Hui becoming Prime Minister like this, many people, including Sejong, were satisfied.

But there was one person who couldn't be happy.

His name was Kim Jong-seo.

"Why can't I be happy!"

Kim Jong-seo, who returned to Hanseong with Hwang Hui, was assigned to the "Office of State Affairs Coordination" directly under the Prime Minister.

And not just as a regular official of the coordination office, but as the head of the office.

There were numerous policies that the court established and implemented, and policies that divided interests between departments were not uncommon. In such cases, the final decision was Sejong's, but it was the job of the Office of State Affairs Coordination to set some framework before that.

Naturally, all kinds of pleas and appeals from the involved departments flooded into the coordination office. But because coordination had to be fair, officials from the coordination office had to run here and there to visit work sites.

Among them, the one who had to run around the most was, of course, Kim Jong-seo.

“I hear there’s been a big flood in the Jeolla region. Go and conduct a field investigation.”

“Are there still bold ones who skim off the middle these days?”

“That’s why I’m telling you to go check. And while you’re at it, take a look at the progress of the road construction from Hanseong to Jeolla...”

“My lord, I’m the office head, aren’t I? Do I have to go out myself?”

“Then should I go? Can’t you see we’re short on people?”

“Still...”

As Kim Jong-seo hesitated, Hwang Hui grabbed the nameplate on the desk.

“Do you want to go back to Hamgil Province? Or should I make you see nothing but snow for 30 years on Daeseol Island?”

“I’m going, I’m going!”

Even as he turned to leave, Kim Jong-seo kept grumbling.

Seeing Hwang Hui and Kim Jong-seo like this, the officials of the coordination office whispered softly.

“They’re really something, both the office head who always tries to wriggle out and the Prime Minister who manages such an office head...”

“Even though he tries to wriggle out like that, he does the assigned work perfectly, which is also amazing.”

“Who’s chattering over there? If you’re so idle, should I send you on a business trip to Gaema Plateau?”

“Eek!”

At Hwang Hui's words, the officials became turtle-necked and buried their heads in documents.

In such a peaceful, daily life that flowed like a calm river, a small whirlpool occurred in Gyeongbokgung Palace.

'Princess Jeongui is meeting a man!'

A scandal had broken out.

Upon hearing the rumor, Sejong immediately mobilized eunuchs and court ladies to investigate the truth.

As it involved his younger sister, Hyang also took a deep interest in the investigation.

And as a result of the investigation, the scandal turned out to be true.

Receiving the facts, Sejong called Hyang separately and lamented.

"An unmarried young woman meeting an outside man... How could such an unsavory thing happen..."

Hyang responded to Sejong's lament.

"Wouldn't it be a bigger problem if a married woman met an outside man? Isn't this rather a good opportunity? Haven't you been worried that Jeongui hasn't gotten married?"

At Hyang's words, Sejong squinted his eyes and glared at Hyang.

"Are you covering for him because that man belongs to the research institute?"

"Of course not! Absolutely not!"

"Sigh~."

Sejong, who let out a long sigh, seemed to have given up.

“Since it’s already happened... Alright. Tell me about this Kim Dam fellow’s background.”

“Yes.”

The culprit who caused the scandal with Princess Jeongui was Kim Dam.

The time when Princess Jeongui entered the research institute saying she would learn mathematics and work there, and the time when Kim Dam entered the research institute were almost the same.

Although Kim Dam had outstanding mathematical skills, he was lacking for practical work. Therefore, Hyang and Jeong-cho put him in the research institute’s affiliated educational facility.

At that time, only a very small number of people were receiving education at the educational facility. Therefore, those who needed to receive intermediate and advanced education were gathered in one place for education. And that’s where he met Princess Jeongui.

“Hmm... His family background seems appropriate, and his character doesn’t seem likely to stray elsewhere... He seems fine.”

“He seems to be a very good match for Jeongui.”

At Hyang’s words, Sejong clicked his tongue.

“Tsk! What does compatibility matter when they’ve already done the deed! And aren’t you thinking about the repercussions this scandal will bring!”

At Sejong’s words, Hyang’s face also became serious.

“It will certainly have some impact on women entering government service.”

After confirming the scandal, Hyang immediately summoned Jeongui and Kim Dam.

“How did you two end up like this?”

At Hyang’s question, Jeongui kept her head down and only fidgeted with her fingers, while Kim Dam turned his head towards the window.

“Speak up now!”

At Hyang’s shout, Kim Dam hurriedly opened his mouth.

“While putting our heads together to solve mathematical problems and exchanging opinions, we ended up...”

At Kim Dam’s answer, Hyang put his hand on his forehead.

“You should have stopped at putting your heads together. Why did you have to put your lips together too...”

The scandal started when they were caught kissing in a secluded corner of the research institute by the eyes of court ladies.

“Sigh~.”

Hyang, who let out a long sigh, continued.

“Now that it’s happened, you know what will happen next, right?”

“Yes.”

The faces of Jeongui and Kim Dam, who answered, had turned red.

“It seems you don’t dislike it. Well, that’s why you caused such an accident...”

As Hyang poked at them, the heads of the two gradually dropped lower.

Smiling slightly while watching the two, Hyang thought about what was to come and became serious.

“Probably, to erase your scandal, the wedding will proceed quickly. This is not only a matter of royal dignity, but also because the success or failure of the policies implemented by the court is at stake.”

At Hyang’s words, Jeongui and Kim Dam raised their heads.

“Is it because of women entering government service?”

Hyang nodded at Jeongui’s question.

“You know well.”

Although it was decided to allow women to enter government service to solve the shortage of talent, the court had a separate concern.

“Will educated women really respond properly?”

Most of those with enough education to work as officials at this time were daughters of noble families.

The question was whether the scholar-officials of these noble families would accept women entering government service.

In the worst case, a disaster could occur where it would become nominal until women who had gone through the Commoner’s School and middle schools came out.

“You two caused trouble in such a situation. That’s why the wedding needs to be held before your scandal spreads. Do you understand?”

“Yes.”

“We’re sorry.”

At Hyang’s point, Jeongui and Kim Dam looked genuinely sorry.

It was certain that not a few scholar-officials would completely block women’s attempts to take the civil service examination using their scandal as a reason.

Seeing the two like this, Hyang leaned back in his chair and gestured.

“Go and do your work. You know well that work here means the research you’re in charge of, right?”

“Yes.”

After sending the two out like this, Hyang’s face became troubled.

“How should I solve this problem...”

After pondering to find the best solution, he had to come to a conclusion.

“Is there no choice but lightning speed and making noise in the east while attacking in the west? Damn it...”

Hyang’s face was full of bitterness as he mentioned “making noise in the east while attacking in the west”.

It was because he remembered a common saying from the 21st century.

-When a political scandal breaks out, the entertainment industry gets turned upside down.

“It will certainly have some impact on women entering government service. Therefore...”

Answering Sejong’s point, Hyang explained the method he had thought of.

“I think the best method is lightning speed and making noise in the east while attacking in the west.”

At Hyang’s words, Sejong immediately asked back.

“Lightning speed would mean holding the wedding as soon as possible, and making noise in the east while attacking in the west... Don’t tell me you’re suggesting fabricating a treason plot? That’s not possible.”

At Sejong’s words, Hyang continued his explanation.

“In the current stable political situation, treason would be even more suspicious. Isn’t making noise in the east while attacking in the west about diverting the enemy’s attention? Then doesn’t Father have the best means?”

At Hyang’s words, Sejong’s face brightened as he searched his memory for a moment.

“You mean to use the state monopoly stores!”

“Yes. It’s almost time for the first birthdays of the royal grandchildren and great-grandchildren anyway. Add to that celebrating Jeongui’s wedding and hold a large-scale discount event at the state monopoly stores.”

At Hyang’s words, Sejong nodded and summarized the situation.

“I see. While everyone’s attention is focused on that, it will be time to hold the civil service examination. That’s good.”

Seemingly satisfied with Hyang’s proposal, Sejong, with a brighter expression, chewed over Hyang’s plan once more and called the Chief Secretary.

“Give the summons to the Royal Secretariat, and tell them to call Lord Jeong-cho.”

“Yes, Your Majesty.”

After giving orders to the Chief Secretary, Sejong turned to Hyang.

“It seems better to add one more thing to that.”

“What is it?”

“Three men make a tiger (a lie becomes truth if many people repeat it).”

“Ah!”

At Sejong’s words, Hyang immediately exclaimed.

When time passed and Jeong-cho arrived, Sejong immediately got to the point.

“You need to become the old man under the moon.”

“Pardon?”

Jeong-cho only blinked his eyes at Sejong’s sudden words.

However, with Sejong’s following explanation, Jeong-cho immediately nodded.

“I will gladly become the old man under the moon.”¹

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BBCodes

[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.
Deathbringer, emphasis on [i]*death*[/i].
I'm totally [s]~~crossed out~~[/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

[img]https://www.agine.this[/img]
[link]http://topwebfiction.com[/link].
[link=https://www.n.ot]clickbait[/link].

[quote]... me like my landlord! [/quote]

[spoiler]Spanish Inquisition! [/spoiler]
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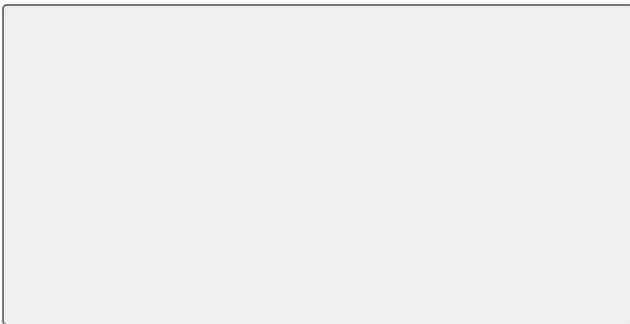
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Chapter 301 - 400

BCJ Chapter 378

A Brief Interlude

by *BlossomTLBlack Corporation: Joseon*

After that, Sejong proceeded with the matter at lightning speed.

Kim So-ryang, Kim Dam's father, received the royal order through a messenger who had ridden all night, and rushed up from Wonpyeong County – now Paju – in one breath.

Upon arriving, Kim So-ryang heard a rough outline of the story from Jeong-cho, who was with Sejong.

“So, Deputy Director Jeong-cho here learned that the two children had affection for each other and became the matchmaker. I also think he's suitable as Jeongui's partner. What do you think?”

“It's an honor for our family!”

Kim So-ryang had no choice but to accept immediately at Sejong's question.

To be honest, Kim So-ryang had no other option but to accept.

This was because of the example of Yi Sok, whose family was ruined after refusing to accept the previous king Taejong's illegitimate daughter as a daughter-in-law. (Note 1)

No, in Yi Sok's case, there was at least the excuse that he refused because the prospective daughter-in-law was an illegitimate princess. But Princess Jeongui was Sejong's legitimate daughter.

As Kim So-ryang gave permission, half willingly and half unwillingly, Sejong continued with a satisfied face.

“Ah, and come up to Hanseong with your family. Now that you've become part of the royal family, you can't remain as a county magistrate, can you?”

At Sejong's words, Kim So-ryang prostrated himself and answered.

“Your grace is boundless!”

“A position has been prepared in the Ministry of National Defense, so you should come up as soon as possible.”

“I receive your command!”

The position Sejong had assigned for Kim So-ryang was the head of the Second Administrative Office in the Ministry of National Defense. It was quite a high position, but not so high as to cause gossip.

Of course, Sejong hadn't just randomly chosen the position. It was the result of examining Kim So-ryang's performance evaluations and reviews.

“He's skilled in administration, so this position should be perfect. The Minister of National Defense had been complaining about the lack of people skilled in administrative work anyway.”

Both in the history before Hyang's intervention and in the history after his intervention, Kim So-ryang ended up benefiting from his son's influence.

In the history before Hyang's intervention, as Kim Dam rose to the position of Minister of Personnel, Kim So-ryang was posthumously promoted to Minister of Military Affairs with the rank of Jaheon Daebu.

And in the history after Hyang's intervention, he became a high-ranking official while still alive.

As the situation was settled, soon the government gazette was posted on bulletin boards in government offices across the country.

-To commemorate the Crown Prince and Princes safely reaching their first birthdays, and to celebrate Princess Jeongui's wedding, a discount event will be held at state monopoly stores for five days. The dates are...

"It's out!"

The people checking the contents of the gazette clenched their fists and focused on it. What the people were most interested in was the event dates and discount rates.

"What's the discount rate? What does it say?"

"Let's see... Uni... uniform... Uniform 50%!"

"50%, it says!"

"And it's uniform!"

"Long live His Majesty!"

At the content of "50% discount on all items," all the people reading the gazette shouted "Long live!"

Meanwhile, veteran officials watching the scene at the entrance of the state monopoly stores warned the new officials.

"It'll be quiet for a while, so rest and build up your strength. Once the event starts, there'll be wailing."

"Is it that bad?"

"You'll be able to feel what it means to say 'people flood in like a tidal wave.'"

At the veteran official's words, the faces of the new officials turned pale.

However, the veteran officials who had already gained some experience had researched and shared appropriate methods.

‘Only let in a manageable number of people at a time.’

‘Set up zigzag queues with ropes to prevent people from rushing in all at once.’

‘Make sure to request solid support from the police bureau.’

At the same time, ships and carts loaded with goods to be sold rushed to state monopoly stores across the country.

While the whole of Joseon was buzzing with anticipation for the discount event, another matter was progressing.

At a gisaeng house in Bukchon.

The ministers were having a drinking party together after a long time.

“How long has it been since we had a drink together?”

“Haha! Indeed!”

The ministers enjoyed the feast, laughing constantly.

As the ministers said, it really had been a long time since they had a drinking party.

Under the pretext of “slowing down the pace but ensuring substance,” they had been reviewing and coordinating policies, leading to a life of “home-office-palace-office-night duty room-palace-(repeat)-occasionally home.”

There was a break in between when Lee Jik passed away, but they had to endure more than a day at the funeral home paying condolences.

Amidst this, “Princess Jeongui’s marriage” was decided. As Sejong’s workload decreased due to focusing on his daughter’s marriage, the ministers finally had some free time after a long while.

As drinks were exchanged, the ministers asked Jeong-cho, who was attending the drinking party:

“How did you end up becoming the matchmaker?”

“Yes, tell us.”

At the ministers’ questions, Jeong-cho emptied his cup with an embarrassed expression and opened his mouth.

“Well, you see... Weren’t both of them receiving education at the research institute? When I took a peek, I saw that love was budding between the two. So, I stepped forward to be the matchmaker. They’re both in the prime of youth, wouldn’t there be a scandal if something went wrong?”

After saying that much, Jeong-cho emptied his cup and sighed.

“Sigh~. I thought it had worked out well, but...”

As Jeong-cho trailed off, the ministers nodded. They had heard the rumors that had been circulating in the palace for a while.

Seeing the ministers’ reactions, Jeong-cho concluded his explanation.

“Because of that, things progressed urgently. If not for that, we could have chosen an auspicious date and proceeded according to proper procedures.”

“Well, they’re both in the prime of youth...”

“Still, since it happened after permission was given, isn’t it rather fortunate?”

The ministers summarized the situation, speaking like this.

As the drinking party broke up, the ministers left the gisaeng house one by one.

“Lord Hwang.”

“What is it, Lord Maeng?”

Maeng Sa-seong, who had called out to Hwang Hui, looked around and asked in a low voice.

“What do you think?”

“About what?”

“Princess Jeongui’s marriage. Do you really think that sequence is correct?”

At Maeng Sa-seong’s question, Hwang Hui immediately answered.

“There’s a saying in the market: ‘Pretend not to know even if you know, and don’t try to know if you don’t know.’ Do you think the other ministers just let it pass because they didn’t know?”

At Hwang Hui’s words, Maeng Sa-seong nodded slightly. Seeing Maeng Sa-seong’s reaction, Hwang Hui continued.

“Now that we’ve talked about it like this, rumors will soon spread. With that, we’ve done our job well.”

“Hmm... I suppose so.”

Maeng Sa-seong nodded at Hwang Hui’s words.

As Hwang Hui said, the “love story” that Jeong-cho had talked about at the gisaeng house spread throughout Hanseong in an instant. And soon after, it spread throughout Joseon. The secret royal guards also played a part in spreading the rumors so quickly.

While rumors were spreading like this, Princess Jeongui's wedding took place.

Sejong had prepared a house in Bukchon for Princess Jeongui. Hyang, attending on behalf of Sejong at the wedding held in the courtyard of the house that exuded a fresh feeling, muttered inwardly while looking at Princess Jeongui and her husband.

'Isn't this how Joseon's Curie couple is born?'

Both Princess Jeongui and Kim Dam belonged to the research institute and were devoted to its work. Therefore, it wasn't an impossible thing.

'No, since this is earlier, instead of being Joseon's Curie couple, are they becoming France's Jeongui couple?'

As he continued this train of thought, Hyang burst into laughter.

'And one of their children will say they're the family's shame.'

The second daughter of the Curie couple, unlike her parents and older sister, entered the cultural field instead of the scientific field.

And when her parents, older sister, and even her husband received Nobel Prizes – in her husband's case, he received the Nobel Peace Prize as a UNICEF representative – she often joked like this:

"I'm the family's shame."

However, she received the Legion of Honor instead of a Nobel Prize.

Shortly after Princess Jeongui's wedding took place, the first birthday celebration for Hyang's three sons was held.

The first birthday party held at the Crown Prince's palace was attended by Sejong, the royal family members, and ministers, all celebrating the first birthdays of the three children.

“Now! It's time for the doljanchi!”

On the feast table, various objects were placed for the doljanchi. Besides traditional items like thread, rice, brush, and money, even a compass and a sword were placed, while the Crown Princess and the wet nurses sat the babies in front of the table.

“Now! Quickly, grab something.”

As soon as the words fell, the other two children, except for the Royal Grandson, grabbed the compass and sword like lightning.

“Sigh~.”

Seeing this, the Royal Grandson let out a small sigh with an expression of unfairness.

‘I'm not seeing things, right? That was a sigh?’

‘A baby sighing?’

While everyone was bewildered by the unexpected situation, Hyang whispered softly to the Royal Grandson.

“Wan, no matter what Du and Seul do, you have the authority over personnel appointments.”

As if understanding something from Hyang's words, the Royal Grandson grinned and grasped the thread and brush in both hands.

“Thread and brush... He'll have a long life and be accomplished in scholarship. That's good. Du grabbed the sword, so he'll become a military official, and Seul grabbed the compass, so he'll travel far seas and expand Joseon's territory.”

At Sejong's words of blessing, Hyang smiled and bowed his head.

"I only hope they'll grow up as Father wishes."

"You'll have to educate them diligently. By the way, I always feel this, but you've really given them good names. Jade... Yes, a person should become like jade."

As Sejong said, the names of all three children meant fine jade.

At Sejong's high praise, Hyang bowed his head and replied.

"I hope they'll become precious treasures like jade."

However, there was something Hyang didn't mention.

It was etiquette to choose rarely used Chinese characters for the names of royalty, especially princes. This etiquette, called 'pihwi', was to prevent the disrespect of commoners using the same characters as the names of ancestors or kings.

Because of this, most princes' names were given as single characters chosen from rarely used Chinese characters.

And Hyang had volunteered to take on this naming task.

"If they're given names with difficult-to-pronounce Chinese characters, it'll be troublesome for me."

Although he took on the task to avoid trouble, Hyang realized that naming was not an easy task.

"Tch... This is frustrating..."

While pondering for suitable names, Hyang soon found an appropriate method.

"This is annoying! Let's go with one, two, three!"

After deciding on the pronunciation first, he then searched the dictionary for Chinese characters with appropriate good meanings, which resulted in Wan (琬, name of a jade), Du (斗, jade), and Seul (璪, blue bead).

After the first birthday party ended, in the deep night when everyone was asleep, Hyang sat alone in his study, reflecting on the day's events and tilting his head.

“No matter how I think about it, aren't those kids on their second round? It seems like their second round... No matter how smart they are, it doesn't make sense that they already understand words, right?”

Suspecting that they might be reincarnators like himself, Hyang soon shook his head.

“But that's a bit strange too... They're showing it too obviously? Don't they think they'll be suspected right away?”

After pondering for a long time, Hyang finally reached a conclusion.

“Whether they're reincarnators or not, what's the problem? If they're reincarnators, it's good because they'll do well on their own, and if they're not reincarnators, it means they're that smart, which is also good. In other words, no matter what, the fact that they'll be rolled by me doesn't change, so why worry?”

And so, the brief interlude was coming to an end.

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[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.
Deathbringer, emphasis on [i]*death*[/i].
I'm totally [s]~~crossed out~~[/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

[img]https://www.agine.this[/img]
[link]http://topwebfiction.com[/link].
[link=https://www.n.ot]clickbait[/link].

[quote]... me like my landlord! [/quote]

[spoiler]Spanish Inquisition! [/spoiler]
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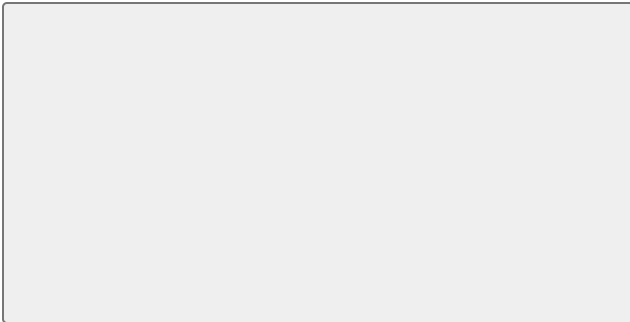
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Chapter 301 - 400

BCJ Chapter 379

The Eastern Archipelego

by *BlossomTL*Black Corporation: Joseon

Late December of the Imja year. Otaornai Port on Daeseol Island. (Now Otaru)

There was quite a complicated story behind the name ‘Otaornai Port’.

At first, it was named ‘Sajangcheon (沙場川)’, meaning ‘river in the middle of a sandy beach’, taking the meaning of Otaornai.

However, the Ainu people’s reaction was not favorable, and thanks to Hunminjeongeum being introduced earlier than in other places, the name was settled as Otaornai Port, its original name.

And a Challenger-class warship was docking at the pier of Otaornai Port, where snow was piled high.

On the side of the ship’s bow and stern, a nameplate with the Chinese characters ‘길림 (Kirin)’ was attached.

It was the 10th ship of the Challenger-class, ‘Kirin’, named to commemorate the ‘Battle of Kirin’ where the Joseon army crushed the Jurchen tribes led by Yi Manchu and Mengtemu.

Go Il-nam, the captain of the Kirin ship docked at the pier, shouted to the sailors.

“Rest for a day, and complete resupply and maintenance as quickly as possible! We’ll return to Wonsan as soon as maintenance is finished!”

“Yes, sir!”

The sailors responded energetically to Go Il-nam’s order.

After Go Il-nam’s instruction ended, the sailors who rushed off the ship soon scattered in groups of threes and fives.

Go Il-nam, who disembarked last, sought out the port’s defense command headquarters.

After receiving a brief report from Go Il-nam, Commander Kang Ho-jun asked Il-nam:

“What’s happening that you’re moving so urgently?”

“Yes. We discovered something while investigating the northeast direction, and I think we should report it immediately.”

“What is it?”

At Ho-jun’s interested question, Il-nam answered simply.

“We seem to have found an archipelago extending eastward.”

At Il-nam’s answer, Ho-jun jumped up from his seat.

“Is that true!”

It was before the debate between the geocentric and heliocentric theories broke out in the research institute, but the navy’s captains and high-ranking officers were already accepting the spherical Earth theory.

This was due to the accumulated experiences from various natural phenomena they were familiar with during navigation – such as time differences and the curved appearance of the horizon – and the ‘hypotheses’ presented by the research institute.

Among the navy officers who had physically experienced this, one question emerged.

“Then what’s in the east?”

The reason the navy officers came to have this question was due to the traditionally passed down ‘theory of harmony’.

-Yin and yang harmonize with each other, and the five elements also harmonize through mutual generation and overcoming.

According to this theory of harmony, various natural disasters and epidemics occurred when this harmony was broken.

And the main reason for this harmony breaking was people becoming unvirtuous.

Therefore, when various natural disasters and epidemics occurred, the king would first come forward to offer sacrifices to heaven and compose himself.

Hyang, who had obtained Zheng He’s navigation records and observational data, mobilized researchers from the institute to create maps. These completed maps were supplemented with Islamic maps that came through Mansur, and as navigation records obtained during voyages to Suez – or more precisely, Alexandria – were added, the maps became increasingly detailed.

As the existence of an ocean discovered while investigating the surroundings of Daeseol Island was added, the navy began to have questions.

“If all the land in the world is gathered in one place like this, it’s not balanced, is it?”

“Right? It doesn’t seem harmonious.”

“The harmony of yin-yang and the five elements is not harmonious at all. There’s too much water energy like this.”

Although the question started from the traditional ‘theory of harmony’, the navy gradually began to harbor doubts and possibilities.

‘There must be land in the east!’

These doubts and possibilities were immediately written into documents and sent up to Geunjeongjeon.

“Review this once.”

“Yes, Father.”

After reading the report handed over by Sejong, Hyang’s face became incredulous.

“Does it work out like this? Well, if we were to nitpick, there’d be no end...”

Hyang reported to Sejong as follows:

“It seems worth trying.”

And after hearing about the debates that took place in the research institute and their results – which included even an estimate of this Earth’s diameter, although it was just an estimate – the navy’s atmosphere changed from possibility to certainty.

“If this world is that big, there must be land in the east!”

Although they were convinced that there was definitely land in the east, the navy couldn’t immediately act on it.

There were several obstacles that prevented the Joseon navy from taking action, but broadly speaking, there were two.

The first obstacle was the chronic problem of manpower shortage, which affected not only the navy but all of Joseon.

Due to the manpower shortage problem, the Joseon navy had to make a choice. They concluded to prioritize the deployment of Haeung-class warships to secure control of the seas near Joseon.

As Haeung-class warships were prioritized for deployment, the production and deployment of Challenger-class warships were pushed back.

Although Challenger-class warships had the strongest combat power and long-distance navigation ability among the warships possessed by the Joseon navy, they also required considerable human resources.

“Of course, if you think about it, Haeung-class isn’t easy either...”

While examining the related reports, Hyang put his hand on his throbbing forehead.

In absolute numbers, it had fewer crew members than the Challenger-class, but relatively, the Haeung-class carried more crew members compared to its size.

The reason for this was the sails that supported the Haeung-class’s fast maneuverability. Although it was smaller in size, the number of sails attached to the Haeung was just two fewer than those on the Challenger-class.

Therefore, not only the Ministry of National Defense but also Sejong and the ministers had to ponder over the Challenger and Haeung.

“We must prioritize Challenger-class warships! Considering Joseon’s increasing trade volume, we must unconditionally prioritize Challenger-class warships!”

Although Kim Jeom, the Minister of Finance and Economy, strongly argued that Challenger-class warships should be prioritized, a decision was made to give priority to Haeung-class warships for the time being.

Ironically, the background for this decision was due to the Challenger-class's excellent long-distance navigation ability. Long-distance navigation meant that many sailors would be away from their posts for that long.

Even so, the construction and deployment of Challenger-class warships were not completely halted. Construction and deployment proceeded slowly but steadily, and the launching of the 11th ship had been completed.

The second obstacle was the enormous size of the ocean located east of Daeseol Island.

Joseon confirmed that the ocean east of Daeseol Island was literally a vast sea through the distress of the Challenger-class 6th ship 'Jinpo'.

After finishing the coastline survey of Daeseol Island, the Joseon navy decided to explore the ocean located east of Daeseol Island once.

The Jinpo, chosen for the exploratory voyage, was loaded with minimal armament – just enough for one battle – and the rest was filled with food and water.

“With the food and water currently loaded, a three-month voyage without resupply is possible. Of course, if we ration well, it might be possible for up to four months. But anything beyond that is absolutely impossible.”

Kim Eok-su, the captain of the Jinpo, nodded at the caution from the supply officer who had completed the ship's provisioning.

“I understand. We'll be careful.”

The Jinpo, which set sail after such preparation, was confident from the captain down to the lowest-ranking sailors.

This was because since its commissioning, they had made several trips to Alexandria and Chittagong, and had experienced the rough seas of the northeastern region of Daeseol Island.

The Jinpo, which headed east like this, didn't encounter land for a month and a half.

“Should we turn back, or should we go a bit further?”

“How about going a bit further, sir?”

“If we remember the times we went to Chittagong or Alexandria, didn't we encounter islands or land at every critical moment? It will be the same this time.”

At Kim Eok-su's question, most of his subordinate officers argued to go further east.

This was because, as they said, they had similar experiences when going to Alexandria or Chittagong.

They thought it was an endless sea with nothing, but if they went just a little further, Malacca appeared.

Despite the officers' answers, Kim Eok-su, wanting to confirm more solid support, called even the sailors and asked for their opinions.

The sailors, after hearing the situation explanation from Kim Eok-su, agreed with the officers' opinions. The sailors also expected it to be similar to the long-distance voyages they had experienced so far.

However, even after two months and ten days, no island or land appeared.

“We can't go any further.”

Having confirmed that it was impossible, Kim Eok-su finally had to turn the ship around.

But from then on, the Jinpo faced a series of hardships. This was because they had to move against both the ocean currents and the wind.

As a result, it was almost half a year after setting sail when the Jinpo returned to Daeseol Island.

Thanks to the distillation apparatus and dried vegetables and meat that Hyang had deployed just in case, there were no starvation deaths, but from Captain Kim Eok-su to the lowest-ranking crew members, everyone was in a serious state of malnutrition. Upon receiving the report that it would take about two months for them to regain their strength, the navy and the Ministry of National Defense concluded:

“For the time being, exploration of the due east route is suspended. Instead, focus on exploring the northeast direction.”

It was in this state of decision that the Kirin ship found the possibility of discovering an archipelago extending eastward.

Given the situation, the Kirin ship headed towards Wonsan at maximum speed.

Unlike the usual case where they would rest for about three days and resupply after returning to Daeseol Island from northeastern region exploration before heading to Wonsan, the sailors had no particular complaints.

This was because the sailors were also excited with anticipation.

For those living on warships, from captains to sailors, the ‘distress of the Jinpo’ was a kind of shame.

“The world’s best warship manned by the world’s best sailors, and yet a distress? This is shameful!”

They had suffered a great blow to their pride, which had risen to the sky after experiencing situations where even the fierce Wokou and pirates

would tuck their tails and flee at the sight of a Challenger-class warship.

“You shouldn’t underestimate the sea!”

Of course, experienced veterans warned, but the current Joseon navy was young from captains to sailors.

The report written by the captain of the Kirin ship that arrived in Wonsan was immediately sent up to Hanseong.

“This must be reported to His Majesty as quickly as possible!”

Jo Mal-saeng, who confirmed the report, grabbed the scroll and ran to Geunjeongjeon.

After confirming the report from the Kirin ship’s captain submitted by Jo Mal-saeng, Sejong, with an excited face, issued an order.

“Summon the captain of the Kirin ship immediately to write a more detailed report!”

“I receive your command!”

“No, to know properly, we need the memories of more people, so summon all the people from the Kirin ship to Hanseong!”

“I receive your command!”

According to Sejong’s order, Go Il-nam and his officers, as well as the sailors who were staying in Wonsan, had to come to Hanseong.

The officials from the Ministry of National Defense began to dig deeply into those who came to Hanseong like this.

Based on the information secured from not only the oral reports of the captain, officers, and crew, but also navigation records and personal records, the officials of the Ministry of National Defense began to meticulously examine the possibilities.

After examining like this, the officials soon reached similar conclusions.

“There seems to be a possibility?”

And that conclusion soon transformed into a thick report and was submitted to Jo Mal-saeng.

After confirming the report, Jo Mal-saeng ordered his subordinates.

“Prepare to report properly in Geunjeongjeon. Who was that guy with the good voice?”

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Bold of you to assume I have a plan.

Deathbringer, emphasis on *death*.

I'm totally ~~crossed-out~~ by this.

- Listless I'm counting my bullets.



<http://topwebfiction.com>.

[link=https://www.n.ot](https://www.n.ot) [clickbait](#).

... me like my landlord!

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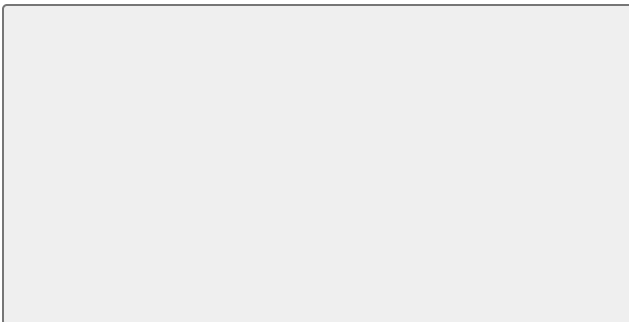
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Chapter 301 - 400

BCJ Chapter 380

Eastern Archipelago

by *BlossomTL*Black Corporation: Joseon

Three days later, a presentation led by the Ministry of National Defense was held in Geunjeongjeon.

After paying respects to Sejong, the presenter soon began the presentation.

“First, please look at the map.”

With the presenter’s words, the waiting military officers turned over the chart’s cover.

The paper of the chart, more than twice the size of a typical chart, was a large map showing the Korean Peninsula and the regions to its east.

“First, I will report on the geographical information we have confirmed so far. These are the information confirmed through cross-verification and actual measurements based on the information secured after confirming its existence in the Sinhai year (1431).”

Starting with a summary of the content to be presented, the presenter pointed here and there with a long pointer while reading the paper on the podium.

“This is Dongbinghang (Winter Ice Port). And this island to the east of Joseon is Daeseol Island. And these two places in the north, which we couldn’t properly confirm whether they were islands or land in the Sinhai

year, have been confirmed through continued exploration that the one closer to this coastline is an island, and the one outside is a peninsula.”

The presenter pointed to Sakhalin Island and the Kamchatka Peninsula and continued the explanation. (Note 1)

“According to our examination of records, there is a record of Yuan invading this island in the 8th year of King Chungryeol of the previous dynasty (1282). According to information collected by the previous dynasty at the time, there is a record that Yuan’s military conquered this region at the request of the indigenous tribes of the area tentatively named Yeonhaeju (Coastal Province). We have confirmed records up to the point where, after the conquest was completed, people from Southern Song were relocated to operate military farms near the Heilongjiang region facing the island.”

Sejong’s interest grew even more at the report that Yuan had mobilized Southern Song people to cultivate military farms.

“Are those military farms and Southern Song people still there now?”

The reason Sejong asked this was because of the military farms.

-If the military farms are still usable, couldn’t we send the Chinese people in that region back to Ming and use them for Joseon?

However, the presenter’s answer was negative.

“After investigation, we could only confirm traces.”

“Chinese people also have strong attachments to land. Of course, it’s 200 years ago, but it’s not easy to understand why only traces remain.”

At Sejong’s point, the presenter flipped through his papers and found an answer.

“In the 13th year of King Chungryeol, Nayan’s rebellion seems to be the biggest cause.”

“Hmm...”

Sejong nodded at the presenter's answer.

Military farms were the easiest way to secure military control over newly acquired territories.

However, military farms required as much careful attention as farming itself.

They had to provide reliable supplies until crops could be harvested from the secured farmland, and they also needed reliable defense facilities and support troops that could rush in immediately if fighting broke out.

But if these elements were not properly in place, military farms would collapse immediately.

'If a rebellion broke out, they would have taken away proper military force first, so it would inevitably collapse. And it's already more than 200 years ago... But it's a bit regrettable.'

Having reached his own conclusion, Sejong continued his questions.

"Then, since that time, has the Yeonhaeju region been cut off from other places?"

"Regrettably, no."

The presenter answered Sejong, openly showing his regret.

"In the 11th year of Yongle, we confirmed from the indigenous tribes that an expedition led by Yi Shiha, a eunuch from Ming, visited. Also, we were able to discover a stone stele called 'Chiksunoagan Yeongnyeongsa Bigi' at the site of a temple called Yeongnyeongsa."

After finishing his explanation, the presenter gestured to the military officers standing next to the hanging chart. Seeing the hand signal, the officers hung another chart on a separate hanger.

"This is a rubbing of the inscription on that stele. As you can see from the content, it says 'By the Emperor's order, Noagando-sa was established, and

Yi Shiha's expedition team erects this stele.'"

At the presenter's report, the faces of Sejong and the ministers became unprecedentedly serious.

If Ming was still exerting influence in that region, there was a high possibility that Joseon's expansion attempt would be frustrated.

Sejong continued his questions with a serious face.

"Is Ming still exerting influence in that region?"

"According to the military's investigation, they haven't visited again since erecting that stele."

"Why?"

At Sejong's question, the ministers also nodded. To go to the trouble of erecting a stele and then not visit again? It was incomprehensible.

The presenter immediately answered Sejong's doubt.

"The natural environment is not good, the population is small, and productivity is not very good. The military's judgment is that it's closer to giving symbolic meaning, just like Yuan did."

"Symbolic meaning..."

Nodding at the presenter's answer, Sejong soon had a question.

"But why haven't I heard or known about this..."

Sejong was about to continue speaking but immediately cut himself off.

He realized that if he made even a slight slip of the tongue, it would create a situation where he would be publicly criticizing his father.

The time when Ming sent an expedition to that region was during the reign of his father, King Taejong.

During Taejong's reign, the relationship between Joseon and the northern regions was a "period of disconnection."

Taejong, who ascended to the throne through two "Princes' Wars," had no time to pay attention to external affairs as he was focused on solidifying his power base.

Taking advantage of this gap, Ming began to strengthen its dominance over the Jurchen tribes in Liaodong.

Of course, Taejong also tried to maintain influence, but it was inevitable that more weight was placed on Joseon's internal affairs.

As a result, the Jurchen tribes largely defected from Joseon's sphere of influence, and Joseon's eyes and ears towards the northern regions were blocked. No, not just eyes and ears, but even the roads were blocked.

To escape this situation, the "Grand Strategy of Eastern Advance" was created and implemented. And in the process, various issues became entangled and exploded in an unfavorable direction, resulting in the rebellion of Yi Manchu and Mengtemu.

Hastily cutting off his words, Sejong changed the subject.

"Minister of Foreign Affairs."

"Yes, Your Majesty."

"In your contacts with Ming and the Jurchen tribes, have you heard anything about an agency called 'Noagando-sa'?"

At Sejong's words, Lee Maeng-gyun bowed his head and answered.

“I am ashamed to report that I have never heard of it. Please forgive my incompetence.”

“Don’t worry about it. But what I’m curious about is whether that agency actually has substance.”

After briefly organizing his thoughts at Sejong’s words, Lee Maeng-gyun answered.

“I think it’s close to being nominal without substance.”

“What’s your reason for thinking so?”

“Although that region is far, it’s connected by land and expeditions have gone back and forth. If the Noagando-sa agency had substance, there should have been consistent communication, and if so, it would have reached even my incompetent ears. But since it hasn’t, I think this agency is closer to a symbol without substance.”

Sejong nodded at Lee Maeng-gyun’s explanation. Unlike the early stages of the reforms, in the latter half, the information network in the northern regions was operating well. If the agency in question had been operating normally, intelligence would certainly have come in.

However, Sejong didn’t forget to give a warning.

“But there must not be even the slightest loophole.”

“I will engrave it on my bones and heart!”

However, there was something that Sejong and the ministers didn’t know.

This was one of the butterfly effects created by Hyang.

Yi Shiha’s expedition didn’t only happen in the 11th year of Yongle.

In the history before Hyang's intervention, in the 8th year of Xuande (1433), Yi Shiha visited Yeongnyeongsa again and erected 'Xuande Reconstruction of Yeongnyeongsa Record', firmly establishing it as Ming territory.

At that time, Sejong had ordered Choe Yun-deok to subjugate the Jurchen tribes in the Yalu River region and strengthen control over Liaodong.

Ming, wary of Joseon's northern advance, visited Yeonhaeju again. And by erecting the stele, they officially declared that the dominion over the Manchurian region belonged to Ming.

However, with Hyang's intervention, this history was twisted.

What Hyang gained by persuading Emperor Xuande to establish a joint trading company was not just securing trademark rights and stable means of trade.

He resolved the Jonggyebyeonmu issue that had remained a thorn between Ming and Joseon, and gained recognition for advancement into the Tumen River region on the grounds of it being the "origin of the royal family."

Especially with the recognition of advancement into the Tumen River region, Noagando-sa became nominal.

Of course, as this decision was close to an impromptu decision by Emperor Xuande, a flood of opposition and concern poured out from Ming's court afterwards.

Emperor Xuande asked such ministers:

"Does that wilderness at the eastern end help the empire's finances? Does it help defend against Northern Yuan? Or does it help defend against the Wokou?"

At Emperor Xuande's questions, the ministers closed their mouths.

Seeing the ministers like this, Emperor Xuande concluded:

“I forbid any further mention of this decision. This is an imperial decree.”

The background for Emperor Xuande making such a decision was the staggering financial problems of Ming.

Like Taejong of Joseon, Emperor Yongle, who ascended to the throne through civil war, had to demonstrate the empire’s power to stabilize imperial authority.

Therefore, he undertook five expeditions to Northern Yuan and organized a large fleet with Zheng He as commander to go to sea.

While firmly establishing his power in this way, it was accompanied by enormous financial expenditures.

Therefore, Emperor Xuande, who succeeded Emperor Hongxi who died after just one year on the throne, had to practice economy upon economy to restore the depleted finances.

He withdrew many of the military colonies that were widely spread in the Manchurian region to inside the Great Wall, and changed from an offensive-centered military strategy to a defense-centered military strategy.

To Emperor Xuande, the Yeonhaeju region, with its small population and scarce resources, was merely “all show and no substance.” That’s why Emperor Xuande overlooked it to some extent, even while somewhat guessing Joseon’s intentions.

Later, Chinese scholars studying the history of the Ming Empire during this period counted this decision of Emperor Xuande as one of his worst policy failures.

After summarizing the discussion about Ming’s influence spread in the Yeonhaeju region, Sejong gestured to the presenter.

“Continue.”

“Yes, Your Majesty.”

The presenter pointed to Sakhalin Island^[1] on the map with his pointer and continued the explanation.

“The military has given this island the tentative name of Jongjangdo (Longitudinal Island). As you can see, it has a long north-south shape. And the peninsula next to it has been named Eonwol Peninsula. Its shape was similar to a crescent moon sword.”

The presenter moistened his throat lightly and continued.

“And between this Eonwol Peninsula and Daeseol Island, there is an archipelago like stepping stones. The usefulness of these islands will be reported later. This concludes the report on the information confirmed by the navy so far.”

“I see.”

As Sejong nodded, the presenter took a moment to catch his breath and then pointed to the eastern coast of the Eonwol Peninsula (Kamchatka Peninsula) with his pointer.

“And through this exploratory voyage of the Kirin ship, we have learned of the possible existence of an archipelago extending eastward from this Eonwol Peninsula.”

“How did you find out?”

To Sejong’s question, the presenter answered briefly.

“It was a bit of luck, Your Majesty.”

Note 1) Referenced from an Atlas News article.

‘Why did Mongolia attack Sakhalin Island?’. 2019.08.16.

<http://www.atlasnews.co.kr/news/articleView.html?idxno=780>

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1. It's in Russia[↔]

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[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.

Deathbringer, emphasis on [i]*death*[/i].

I'm totally [s]~~crossed out~~[/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

[img]https://www.agine.this[/img]

[link]<http://topwebfiction.com>[/link].

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[quote]... me like my landlord! [/quote]

[spoiler]Spanish Inquisition! [/spoiler]

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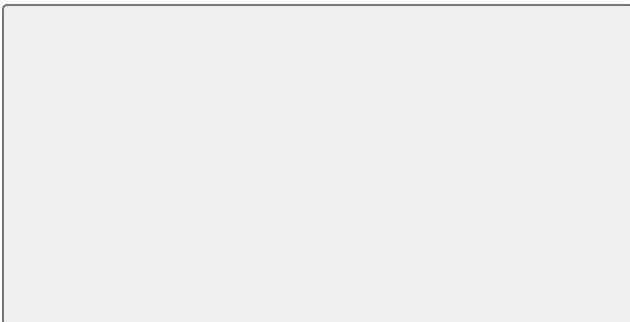
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Chapter 301 - 400

BCJ Chapter 381

Eastern Archipelago

by *BlossomTLBlack Corporation: Joseon*

Southeast of the Unwol Peninsula.

In history before Hyang's intervention, it was a small port city called 'Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky', but now that the Joseon Navy had taken control, it was known as 'Chohang'^[1].

The reason for using the character 'Cho'^[2], meaning 'to bore', was due to the port's location. It was positioned similarly to the decorative hole on the back of a crescent-shaped blade.

While there were other Chinese characters meaning 'hole' – such as 'Kong' (孔) and 'Hyeol' (穴) – they were often used in vulgar metaphors, so this name was chosen after searching through dictionaries.

Despite this background, Chohang's location itself was a natural harbor. The port, situated inside a rounded bay, effectively blocked rough waves and winds.

“Even so, the problem is that it freezes over as soon as the weather gets a bit cold...”

Go Il-nam muttered softly as he looked around, watching the unloading of supplies for the government monopoly store.

Through extensive exploration utilizing all available resources, the Joseon Navy was able to bring the islands and peninsulas north of the Maritime Province and Daesuldo under Joseon's influence.

The next step was, naturally, to subjugate the indigenous tribes.

The government monopoly stores played the most significant role in this process. Joseon hadn't forgotten the benefits gained from using these stores to control the Jurchen tribes in the Tumen River region.

Therefore, as soon as they established garrisons in Daesuldo, the Maritime Province, Jongjangdo, and the Unwol Peninsula, they set up government monopoly stores.

These stores served the interests of both parties.

The indigenous tribes of the Maritime Province had paid tribute to and submitted to the Yuan and Ming dynasties not only because they were forced to by military power, but also to easily obtain scarce goods.

However, sending supplies to this region was not an easy task, so the indigenous tribes still faced shortages.

But the Joseon government monopoly stores consistently received supplies, barring unavoidable natural disasters like typhoons.

Because of this, the tribes in these northern regions strongly desired to trade at the government monopoly stores.

Joseon presented only one condition to these indigenous tribes:

-Submit to Joseon. Those who submit will be treated as Joseon people.

“What does it mean to be treated as Joseon people?”

“It means there will be no discrimination if you faithfully follow Joseon's laws.”

“Ah...”

“Think about it carefully.”

The tribal leaders, having heard Joseon’s proposal through written communication, returned to their tribes with faces full of contemplation.

The indigenous tribes didn’t make an immediate decision. However, as summer and autumn of the year of Imja (1432, the 14th year of King Sejong’s reign) arrived and they saw more goods flowing into the government monopoly stores, the indigenous tribes had to make a decision.

‘Submit, or gamble with raiding?’

While they were deliberating, a small group of impatient natives launched a surprise attack on a government monopoly store near Yeolyeongsa.

“There aren’t many of those Joseon soldiers, if we hit and run, we can definitely succeed!”

Those who attacked the government monopoly store after their own hopeful calculations were torn to shreds by the crossfire of the Joseon Navy’s cannons and muskets.

The Joseon military’s response didn’t stop there. After identifying which tribe the attackers belonged to through interrogation, the Joseon Navy immediately requested cavalry support.

The cavalry, transported by naval ships, struck the problematic tribe, reducing it to complete ruins.

Having witnessed the military might of Joseon, the indigenous tribes were finally forced to make a decision.

That decision was, of course, submission.

Although there had been a bloody incident in between, Joseon faithfully kept the promise it had initially made.

And the tribes that submitted became addicted to the government monopoly stores. The stores established in the Maritime Province, Jongjangdo, and the Unwol Peninsula were bustling with people trying to sell various goods like furs and medicinal herbs to obtain necessities – salt and sugar – and luxury items – black tea and pepper.

Upon receiving the related reports, Hyang smirked and muttered,

“As expected, ‘the evil of capitalism’...”

The impact of the ‘Battle of Yeolyeongsa’ wasn’t limited to the submission of indigenous tribes.

During the process of evaluating the results of the ‘Battle of Yeolyeongsa’, Jang Hang-seon submitted a proposal.

‘On the necessity of creating a naval unit dedicated to ground combat and the discretionary power of field commanders.’

Upon seeing the title of the report, Jo Mal-saeng immediately summoned Jang Hang-seon.

“Isn’t this an unnecessary waste of budget?”

To Jo Mal-saeng’s question, Jang Hang-seon answered firmly.

“No! It has sufficient utility!”

Jang Hang-seon explained in detail to Jo Mal-saeng.

-Looking at this Battle of Yeolyeongsa, it took considerable time from stopping the raid to the cavalry’s strike.

-The reason for consuming so much time was not only the time it took to confirm the arrived report, for His Majesty to make a decision and issue orders, but even more time was spent designating the cavalry to carry out the attack, disseminating orders, and transporting them on ships.

-Joseon's territory will continue to expand in the future. If conflicts occur in places far from the Joseon mainland and situations like this happen, it will only result in too little, too late scenarios.

-Therefore, for ports far from the mainland, it is more appropriate to station separate troops for offense in addition to troops defending the port.

-These separately stationed troops should be primarily composed of cavalry and artillery. Mobility and firepower are the most important factors.

-Depending on the size of the port, station troops ranging from about 100 to 500 men, and quickly deploy these troops by gathering them according to the intensity of the conflict.

-To achieve this, the discretionary power of field commanders must be expanded.

“...It's more efficient to gather and deploy these divided forces than to gather and send troops from the mainland!”

Hearing Jang Hang-seon's explanation, Jo Mal-saeng stroked his chin beard with a troubled expression.

“It seems good, but this part is the problem. The part about ‘expanding the discretionary power of field commanders’. What if we initiate conflicts first due to misjudgment by an aggressive field commander? Or what if a field commander plots a rebellion?”

To Jo Mal-saeng's point, Jang Hang-seon replied immediately, as if he had already thought about it.

“That's why we divide the troops! The criterion for deciding the size of these divided and deployed units is to make it just enough so that the enemy doesn't easily decide to attack, while also ensuring that our Joseon forces can't easily decide to attack first!”

“Hmm...”

After pondering for a while at Jang Hang-seon's words, Jo Mal-saeng seemed to reach a conclusion and spoke.

“I will submit it to His Majesty for consideration.”

At Jo Mal-saeng's words, Jang Hang-seon bowed deeply and replied.

“Thank you!”

And after receiving the report from Jo Mal-saeng, King Sejong reviewed it and reached a conclusion.

“It seems like a good idea. Review it further, refine it, and submit it again. Pay particular attention to the part about the discretionary power of field commanders.”

“I receive your command!”

Meanwhile, upon hearing the news, Hyang immediately sought out Jo Mal-saeng.

“I have some equipment ideas in mind. If the unit creation is actually decided, I request an evaluation.”

At Hyang's words, Jo Mal-saeng replied with a broad smile.

“Is that so! Then I shall do my best to ensure its creation!”

“And please pay close attention to the issue of field commanders' discretionary power.”

“Yes!”

As he left after cautioning Jo Mal-saeng, Hyang muttered quietly.

“At least we shouldn't end up like the Kwantung Army...”

Anyway, based on the proposal submitted by Jang Hang-seon, a new branch was created in the navy.

‘Joseon Navy Rapid Response Mobile Force’

It was the birth of a branch that would later be evaluated as ‘one of the sharpest swords of the Joseon military’.

And like other Joseon weapons and branches, it would become an entity that made foreign armies grind their teeth in frustration.

While Go Il-nam was grumbling about the sea that would start to freeze as soon as snowflakes began to fall with the slightest drop in temperature, and how snowflakes quickly led to heavy snowfall, a light flickered from the watchtower set up at the entrance of the bay.

“Huh?”

Confirming the light from the watchtower, Go Il-nam immediately began to decode the signal.

“Multiple unidentified vessels approaching?”

Jing jing jing!

Gwang gwang gwang!

Besides Go Il-nam, others who had confirmed the signal caused gong sounds and kkwaenggwari (small gong) sounds to overflow from various parts of the port.

Amidst the clamorous gong and kkwaenggwari sounds, the port guard hurriedly gathered their weapons and began to prepare for battle, while Go Il-nam also moved busily.

“Deck officer! Is the unloading finished?”

“There’s still some left, sir!”

“Stop it immediately! Battle stations!”

“Battle stations! Stop the unloading!”

“Battle stations!”

As the sailors moved busily at Go Il-nam’s orders, the vice-captain approached and asked.

“Wouldn’t it be ships coming from Dasangdo (Bering Island), sir?”

The vice-captain mentioned an island about 580 km northeast of Chohang. Named ‘Dasangdo’ because of the frequent frost, Go Il-nam shook his head at the mention of the island.

“Would the watchtower guards not recognize ships coming from Dasangdo?”

“Ah, that’s right, sir.”

At Go Il-nam’s point, the vice-captain nodded and immediately agreed.

“Just in case, prepare to raise anchor and move away from the dock immediately. For our ship to exert its full power, it needs to move freely.”

“Understood, sir!”

At Go Il-nam’s order, the vice-captain immediately answered and moved to command his subordinates.

As the Joseon forces remained on high alert, the vessels in question entered the port.

“A bit larger than a narrow boat. We might be able to end this in one shot if we’re lucky.”

As Go Il-nam was estimating the size of the ships approaching the dock, the vessels in question docked at the pier where the natives’ boats were moored.

Those who docked their ships disembarked with very tense expressions. They were intimidated by the Joseon soldiers who had gathered around the dock.

As the natives who had landed on the dock stood still, a military officer accompanied by a native interpreter approached them.

After a brief conversation, the military officer led the natives away. And not long after, the gong and kkwaenggwari sounds rang out again.

“Emergency over!”

“Stand down!”

As the port guards who had prepared for battle stood down, Go Il-nam also issued orders.

“Stand down from battle stations. And dock the ship again.”

“Yes, sir!”

As the order was transmitted, the tense atmosphere on the Kirin ship also relaxed.

Once the Kirin ship was docked again and firmly tied to the pier, the sailors resumed the unloading of supplies that had been interrupted.

Watching this scene, Go Il-nam ordered the vice-captain.

“I’ll be going to the port command post for a moment. I leave the ship to you.”

“Understood, sir. Leave it to me!”

Having thus entrusted the ship to the vice-captain, Go Il-nam disembarked and headed towards the command post.

He too was a native Joseon person who would be a corpse if not for his curiosity and meddling nature.

Upon arriving at the port command post, Go Il-nam sought out a military officer he was friendly with and began to converse.

“Where did they say they were from?”

“They say it’s an island we’ve never heard of before. They say even those living on Dasangdo might not know about it.”

At the military officer’s answer, Go Il-nam’s eyes began to shine.

“An island we’ve never heard of?”

“They say it’s about 960 km east of here, Chohang.”

“960 km in boats like that? Wait! Did you say east?”

Go Il-nam’s eyes widened greatly.

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BBCodes

Bold of you to assume I have a plan.

Deathbringer, emphasis on *death*.

I'm totally ~~crossed-out~~ by this.

- Listless I'm counting my bullets.



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... me like my landlord!

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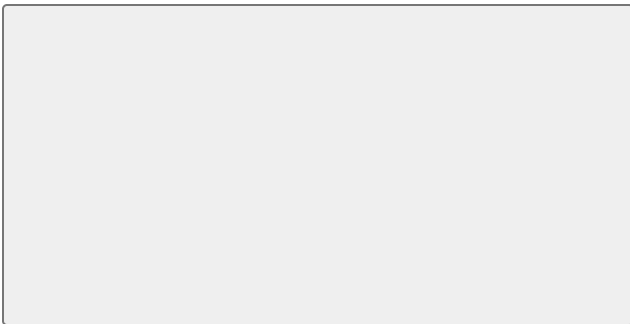
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Chapter 301 - 400

BCJ Chapter 382

Eastern Archipelago

by *BlossomTLBlack Corporation: Joseon*

After experiencing the 'Jinpo ship's distress', the Joseon Navy's primary concern in exploring the east of the Unwol Peninsula and Daesuldo was to confirm the existence of islands that could serve as stepping stones.

In this process, the first island they confirmed was Dasangdo, but Dasangdo had a fatal problem.

The area north of Dongbinghang wasn't ideal for ship navigation. The winter was too long.

No, it wasn't just that the winter was long, but the sea became too dangerous for ships to travel. Come winter, not only the entrance to the port but even the sea near the port would freeze over. The freezing sea was troublesome enough, but the waves and winds also became rough.

Therefore, the Joseon Navy had to explore the possibility of islands existing further south.

However, due to these natural limitations, exploration wasn't easy, and progress was slow.

And now, people claiming to be from an island 2,400 li (about 960 km) east of Chohang had appeared.

Upon hearing this, Go Il-nam immediately sought out the port commander.

“Naval Commander, have you heard the report?”

To Go Il-nam’s question, Yi Hong-sik, the naval commander in charge of defending Chohang, nodded and held up a bundle of papers.

“I just received it. It’s quite interesting. Read it.”

“Thank you, sir.”

Go Il-nam sat down and read the report.

The content of the report was simple:

-The island that the foreigners claim to be from is said to be 2,400 li east of Chohang. This was confirmed by an interpreter from Dasangdo.

-Among the interpreters from Dasangdo, only one person can understand the language used by these foreigners. Written communication is also impossible.

-The reason only this interpreter can communicate is due to his father’s connection. His father, who had been shipwrecked at sea, lived on that island for a considerable period while returning home, learning their language. Since then, there has been exchange every 2-3 years.

-The island’s population is estimated to be around 300 people.

“Hmm...”

Putting down the report, Go Il-nam said to Yi Hong-sik:

“May I speak directly with the interpreter, sir?”

“Go ahead. I’ll issue the order.”

“Thank you, sir.”

After Yi Hong-sik's order was conveyed, Go Il-nam was able to talk with the interpreter in question.

Entering the conference room in the command building, Go Il-nam muttered to himself without realizing:

“Talk about the tail wagging the dog...”

Inside the conference room, there were others besides the interpreter in question.

First, there was a Joseon interpreter who would convey Go Il-nam's words. Although he was called an interpreter, only written communication was possible in this situation, but it was deemed inappropriate for a high-ranking official like Go Il-nam to engage in written communication directly.

Next was a resident of the Unwol Peninsula who could interpret the Dasangdo interpreter's words, then another resident who could transcribe those words into Chinese characters, and finally, the Dasangdo interpreter in question.

Seeing these people sitting in a row, Go Il-nam gave a wry smile and spoke to the Joseon interpreter.

“This must be quite overwhelming work.”

“Is there any easy job among those we receive a salary for? At least, now that a public school is being established here and Hunminjeongeum is being distributed, it should become a bit easier.”

“Is that so?”

To Go Il-nam's words, the interpreter added:

“Of course, it will be hard work for the children learning at the public school. They'll have to learn both the tribe's language and Korean.”

“That’s true. It would be so much easier if we could just make them use Korean.”

“If we did that, we’d be called ‘people without roots’ as the court said.”

Go Il-nam nodded at the interpreter’s words.

The ‘language unification issue’ had been raised since the Jurchen people began to submit to Joseon. However, serious discussions began when incorporating the natives of Daesuldo.

“We must not force the use of Korean! We should use both languages!”

When faced with this issue, Hyang strongly advocated for ‘the use of two languages’.

“Wouldn’t that be too cumbersome?”

“That’s right. And since they’ve become Joseon subjects, they should use Korean.”

The court ministers argued for using only Korean, citing efficiency issues, but Hyang countered with a simple example:

“Do you want to turn the submitted foreigners into ‘rootless people’? Like the Hwachek?”

“ ... ”

Although not as much as in the late Joseon period, at this time too, Joseon society strongly emphasized ‘roots and origins’, including family genealogies.

“Even if it takes time and is less efficient, we should let them choose. Forcing it will only create resistance. For this issue, taking time is the right path.”

“But if they use a different language, it will be difficult for them to feel like Joseon people.”

“We shouldn’t make them Joseon people, but subjects of Joseon. Aren’t those who are loyal to Joseon as its subjects more valuable than Joseon people who betray their country? Think about what we experienced recently.”

At Hyang’s point, the ministers fell silent.

It was a Joseon person, whose ancestors had lived in this land for generations, who had tried to smuggle out craftsmen from Area 51 for his own and his guild’s benefit. Although the arrest failed, it was a person of Joseon origin who had manipulated the merchant for Ming.

The merchant, who was a Joseon person, became a traitor for his own benefit. And the Ming person, though of Joseon origin, was loyal to Ming.

Finally, King Sejong, who had been watching the debate between Hyang and the ministers, concluded:

“Language is one’s roots. Losing one’s language is losing one’s roots, which is like becoming duckweed. If that happens, they will move here and there following their own interests. This time, I think the Crown Prince’s words are appropriate.”

“We receive your command.”

Thus, a law was established that even though they had submitted to Joseon, they would not be forced to use only Korean.

According to the law, from the Jurchen to the Ainu people of Daesuldo, foreigners who entered Joseon’s territory had to ‘learn Korean’ but were not forced to ‘use only Korean’.

They only had to learn Korean for ‘administrative convenience’.

“Well, it might be accurate to see it as a distinction without a difference, but we’ve maintained our principles.... In any case, this approach is better than

the Japanese or Chinese methods in this regard.”

As Hyang checked the related reports, the coffee tasted even more bitter that day.

Having learned what he was curious about through the interpreter to some extent, Go Il-nam went back to report to Yi Hong-sik.

“I believe it would be good to confirm the location of the island these foreigners claim to have come from on this occasion.”

At Go Il-nam’s words, Yi Hong-sik nodded.

“It is indeed a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. Hmm...”

After pondering for a moment, Yi Hong-sik soon made up his mind.

“Alright! I’ll have the necessary supplies provided for the voyage! And I’ll write and send the report to Hanseong on your behalf!”

“Thank you, sir!”

Go Il-nam repeatedly expressed his gratitude with a bright face.

And so, the Kirin ship set sail towards the east, carrying the natives. With the natives’ boats tied to its stern, the Kirin ship embarked on a long journey eastward.

“Will it be alright, sir?”

To the vice-captain’s question, Go Il-nam answered confidently:

“Isn’t 2,400 li manageable for our Kirin ship?”

“That may be so, but I’m worried because we’re already entering October.”

At the vice-captain's words, Go Il-nam looked up at the sky.

After observing the increasingly gloomy sky, Go Il-nam turned to the vice-captain.

“Let's do our best to confirm the island's location first. Once we confirm the island, we'll turn the ship around and return to Wonsan as quickly as possible. It'll be close, but we should be able to avoid the dangerous period.”

And so, after confirming the location of the island to the east, the Kirin ship returned at full speed to submit a report.

The presenter, explaining how the Kirin ship had discovered the island, pointed to three red dots with his pointer.

“These three locations marked at the northeastern edge of the map are the islands confirmed this time. With proper preparation and good timing, it's a position where round trips from Wonsan are feasible without much difficulty.”

In response to the presenter's report, Kim Jeom immediately asked a question.

“Are those islands the eastern limit?”

To Kim Jeom's question, the presenter immediately answered:

“No, sir. The navy speculates that there might be other islands or land east of those islands.”

“Speculates?”

At the presenter's answer, Kim Jeom's voice and expression sharpened.

As the atmosphere of the person in charge of the budget became ominous, Jo Mal-saeng immediately stepped in to defuse the situation.

“Although it’s a risky venture, isn’t it worth trying? This time was also a risk, but didn’t it bring results?”

“Do you think luck will strike twice in a gambling den? Do you think that makes sense? It’s impossible unless it’s a rigged game!”

“Let’s be a bit more positive!”

‘Ah! I’m dying to speak!’

Watching the heated argument between Kim Jeom and Jo Mal-saeng, Hyang was itching to speak.

‘If you go east from there, there’s an enormous continent! A continent full of riches!’

He wanted to shout that right now, but he couldn’t speak.

There was no immediate evidence to speak so confidently. As for bringing in the Western barbarians, who he often used like ginseng in medicine, the research institute was already crawling with them.

‘Come to think of it, it’s a problem even if we discover it, right? Should we completely block sending letters?’

“...Hey? Crown Prince?”

“Yes? Yes! Father, did you call for me?”

Suddenly lost in his thoughts, Hyang was startled back to reality by King Sejong’s voice calling him.

“What are you so absorbed in?”

“Ah, that...”

At King Sejong’s question, Hyang frantically racked his brain for the best answer. After intense thinking, Hyang found a suitable answer and immediately replied to King Sejong.

“I was pondering whether we should disclose or keep secret the new geographical discoveries our Joseon has made.”

“Oh? Let’s see...”

At Hyang’s answer, King Sejong and the ministers also began to ponder.

After a moment of contemplation, King Sejong nodded slightly and spoke.

“I see... Since they say the world is round, if we keep going, we could reach the Western barbarians’ countries. Then we wouldn’t have to detour through Cheonchuk as we do now, which would be beneficial. Especially since we wouldn’t need to engage in intermediary trade in Alexandria.”

At King Sejong’s point, Kim Jeom’s face brightened. Before Kim Jeom could speak with his brightened face, Heo Jo opened his mouth first.

“It would be great if it could be so. But couldn’t the Western barbarians flock to us through the sea route we’ve discovered? Haven’t we heard through Mansur how violent the Western barbarians are? Please remember the battle between the countries called Spain and Portugal at that place called Gibraltar.”

News of the naval battle between Spain and Portugal in the Strait of Gibraltar had been conveyed to Joseon through Mansur.

At that time, King Sejong and the ministers who heard the news all clicked their tongues and shook their heads.

“To try to solve everything with force! How barbaric these people are!”

At Heo Jo’s words, Jo Mal-saeng immediately countered.

“That’s precisely why we need to secure this sea route! Knowing in advance and being prepared can rather prevent conflicts!”

“What about the budget? How will we handle the budget?”

At Heo Jo’s question, Jo Mal-saeng turned to Kim Jeom.

To the silent question, Kim Jeom answered with a troubled face.

“That’s a bit... While direct trade could bring us great benefits, there’s also the issue of military expenses...”

Amidst the ministers’ debate, Hyang had to struggle to hold back the words that were trying to burst out.

‘Ah, dammit! I’m telling you there’s a continent there! Augh! This is killing me!’

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[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.

Deathbringer, emphasis on [i]death[/i].

I'm totally [s]~~crossed-out~~[/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

[img]https://www.agine.this[/img]

[link]http://topwebfiction.com[/link].

[link=https://www.n.ot]clickbait[/link].

[quote]... me like my landlord![/quote]

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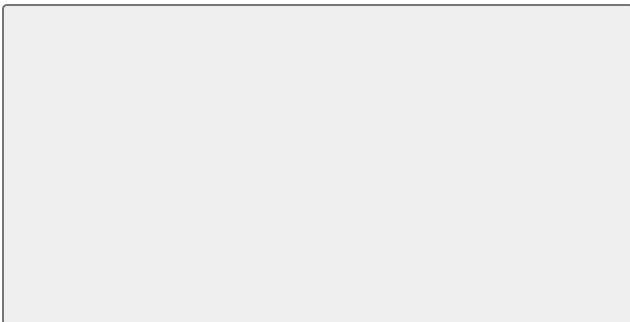
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Chapter 301 - 400

BCJ Chapter 383

Eastern Archipelago

by *BlossomTL*Black Corporation: Joseon

Unaware of Hyang's desire to shout "The emperor has donkey ears!", King Sejong and his ministers continued their heated debate on the topic of the "Eastern Sea Route".

After various opinions were exchanged and arguments made back and forth, King Sejong reached a conclusion.

"Although I'm not entirely satisfied, we're in a situation where we can't draw any conclusions right now. We simply lack too much information. Therefore, the first thing we need to do is to accurately determine what exists to the east. Whether those islands are the eastern limit, or if there's something more beyond. What do you all think?"

The ministers immediately responded to King Sejong's question.

"It seems most appropriate, Your Majesty."

Having summarized the situation, King Sejong turned to Jo Mal-saeng.

"By the way... I forgot to ask about this part. On what grounds do the Ministry of National Defense and the Navy predict that there are other islands to the east? If my memory serves me correctly, the report clearly stated 'archipelago'."

To King Sejong's question, the presenter immediately answered.

“It’s based on the conversations the Kirin ship’s crew had with the residents after arriving at the island in question.”

“The residents said so?”

“Yes, they say that occasionally when they drift far on ocean currents, they sometimes see the shadows of islands.”

“Shadows of islands... Hmm...”

After mulling over the presenter’s words, King Sejong nodded.

“Whatever the case may be, we should establish an outpost on that island, shouldn’t we?”

“Yes, Your Majesty. And we should also bring the indigenous tribes into our Joseon as subjects.”

As King Sejong nodded at the presenter’s words, he turned to Kim Jeom.

“Minister of Finance.”

At King Sejong’s call, Kim Jeom let out a small sigh and replied.

“Yes, Your Majesty. I will proceed with the establishment of government monopoly stores in consultation with the Ministry of National Defense.”

“It will be difficult, but please do your best. If there is an archipelago, we will have secured a good position, and even if there are no islands, it could be the last resting place before reaching the Western barbarians’ countries.”

“I will keep that in mind, Your Majesty.”

Through King Sejong’s decision, the Navy was able to steadily pioneer the eastern sea route.

Having thus summarized the situation, King Sejong continued, looking at the presenter and Jo Mal-saeng.

“Besides the budget, is there anything else needed?”

To King Sejong’s question, Jo Mal-saeng immediately replied.

“We need new ships. And we need many of them.”

“Heup!”

At Jo Mal-saeng’s words, Kim Jeom let out a choking sound, and King Sejong expressed his doubt.

“Wasn’t there a shortage of people even with the existing ships?”

“The Jurchen people, as well as the natives of Daesuldo, are good at sailing ships. And the natives of the newly secured Jongjangdo and Unwol Peninsula are accustomed to the harsh northern seas, so we plan to incorporate them into the military as soon as they properly learn Korean.”

“Hmm... So you’re saying the manpower issue will soon be resolved?”

“That’s correct, Your Majesty.”

Jo Mal-saeng immediately answered King Sejong’s question, while Kim Jeom’s complexion began to turn increasingly pale.

They were indeed making considerable profits from long-distance trade using the Navy’s Challenger-class warships.

However, the northern sea route was a different story. Of course, the precious furs from various northern regions and the oil extracted from whales and seals were being usefully employed to light up Joseon’s nights.

Nevertheless, the northern sea route was in a situation where expenditures far outweighed the profits.

Even those sturdy Challenger-class vessels had to undergo extensive maintenance at the shipyard without fail after enduring the northern winter seas.

Noticing Kim Jeom's pale complexion, King Sejong turned his gaze elsewhere and spoke.

"Minister of Finance, please work hard on this."

"...I receive your command, Your Majesty."

Just as it seemed the situation was settled, the presenter continued.

"The Navy wishes to equip the newly built Challenger-class warships with steam engines."

"Huh?"

"What?"

At this unexpected statement, both King Sejong and Hyang simultaneously uttered exclamations of surprise.

'Steam engines?'

'They came up with this idea? Already? From the notoriously conservative military?'

Their exclamations contained different thoughts.

"Explain why the Navy wishes to equip them with steam engines."

At King Sejong's order, the presenter immediately began to explain.

-Considering the natural environment of the north, the period when ships can sail stably is extremely short.

-Since humans cannot arbitrarily change the natural environment, the conclusion is that we must make the most of this short time.

-To do this, increasing the speed of the ships is the best solution.

-To increase the ship's speed, we could add more rowers. However, rowers tire easily, and adding more personnel increases resource consumption.

-Therefore, steam engines are the best solution. The Challenger-class warships already have space prepared for installing steam engines.

-There are several advantages to increasing the ship's speed. First, when heading east, the combination of wind, ocean currents, and steam engines will allow for even faster movement.

-Conversely, when moving from east to west, we have to go against the currents and winds, requiring a zigzag movement. Even in this case, operating the steam engine can reduce travel time.

“...For these reasons, the Navy wishes to equip the Challenger-class ships with steam engines.”

After hearing the presenter's explanation, King Sejong looked at Hyang.

“I also think it's reasonable. What's your opinion, Crown Prince?”

To King Sejong's question, Hyang immediately replied.

“While it's the best solution, it's not feasible right now.”

“Why? Aren't the iron horses already running well?”

“The engines we've completed now would likely just take up space. We need to develop engines that are smaller yet more powerful.”

At Hyang's explanation, Jo Mal-saeng quickly interjected.

“I hear that an improved version is currently being developed?”

“Of course, we're working on it, but it's not sufficient.”

Hyang explained why it's difficult right now.

-First and foremost, the weight of the object to be moved is an issue. Currently, the maximum weight that an iron horse can pull at once is about 22.5 tons. This includes the weight of the iron horse itself, water, and fuel.

However, the full load displacement of a Challenger-class warship is about 900 tons. The current iron horse cannot handle this weight.

-Of course, we could increase the output by enlarging the steam engine. But doing so would take up additional limited space on the warship. Moreover, fuel consumption would increase, and in the worst case, after loading the engine, fuel, and food, there might be no room left for other cargo.

-We could reduce the amount of fuel or armaments to make room for cargo, but this would be a poor move. On land, we can set up fuel storage depots at stations where the iron horse passes for resupply, but we can't do that at sea, so the cruising range would be reduced. And if we reduce the armaments, it becomes a problem for combat power.

-If we want to maintain the cruising range while reducing the fuel load, we could use the method of running the engine only when necessary. However, this deviates from the Navy's purpose for installing steam engines.

“...This is why it's unreasonable to install steam engines right away. Of course, it's not entirely impossible, and if we add a little more time and a bit more budget...”

Hyang trailed off, glancing at Kim Jeom's expression.

‘If we push a little more, we might end up holding a funeral here...’

As if understanding Hyang's thoughts, King Sejong picked up where he left off.

“Crown Prince, although I doubt whether your ‘little’ is truly ‘little’, I hope you can complete a usable engine as quickly as possible.”

At King Sejong's words, Hyang bowed his head and replied.

“I will do my best.”

“Good, I’ll trust you. But about the loading capacity issue you mentioned earlier. Couldn’t we solve it by increasing the size, even if it means sacrificing some speed?”

“That’s not feasible, Your Majesty.”

“Why not?”

To King Sejong’s question, Hyang explained why it wasn’t feasible.

“The current Challenger-class ships are already close to the limit of wooden ships. Ah! If we decide to increase the size, we could make them bigger, but it would be difficult to guarantee their durability and safety. Then they would lose their value as weapons.”

“I see.”

At Hyang’s explanation, King Sejong nodded with a face full of regret.

Though King Sejong and the others didn’t know, the explanation Hyang had just given wasn’t entirely factual.

‘The USS Constitution was a wooden ship, but it was 2,200 tons. However, to build something like that, we’d have to completely redesign everything from the hull shape up. The Challenger-class is already at the level of a national powerhouse for this era, but the Constitution? Are we trying to conquer the world? And I should guide them to gradually transition to iron ships. Iron steamships, that sounds good, doesn’t it?’

Even in this situation, Hyang was deceiving for the sake of his own interests.

As King Sejong listened to Hyang’s explanation, he asked again.

“Crown Prince. You just mentioned the limit of wooden ships, so then with a different material... Wait, now I remember. Would it be possible with iron ships?”

Recalling the cold noodle bowl he had seen in the Crown Prince's palace before, King Sejong asked, and Hyang immediately nodded.

“Yes.”

“It wouldn't be an easy task, would it?”

“It would consume considerable budget and time.”

At Hyang's answer, Kim Jeom muttered quietly.

“Not considerable, but enormous...”

“Shh! Your Excellency!”

As Heo Jo, who was next to him, cautioned him, Kim Jeom immediately closed his mouth and watched King Sejong's reaction.

King Sejong, giving Kim Jeom a brief glare, ordered Hyang.

“Research iron ships step by step, but focus on developing steam engines to be mounted on the Challenger-class ships.”

“I receive your command.”

And with that, all matters were settled.

After finishing his work at Gyeongbok Palace, Hyang gathered the people from the research institute and Area 51 to relay King Sejong's orders.

“...Therefore, the order is to begin research on steam engines and propulsion devices to be mounted on Challenger-class warships. I hope you will do your best.”

“We receive your command!”

The researchers and craftsmen who answered energetically gathered in small groups and returned to their places.

Watching the enthusiastic researchers and craftsmen, Hyang muttered quietly.

“Those folks have all become enthusiasts too.”

For the researchers and craftsmen at the research institute, orders to research and create new devices were always a joy.

Researching intangible things, like the recent debate between the geocentric and heliocentric models, was mentally taxing and easily fatiguing work. Of course, there were exceptions like Yi Soonji and Kim Dam.

But creating devices was welcomed because they could immediately see the results of what they had researched and designed.

“Your Highness! I have a good idea regarding transportation in the north!”

To Jinpyeong’s energetic exclamation as he entered, Hyang briefly replied.

“If you’re going to suggest building a bridge to Jongjangdo in the north and laying down a railroad, just leave.”

“Why not? It’s a perfectly feasible plan. We can build a bridge at the narrowest point of the strait between the Maritime Province and Jongjangdo.”

“Even at its narrowest point, the width is just under 8 kilometers. We’re already struggling to build a bridge over the Han River, which is barely 1.2 kilometers wide, and you want to build a bridge over a strait?”

Despite Hyang’s rebuttal, Jinpyeong didn’t back down.

“Of course, it’s unreasonable now, but if we keep researching and challenging ourselves, won’t it become possible? If the railroad succeeds, it

can solve many of the current difficulties in the north!”

“Hmm...”

At Jinpyeong’s words, Hyang fell into thought. Seeing Hyang’s contemplative look, Jinpyeong continued.

“I too understand that it’s nonsense right now! But don’t we need to set high goals to progress? Didn’t Your Highness always say, ‘Keep challenging without rest!’?”

At Jinpyeong’s words, Hyang narrowed his eyes and glared at him.

“You... You’re aiming for the Challenge Record, aren’t you?”

“I won’t deny it. But my belief that railroads are the most useful for Joseon’s expanding territory remains unchanged!”

At Jinpyeong’s words, Hyang let out a long sigh.

“Sigh~ That’s not wrong either, so I’ll discuss it with Minister Jeong-cho.”

At Hyang’s decision, Jinpyeong smiled brightly and bowed his head.

“Thank you, Your Highness!”

After Jinpyeong left, Hyang muttered, looking at the place where Jinpyeong had been.

“They say there’s no cure for a train enthusiast... It’s really true.”

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BBCodes

[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.
Deathbringer, emphasis on [i]*death*[/i].
I'm totally [s]~~crossed out~~[/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

[img]https://www.agine.this[/img]
[link]http://topwebfiction.com[/link].
[link=https://www.n.ot]clickbait[/link].

[quote]... me like my landlord! [/quote]

[spoiler]Spanish Inquisition! [/spoiler]
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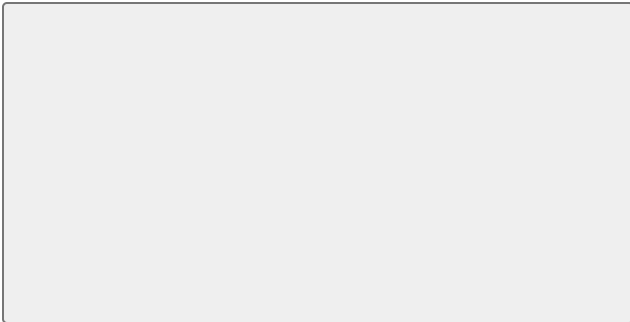
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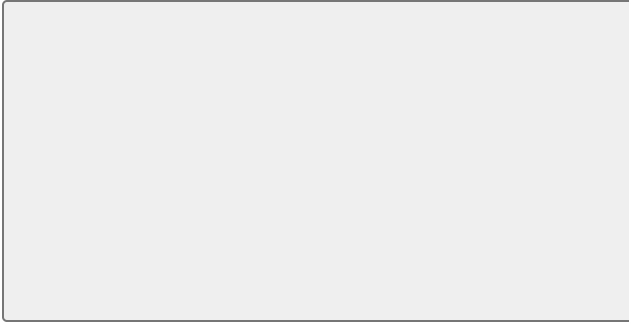
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Dear valued community members, we have important updates regarding our platform's future. Please read carefully as this affects all users:

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Chapter 301 - 400

BCJ Chapter 384

He, Jang Yeong-sil

by *BlossomTLBlack Corporation*: Joseon

Two days later, a new official document was posted on the large bulletin boards of the research institute and Area 51.

-New Entry in the Challenge Record.

Date: 7th day of the 1st month, Year of Gyechuk (1433).

Proposer: Prince Jinpyeong.

Content:

Connect a land transportation route by building a bridge between the Maritime Province and Jongjangdo.

Grade: Moving Mountains (愚公移山) Upper Level

Proposer's Rank: Pioneer (先驅)

Although it was a brief official notice, everyone who read its contents nodded their heads.

“As expected, it’s His Highness Prince Jinpyeong.”

“Who else but him would think of such an idea?”

“It says land transportation, but it must mean a railway, right?”

“Of course.”

As they discussed, all the researchers and craftsmen had the same thought.

“If it’s been added to the Challenge Record, doesn’t that mean they think it’s possible?”

“Even though the grade is Moving Mountains... But the fact that it’s in the Challenge Record itself means it’s possible, right?”

The researchers considered it potentially feasible simply because it had been added to the Challenge Record.

The Challenge Record was created by Hyang to inspire a spirit of challenge among the researchers and craftsmen of the research institute.

Hyang created this when he realized that the researchers and craftsmen were too passive.

Until then, the vast majority of tasks carried out in the research institute and Area 51 were based on Hyang’s instructions.

“His Highness the Crown Prince will think of something.”

“That’s right. We just need to do what His Highness tells us to do.”

Most researchers and craftsmen held this mindset while diligently carrying out their assigned tasks.

Upon confirming this situation, Hyang clicked his tongue.

“Tsk! I went through all those trial and errors to avoid seeing this sorry state...”

When first establishing the research institute and Area 51 and proceeding with weapon development, Hyang had endured numerous trials and errors and wasted time. The reason for this was to prevent the current passive situation.

However, as time passed, the researchers and craftsmen became passive.

But this couldn't be entirely blamed on the researchers and craftsmen.

They had become passive because they were overwhelmed just by turning the various concepts and ideas Hyang had presented into proper theories and proving them.

“This won't do! If we don't come up with something...”

Displeased with this passive atmosphere, Hyang racked his brains to find a solution, and thus the Challenge Record was created.

“There are two things that make even a whale fly in the sky. One is incentive, the other is honor. We're already using incentives well, so we should use honor.”

Hyang stimulated people's desire for honor.

If an idea passed the strict review of Hyang, Jeong-cho, Jeong In-ji, Lee Chun, and other top executives and was registered in the Challenge Record, the date of registration, the proposer, and its contents were announced and accurately recorded.

As long as that record existed, everyone would know who first came up with the idea.

There were 9 grades created in this way.

First, 3 main grades:

Lone Army's Struggle (孤軍奮鬪): Difficult, but seems solvable within one generation.

Grinding an Axe into a Needle (磨斧作針): Extremely difficult, but there's a possibility of solving it within three generations.

Moving Mountains (愚公移山): It will take more than three generations of time and effort, but there's a possibility.

These 3 grades were further divided into upper, middle, and lower levels, creating a total of 9 grades.

Moreover, those who solved the challenges listed in the Challenge Record would also have their names recorded in it.

After announcing this Challenge Record system, the atmosphere among the researchers and craftsmen gradually began to change according to Hyang's intentions.

One by one, creative opinions and ideas that even Hyang hadn't anticipated began to emerge.

Believing in the feasibility of the project due to its inclusion in the Challenge Record, the researchers flocked to the archive attached to the research institute.

After examining the relevant reports and maps sent by the Ministry of National Defense, all the researchers shook their heads.

“Even at its narrowest point, it's said to be a full 8 kilometers...”

“Even if the grade is Moving Mountains...”

“Do His Highness the Crown Prince and Minister Jeong-cho really think this is possible?”

“They must think it's possible, since it's in the Challenge Record, right?”

The researchers discussing this all shook their heads.

“Even if it’s the Moving Mountains grade, and even the upper level at that, this is a bit...”

“I wonder if His Highness the Crown Prince is thinking too lightly of this...”

Even as they voiced these concerns, the researchers’ eyes were shining.

“But the fact that it’s in the Challenge Record means there’s a possibility of realization! The moment we succeed, our names will go down in history! Even though it’s more than three generations, even just creating a provable theoretical method will be recorded!”

Area 51, Engine Research Department.

“The construction folks have been busy lately, is something going on?”

To the junior researcher’s question, the senior researcher answered in a dull voice, his eyes fixed on the blueprint.

“They’re all worked up about building a bridge that’s 8 kilometers long.”

“8 kilometers? You’d start crossing after breakfast and finish by lunchtime.”

“Never mind that, did you find what I asked you to look into?”

Realizing the senior researcher’s mood wasn’t good, the junior researcher hurriedly put down the books.

“Ah, yes! I found some good material in the Wujing Zongyao^[1] you mentioned.”

At the junior researcher’s answer, the senior researcher’s face brightened.

“Really? So my memory wasn’t wrong! Let me see!”

At the senior researcher's words, the junior researcher flipped through the book, opened the relevant section, and handed it to the senior researcher.

"It's this part!"

"Hmm..."

Taking the book, the senior researcher examined the content of the relevant section.

"Chariot Raft^[2]... Inside the boat, sailors step on pedals to turn the wheels outside..."

After checking the illustration and content, the senior researcher ordered the junior researcher.

"The picture is small, so copy it onto a larger sheet of paper."

"Yes, sir."

The enlarged copy of the illustration by the junior researcher was soon posted on the wall of the Engine Research Department.

"A wheeled raft... Are they suggesting using wheels?"

To the deputy head's question, the senior researcher nodded.

"That's right."

"Hmm... Not bad."

At the deputy head's words, the researchers and craftsmen of the department nodded.

A monk who was examining the illustration with them joined the conversation.

“I’ve seen a similar illustration before.”

“Where?”

“Please wait a moment!”

The monk, who had dashed off somewhere and returned, pulled out a thick parchment book from his chest.

“It’s a book called ‘De Rebus bellicis’. It mentions that ancient Rome used a similar boat.”

“Let me see.”

The researchers huddled around the book, putting their heads together.

After examining the contents for a while, the researchers nodded.

“Is it using oxen instead of people?”

“It should be more powerful than the wheeled raft in the Wujing Zongyao.”

“It seems to be an application of the donkey-powered millstone.”

After listening to the researchers’ opinions and organizing his thoughts, the deputy head concluded.

“Let’s try to adapt this to the steam engine.”

“Yes, sir.”

“Remember, we need to prepare a report and blueprints to submit to His Highness as quickly as possible.”

“Yes, sir!”

Ten days later, Hyang received the report and blueprints and examined them with a face full of curiosity.

As he looked over the records of similar ships conceived in both the East and West, Hyang chuckled.

“They say human thoughts are all alike... By the way, is this China where people are abundant? Almost everything relies on manpower...”

After making his own assessment, Hyang asked the deputy head.

“Looking at the blueprints, are you planning to build a test ship based on this?”

“Yes, Your Highness.”

“It’s going to be quite costly, isn’t it?”

To Hyang’s question, the deputy head answered with a resigned expression.

“It can’t be helped. We must prove it empirically.”

“Hmm...”

After pondering for a moment at the deputy head’s words, Hyang stood up.

“I’ll try to find another method.”

‘If I submit this directly to Father, Minister Kim Jeom will try to eat me alive!’

“Yes, I understand.”

As Hyang left the office, he muttered while walking.

“Paddle wheels aren’t very efficient, how can I lead them to a propeller method?”

As Hyang was pondering how to find a good method, another thought occurred to him.

“Wait a minute... Mounting a steam engine on the already formidable Challenger-class warships? The Europeans would curse like mad. They’d say we have no sense of fair play.”

As Hyang let his imagination run wild about the butterfly effect that would occur with the installation of steam engines, he smirked and concluded.

“Not my problem.”

The place Hyang visited after leaving the office was Jang Yeong-sil’s workshop.

After moving to Area 51, Jang Yeong-sil had been promoted repeatedly from Byeoljwa to Jeongrang.

When the organizational structure of the research institute and Area 51 changed through reforms, he was offered the position of Head Director of the Development Department, but Jang Yeong-sil refused.

“I am a craftsman who works with objects, not a civil servant who handles documents! The position of director doesn’t fit me. My place is where I wield saws and hammers.”

Hyang gave a wry smile at the sight of Jang Yeong-sil, who, befitting someone in the realm of the ‘incomprehensible’, refused a high position.

‘That man has become a true enthusiast too.’

Thanks to this, Jang Yeong-sil received a new position.

‘Director of the Technical Verification Department’

It was a department that created physical prototypes to verify whether the blueprints or technologies produced by the research department were

actually usable.

It was the perfect position for Jang Yeong-sil.

“You could have called for me, why have you come to such a humble place?”

Jang Yeong-sil couldn't hide his embarrassment as he welcomed Hyang to his workshop.

“Haha! Sometimes moving like this is good for health! And...”

Hyang continued as he looked around Jang Yeong-sil's workshop.

“I heard you've been making many interesting things lately, so I came to see.”

“Ah...”

At Hyang's words, Jang Yeong-sil's eyes lit up playfully as he offered a seat.

“Please, have a seat first. Apprentice! Bring two cups of black tea here!”

“Yes, Master!”

Seeing this, Hyang's eyes brightened.

“I did receive a report that you had taken on an apprentice.”

“Yes. He's a good boy.”

A moment later, a young man who looked about the same age as Hyang entered carrying a teapot.

The young man stood at the opposite end of the conference table where Jang Yeong-sil and Hyang were seated, placed two cups on a tray held by a

small doll, and wound up the spring on the doll's back.

Char-rrr~

With the sound of the spring unwinding, the doll holding the tray slowly moved towards Jang Yeong-sil. Using wheels hidden between its legs, the doll glided smoothly and stopped right in front of Jang Yeong-sil.

Seeing Hyang frozen with a surprised look on his face, Jang Yeong-sil smiled slightly and took a cup from the tray, placing it in front of Hyang.

“Your Highness, please drink.”

Click!

As the two cups were removed from the tray, with a small mechanical sound, the doll turned 180 degrees and returned to its original position.

Hyang, who had been staring blankly at the doll, turned to Jang Yeong-sil.

“What's that?”

“Ah! It's a spring-powered doll I made for entertainment while working on self-moving chairs and precision clocks. It's very good for enjoying leisure time.”

As Jang Yeong-sil spoke with an expression that suggested it was nothing special, Hyang inwardly exclaimed.

‘People! There's a monster here!’

It was the appearance of something akin to the automatons that began to be made in 17th century Europe and the karakuri (からくり) made in 19th century Japan, now in the 15th century.

A moment later, having regained his composure, Hyang looked around once more and spoke.

“Do you have any other entertainment items?”

At Hyang's question, Jang Yeong-sil held up a complex wooden bundle hanging on one wall.

“This is something I made after being inspired by watching the deolmi (puppet shows) performed by traveling entertainers.”

After finishing his explanation, Jang Yeong-sil slipped his arm into the wooden frame and put his hand into the attached glove. Thick threads were connected to each finger of the glove, leading into the wooden frame. And at the end of the wooden frame were model fingers mimicking human fingers.

Kki-gi-gik.

As Jang Yeong-sil moved his gloved fingers, the wooden model fingers moved in exactly the same way.

As an unexpected object revealed its existence, Hyang could only open and close his mouth in amazement.

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1. 武經總要. Also known as ‘The Complete Essentials for the Military Classics, is a Chinese military compendium written from around 1040 to 1044.[↔]
2. 車輪舸圖[↔]

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BBCodes

[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.

Deathbringer, emphasis on [i]death[/i].

I'm totally [s]crossed-out[/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

[img]https://www.agine.this[/img]

[link]http://topwebfiction.com[/link].

[link=https://www.n.ot]clickbait[/link].

[quote]... me like my landlord! [/quote]

[spoiler]Spanish Inquisition! [/spoiler]

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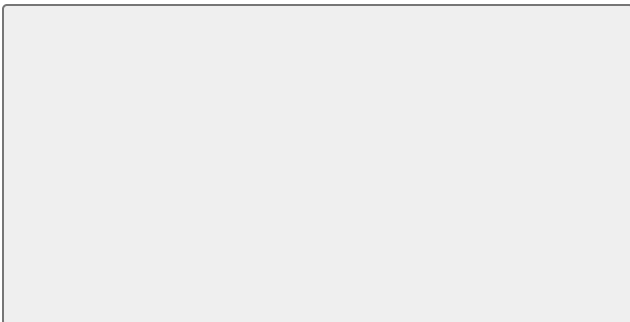
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Chapter 301 - 400

BCJ Chapter 385

He, Jang Yeong-sil

by *BlossomTLBlack Corporation: Joseon*

Seeing Hyang's expression of open-mouthed amazement, Jang Yeong-sil instead showed a surprised look.

"I've been working with Your Highness for nearly 10 years, but this is the first time I've seen you make such an expression."

At Jang Yeong-sil's question, Hyang quickly composed himself and answered.

"Ah, I was momentarily surprised to see a device more astonishing than I expected. But how does that work?"

"Ah, when thinking about contracting mountains or moving heavy objects, we usually have many people working together, or use cranes and windlasses, right?"

"That's right."

"However, there are often cases where space is too tight to install cranes or windlasses. Or sometimes, a job that would be easy with 4-5 people has to be done by just 2-3 people struggling. I've been pondering a bit about what to use in such cases."

As he explained, Jang Yeong-sil carefully assembled the structures hanging on one wall.

When the assembly was complete, Hyang asked in a trembling voice.

“Could it be an exoskeleton?”

At Hyang’s question, Jang Yeong-sil exclaimed in surprise.

“To recognize it at a glance, as expected of Your Highness! That’s correct. It’s a device that mimics the human skeleton to be worn. Right now, it’s made of wood as we’re in the process of proving the concept, but if it works properly, we’ll make it out of iron to ensure durability.”

“How will you power it?”

At Hyang’s point, Jang Yeong-sil’s expression darkened.

“That is indeed the problem. I thought of using a steam engine as the power source, but considering the size of the steam engine and the management of heat and fuel... Sigh~”

After a short sigh, Jang Yeong-sil continued with a face full of regret.

“It’s the same with the process of transmitting the user’s movements. Right now, it’s just mimicking movement, so thick and sturdy cotton threads are possible, but if we were to actually make it, we’d have to use iron ropes, and then no one would be able to move it...”

Before Jang Yeong-sil could finish speaking, Hyang interjected.

“There would also be the issue of controlling the force. Using that would allow at least 2-3 times the strength of an ordinary person, but that much force isn’t always needed.”

“That’s right!”

Jang Yeong-sil nodded strongly at Hyang’s words and continued.

“That’s correct! So I thought about adjusting it before use, but that’s too inconvenient...”

“Before that, how would you transmit the power generated by the steam engine?”

“That’s also under research...”

As Jang Yeong-sil trailed off, Hyang suddenly shouted.

“Director Jang! I’m disappointed in you! How can a person do this?”

Momentarily bewildered by Hyang’s sudden rebuke, Jang Yeong-sil immediately prostrated himself on the floor.

“Please forgive me! I’ve used time and resources privately for my personal research! And yet, I haven’t achieved proper results, which is a great sin! Please forgive me!”

Jang Yeong-sil begged for forgiveness, stating what seemed to be the most obvious reason for Hyang’s anger, but Hyang’s scolding continued.

“Why did you conduct this research alone? To do such interesting research by yourself! Don’t you know proper etiquette?”

“Pardon?”

Surprised by this unexpected reason, Jang Yeong-sil unconsciously raised his head to look at Hyang.

‘Is he joking... He’s serious!’

Seeing Hyang’s face, Jang Yeong-sil had no choice but to prostrate himself again.

“I apologize! As it was just a thought from an ignorant craftsman, I didn’t report it, thinking it would be worthless! Please forgive me!”

“Even if it seems worthless to you, it could be worth thousands or tens of thousands of gold to others! If you have any other research, bring it immediately! Right now!”

“Yes, yes!”

At Hyang’s order, Jang Yeong-sil hurriedly moved to bring concept drawings and blueprints of what he had been conceptualizing and handed them to Hyang.

As Hyang examined the blueprints Jang Yeong-sil had brought, he genuinely became angry with Jang Yeong-sil.

“You just kept these precious things tucked away? Such interesting things!”

“I’m deeply honored!”

“I’ll take these, discuss them, and then register them in the Challenge Record, so be aware of that.”

“It’s an honor!”

“Really, people should have a sense of propriety... Interesting things should be done together, not trying to have fun alone...”

After calming down from this commotion, Hyang remembered the reason he had come here.

“Ah! The reason I came here today is that I want Director Jang to make a spring mechanism.”

“A spring mechanism, you say?”

“That’s right.”

Hyang told Jang Yeong-sil about the propulsion system issue for ships equipped with steam engines.

“...so, the Development Department wants to conduct experiments with steam engines attached, but it seems premature to me. If the current method proves completely unsuitable, we’d have to start over from the beginning,

which could lead to unnecessary repeated expenditures. If that happens, wouldn't Minister Kim Jeom and all the officials from the Ministry of Finance come rushing in to cause an uproar?"

"That would indeed be the case."

At Hyang's words, Jang Yeong-sil nodded unconsciously.

Even to his knowledge, the budget consumed by the research institute and Area 51 was enormous. If not for their achievements so far, it would have been reasonable to call for their immediate abolition.

Having confirmed Jang Yeong-sil's understanding, Hyang explained the purpose for needing the spring mechanism.

"So, I think it's better to experiment using scaled-down model ships."

Jang Yeong-sil nodded at Hyang's explanation.

"That's certainly true. Then, what size would be appropriate?"

At Jang Yeong-sil's question, Hyang spread his arms to indicate a suitable size.

"About this big? About the width of my chest should be appropriate."

At Hyang's words, Jang Yeong-sil immediately replied.

"I understand. Then, I'll create both the spring mechanism and the model ship. By when should I have them ready?"

"Is five days possible?"

"It should be possible."

"Then, let's plan on receiving them within five days... Ah! When making the spring mechanism, it should be designed so that the direction of the power axis can be easily changed."

“The direction, you say?”

After pondering for a moment at Hyang’s words, Jang Yeong-sil soon nodded.

“I understand why it needs to be that way. I’ll make it accordingly.”

“Then I look forward to it.”

Having finished his business, Hyang stood up. Gathering up the blueprints that Jang Yeong-sil had neglected, Hyang cautioned him again.

“I’ll say it again, please don’t just tuck away things you’ve thought up like this.”

“Yes, Your Highness.”

As Hyang was about to leave Jang Yeong-sil’s office, he suddenly turned around as if something had occurred to him.

Jang Yeong-sil, who had followed to see Hyang off, tensed up when Hyang suddenly turned.

“Your Highness?”

“Ah, I just had a sudden thought about the exoskeleton and power issue we discussed earlier. Let’s go inside and talk.”

“Pardon? Yes.”

Re-entering the office and sitting down, Hyang spread a blank paper on the conference table and began to speak.

“About that exoskeleton. There’s no need to have all four limbs like a person, is there? And there’s also the issue of attaching a steam engine...”

Trailing off, Hyang began to draw on the blank paper.

The pictures Hyang drew were of construction machinery like excavators and cranes.

“If we use pulleys and iron ropes to transmit power and control movement like this...”

Listening to Hyang’s drawings and explanations, Jang Yeong-sil immediately understood and nodded.

“Ah! It would be of great use in civil engineering and construction work! I’ll think about it carefully!”

“I plan to add it to the Challenge Record as well.”

“Haha! It will be a good competition!”

Meanwhile, Jang Yeong-sil’s apprentice, who had been listening to their conversation from the side, became crestfallen.

‘I can’t understand a word of what they’re talking about! I thought I was quite smart, but am I just a frog in a well?’

While Jang Yeong-sil’s apprentice was despairing in a corner, Hyang, having finished his conversation with Jang Yeong-sil, stood up with a satisfied look.

“Then, I look forward to future developments.”

“I will do my best!”

After seeing Hyang off and returning, Jang Yeong-sil sat down in his chair, let out a light sigh, and turned to his apprentice.

“Truly an extraordinary person, isn’t he?”

“Yes.”

“I feel this every time I see him, but His Highness the Crown Prince is a divine person. He’s someone heaven has sent down for our Joseon.”

“Isn’t the person that such a great individual values highly you, Master? You are your disciple’s pride.”

At his apprentice’s words, Jang Yeong-sil shook his head.

“Compared to His Highness the Crown Prince, I am but a firefly under moonlight. Didn’t you just see? Despite seeing the blueprints and models for the first time, he immediately identified problems and even thought of applications. Who else in Joseon today could do this? As far as I know, there’s only one other person besides His Highness.”

“Who might that be?”

To his apprentice’s question, Jang Yeong-sil answered firmly.

“His Majesty the King.”

While Jang Yeong-sil was lecturing his apprentice, Hyang’s steps as he returned to his office seemed to be floating.

“Hehehehe...”

A smile as wide as a washbasin was plastered on Hyang’s face as he looked at the blueprints and various concept drawings he held in his arms.

‘With this, the chances of running out of ideas have decreased!’

As things had been progressing under Hyang’s leadership, he had been gradually feeling a sense of crisis.

‘If I’m not careful, I might run out of things to geek out about later! I might end up just being a king instead of geeking out! My dream is in danger! I’ve failed at pacing myself!’

Hyang was bitterly regretting his failure to pace himself.

But there was no help for it. The talents at the research institute and Area 51 moved passively, and he couldn't resist the things that seemed immediately realizable rolling around before his eyes.

‘This will disrupt my life plans! I need to find a solution right away!’

And so, the Challenge Record was created.

‘But it’s still a bit lacking...’

Even so, to Hyang, who felt a 1% deficiency, Jang Yeong-sil’s works were a gift from heaven.

Most of the concept drawings and designs drawn by Jang Yeong-sil were things that made one want to take off their official robes and enter the blacksmith’s shop right away.

Looking at the blueprints with such a happy face, Hyang quietly muttered, thinking of Jang Yeong-sil.

“That man is really out of the ordinary...”

He had felt it before when making the golden brush, but the skill level of Joseon’s craftsmen at this time was not to be underestimated.

“If only there hadn’t been the custom of looking down on craftsmen and the wars...”

It was a time when there were many craftsmen with such high skill levels that Hyang, who had first confirmed the skills of the craftsmen, would complain, but Jang Yeong-sil was in a league of his own.

Jang Yeong-sil’s skill could be seen in the anecdote of the water clock before Hyang’s intervention, and the record that no one could repair the broken water clock.

With Hyang’s intervention, Jang Yeong-sil’s fate changed greatly.

With Hyang as his backing, he would no longer be dismissed from his position later. And as he created various objects that Hyang wanted, Jang Yeong-sil crossed a kind of boundary.

No, it wasn't just Jang Yeong-sil who had crossed this boundary.

People symbolized by the research institute and Area 51 began to emerge in droves, crossing boundaries swept up in the storm of “scientific and technological revolution”.

Yi Soonji, Kim Dam, Princess Jeong-ui, and others who had been on the verge of crossing the boundary line but were blocked by the walls of Neo-Confucianism and social conventions, began to cross the boundary line and climb even higher.

Two days later, the researchers and craftsmen who came to work at the research institute and Area 51 had to gasp when they saw the bulletin board.

“How many are there in total?”

“I've given up counting...”

People were left dumbfounded looking at the notices that covered not only the bulletin board but also the adjacent wall.

As people examined the items evenly distributed from “Lone Army's Struggle – Lower” to “Moving Mountains – Upper”, they soon realized one fact.

“Is the proposer for all of these Director Jang?”

“It seems so.”

“Come on, that man should have some sense of propriety! How could he dump all of these at once!”

While people were grumbling about Jang Yeong-sil, the craftsmen from the Technical Verification Department came to his defense.

“It’s not like that...”

‘The Crown Prince squeezed everything out of Jang Yeong-sil!’

‘The Crown Prince ordered that everything must be reported from now on!’

Hearing the craftsmen’s words, people instead looked sympathetic.

“Director Jang, that man, his good days are over~”

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[b] **Bold** [/b] of you to assume I have a plan.

Deathbringer, emphasis on [i] *death* [/i].

I'm totally [s] ~~crossed out~~ [/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li] bullets [/li].

[img]  [/img]

[link] <http://topwebfiction.com> [/link].

[link=https://www.n.ot] [clickbait](https://www.n.ot) [/link].

[quote] ... me like my landlord! [/quote]

[spoiler] Spanish Inquisition! [/spoiler]

[ins] Insert [/ins] more bad puns!

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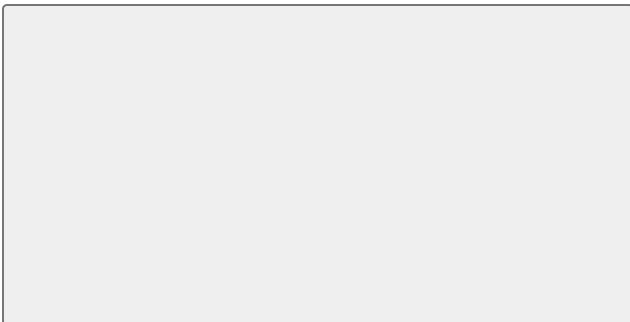
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Chapter 301 - 400

BCJ Chapter 386

He, Jang Yeong-sil

by *BlossomTL*Black Corporation: Joseon

While Jang Yeong-sil and his subordinates were creating a model Challenger-class ship equipped with a spring-powered mechanism, a water tank was being built in a corner of Area 51.

“It would be best to actually float it... If that’s not possible, wouldn’t it be better to float it on the Han River at least?”

As one researcher supervising the construction of the water tank grumbled, a colleague beside him chided:

“Hey! Have you forgotten what His Highness the Crown Prince said?”

When Hyang ordered experiments using model ships and a water tank, the researchers in charge of development came forward to object.

“There’s a large margin of error between models and reality! We need to experiment with actual ships, even if they’re smaller!”

The developers’ objections were reasonable. With the reforms progressing and all sorts of devices being created, measuring instruments had also advanced. The problem was that despite this progress, there was still considerable error.

However, it was unfair to blame the measuring instruments entirely. Even the wood, which was the most commonly used main material, varied greatly in quality. The iron, which was the second most used material, was being produced exclusively by the national ironworks, but there were still variations in quality.

Of course, Hyang wasn't one to overlook this, so continuous quality control and new methods to maintain consistency in quality were being applied, but compared to the 20th or 21st century, it was still a "tearful" situation.

For these reasons, the researchers wanted to build actual ships and engines, even if smaller, for experimentation.

However, these objections and assertions from the researchers had to be buried immediately with one word from Hyang.

"If you insist, go directly to Minister Kim Jeom and secure the budget yourself."

"..."

Because of this incident, the researcher who was again advocating for actual ships had his mouth shut like a clam.

As promised, Jang Yeong-sil created an experimental model ship in five days and submitted it to Hyang.

"Anyone who sees this might mistake it for an immortal using magic to shrink a ship."

At Hyang's praise, admiring the precisely scaled-down model of the actual Challenger-class warship, Jang Yeong-sil smiled and replied.

"I put my skills to use after a long time."

“Of course! It was Director Jang’s craftsmanship! I thought it was extraordinary!”

“Hahaha.”

As Hyang observed the model ship made by Jang Yeong-sil with fond eyes, he noticed the paddle wheels installed on both sides of the hull and turned to Jang Yeong-sil.

“Are these paddle wheels easy to attach and detach?”

“Yes, as requested by the research department, I made it easy to attach and detach paddle wheels of various sizes and shapes.”

“I see. Hmm...”

Humming, Hyang stroked his chin beard.

‘No matter how I think about it, a screw propeller would be better... How can I make them understand this?’

After pondering for a moment, Hyang asked Jang Yeong-sil.

“Can you make one more spring mechanism that produces the same power as the one attached to this model ship?”

“Pardon? It’s possible.”

“Then make a cart with the same weight as this model ship. Put the spring mechanism on it so it can move. Is that possible?”

“It’s not too difficult, but may I ask why?”

To Jang Yeong-sil’s question, Hyang pointed to the paddle wheels and explained the reason.

“When attached like that, we can’t know how efficient it is, can we?”

Jang Yeong-sil nodded at Hyang’s question.

“That’s true.”

“In that case, wouldn’t it be better to have something to compare visually side by side?”

After thinking for a moment at Hyang’s words, Jang Yeong-sil answered.

“That’s right. I’ll make it and submit it within five days.”

“That’s excellent, as the water tank should be completed by then. I’m counting on you.”

“You can rest assured.”

Shortly after Jang Yeong-sil left, Jeong-cho, Jeong In-ji, and Lee Chun entered Hyang’s office.

“We heard that the model ship has been completed.”

Hyang, who was just about to place the model ship on the conference table and wind up the spring, welcomed their visit.

“Ah! You’ve come at a good time. I was about to test run it, fresh from Director Jang’s hands.”

“Is that so?”

At Hyang’s words, the three men’s eyes lit up. Despite their age differences, they had all evolved into inevitable enthusiasts whose eyes would spin at the sight of moving machines.

Tak-tak, ta-da-dak.

As he inserted and turned the butterfly-shaped winding key, the spring wound up with the sound of gears meshing. After winding the spring to some extent, Hyang removed the key and then released the stopper attached next to the spring mechanism.

Jiii.

With the sound of the spring unwinding, the waterwheels attached to both sides of the model ship on the stand began to turn.

“Ooh~”

“Hoo~”

As they watched the turning waterwheels with various exclamations, Jeong-cho asked Hyang.

“Is it possible to adjust the speed?”

“According to Director Jang’s explanation, it should be adjustable in three stages. Just a moment.”

Hyang engaged the stopper to stop the waterwheels and then moved another lever attached to the side.

Click! Jiing!

With a louder noise, the waterwheels began to spin at a faster speed.

“Hmm...”

“Huh...”

After observing the movement of the waterwheels until the spring was fully unwound, the three men took a step back.

“What do you think?”

At Hyang’s question, the faces of the three men organizing their thoughts didn’t look very good.

Jeong-cho was the first to speak.

“It seems quite useful, but there’s an unresolved question. According to the Wujing Zongyao, such paddle wheel ships appeared as early as the Song Dynasty, so why doesn’t the current Ming navy use them?”

As soon as Jeong-cho finished speaking, Jeong In-ji continued.

“I feel the same way. If those paddle wheels were useful, they would still be in use now, but looking at the current Ming naval warships or merchant ships, none of them use paddle wheels, do they?”

To the questions from Jeong-cho and Jeong In-ji, Hyang offered a plausible reason.

“Isn’t it a matter of power? To turn those waterwheels, wouldn’t you need a lot of manpower inside the ship to turn the pedals?”

At Hyang’s words, Jeong In-ji immediately shook his head.

“Don’t warships already carry rowers anyway? Considering that...”

Pausing briefly, Jeong In-ji concluded.

“If the results using the steam engine are not better than the methods using manpower and animal power described in the Wujing Zongyao and Western books, we should look for other methods.”

At Jeong In-ji’s conclusion, Jeong-cho nodded. Seeing this, Hyang turned to Lee Chun.

“What do you think, Minister?”

To Hyang’s question, Lee Chun immediately declared.

“The navy probably won’t like it very much.”

Shortly after, the three men left Hyang’s office. After seeing them off and returning to his seat, Hyang muttered with a satisfied face.

“I think I’ve chosen people well.”

Although Jeong-cho, Jeong In-ji, and Lee Chun gave negative predictions, they didn’t say that the current plan should be overturned.

The common point among these three was that they didn’t unconditionally reject challenging projects brought forward by their subordinates.

As long as it wasn’t a truly absurd plan, these three would say the same thing to their subordinates.

“Organize it a bit more and bring it back.”

No, even if it was a truly outrageous proposal, if it was armed with reasonably sound logic, these three would accept it initially.

And after several revisions and improvements increased the completeness, they moved on to the next step.

“Then let’s try an experiment.”

And after the experiment, regardless of success or failure, they demanded mountain-high analysis reports.

Because of this, the skills of researchers and craftsmen continued to develop.

Of course, there was an exception here too, which was the project proposals put forward by Hyang. Whenever Hyang presented a project proposal, the three would allocate manpower and proceed with the work without any discussion.

The day after the water tank was completed, the public experiment finally took place.

Amidst the gathering of craftsmen from the Development and Verification Departments, researchers and craftsmen who had heard about it, and naval

commanders who had come out, the model ship and cart made their appearance.

“Then let’s begin.”

“Yes.”

At Hyang’s order, two researchers came forward and wound up the springs.

“Start!”

As soon as Hyang’s order fell, the stopper was released, and the model ship and cart began to move forward.

When the test that continued all day ended, the faces of the researchers were not good at all.

“Even considering the difference between land and water...”

In nearly 20 races, the model ship never once beat the cart. It failed to secure a single victory in races conducted with various types of waterwheels of different sizes and shapes.

“This is a result created by the difference between land and water. Although it may be slower than moving on land, it will be faster than anyone else in water!”

“Hmm... Is that so?”

Nodding slightly at the researchers’ assertion, Hyang turned to the naval commanders.

“What do you think?”

To Hyang’s question, the naval commanders immediately replied.

“It might work for civilian use, but it’s impossible for warships!”

At the naval commanders' negative statement, the researchers strongly objected.

“Why is that?”

As the researchers demanded an explanation, the naval commanders explained their reasons.

-The space occupied by those paddle wheels would reduce the number of cannons. This is absolutely unacceptable.

-Those paddle wheels are likely to become targets at a glance. If the paddle wheels are damaged, not only will maneuverability be lost, but they are highly likely to become obstacles hindering proper maneuvering.

-To prevent this, armor, whether wooden or iron, would need to be installed on the outside of those paddle wheels, which would unnecessarily increase the weight of the warship.

At the navy's explanation, Hyang inwardly muttered.

‘Minister Lee Chun was right. Come to think of it, both Minister Lee Chun and the navy pointed out the reduction in the number of cannons as the first problem, as expected of the ancestors of the artillery department...’

While Hyang was thinking this, the researchers and naval personnel were engaged in a back-and-forth argument.

“If the number of cannons decreases, can't we just load more powerful cannons?”

“If we can load more powerful cannons, wouldn't it be better to load many of them?”

“Although those paddle wheels are large, they can move faster! Wouldn't that reduce the risk of being hit?”

“Warships don't always fight in the middle of the sea.”

Finally, after the continued argument, Hyang concluded.

“The paddle wheel method isn’t bad, but it’s not suitable for military use. This seems to be the most appropriate conclusion, doesn’t it?”

At Hyang’s conclusion, Jeong-cho, Jeong In-ji, Lee Chun, and the naval commanders all nodded.

Seeing the ‘high-ranking officials’ and the ‘client’ reach the same conclusion, the researchers all became dejected.

“Although the result shows it’s not suitable for military use, I still think it’s a good method. At least we no longer need to just wait for the wind. You’ve all worked hard.”

At Hyang’s encouragement, the researchers managed to brighten their faces slightly.

“We’re truly grateful for your kind words.”

“Now that we know the shortcomings, we’re just a little bit away. Please put in a little more effort.”

“Yes.”

And so, the experiment left them with the homework of ‘developing a new propulsion method’.

While the researchers were spending several sleepless nights trying to solve the task of ‘developing a new propulsion method’, which was close to ‘heading on bare ground’, Jang Yeong-sil came to see Hyang.

“Your Highness. About that propulsion method.”

“Yes!”

‘Could it be!’

As Jang Yeong-sil mentioned the ‘new propulsion method’, Hyang’s eyes sparkled and his voice rose.

Seeing Hyang’s reaction, Jang Yeong-sil cautiously opened his mouth.

“How about modeling it after the shape of a windmill?”

‘As expected!’

Inwardly cheering, Hyang offered Jang Yeong-sil a seat.

“Let’s discuss this in detail!”

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[b] **Bold** [/b] of you to assume I have a plan.

Deathbringer, emphasis on [i] *death* [/i].

I'm totally [s] ~~crossed out~~ [/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li] bullets [/li].

[img] <https://www.agine.this> [/img]

[link] <http://topwebfiction.com> [/link].

[link=https://www.n.ot] [clickbait](https://www.n.ot) [/link].

[quote] ... me like my landlord! [/quote]

[spoiler] Spanish Inquisition! [/spoiler]

[ins] Insert [/ins] more bad puns!

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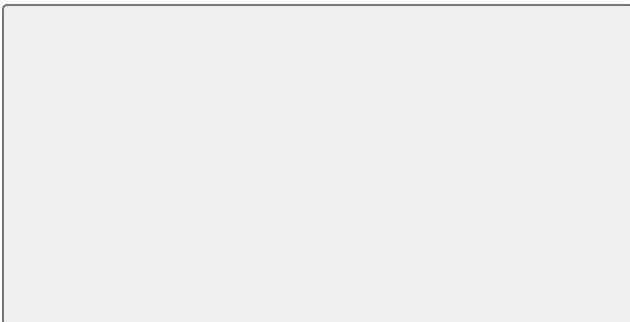
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Chapter 301 - 400

BCJ Chapter 387

He, Jang Yeong-sil

by *BlossomTL*Black Corporation: Joseon

The next morning.

A new notice was posted on the bulletin board.

“Another Challenge Record entry? They’ve been frequent lately.”

“What is it? What is it?”

“Hey, move your head out of the way!”

Researchers and craftsmen gathered in droves to read the contents of the new notice posted on the bulletin board.

The first thing the researchers and craftsmen checked was the grade of the entry. Checking the grade first had become a habit for everyone since the Challenge Record was established.

And the eyes of those who confirmed the grade all widened.

“Huh?”

“What kind of grade...”

The newly posted notice had two grades applied simultaneously.

Grade: Lone Army's Struggle – Lower, Moving Mountains – Upper.

It was a simultaneous assignment of two extreme grades.

Surprised by this unexpected grade assignment, people examined the content more closely.

- New Challenge Record Entry Notice.

Date: 17th day of the 3rd month, Year of Gyechuk (1433).

Proposer: Jang Yeong-sil

Content: Create a propulsion device for ships by applying the shape of a windmill.

Grade: Lone Army's Struggle – Lower, Moving Mountains – Upper

“Ah!”

“Oh no!”

“To think we didn't come up with this, what fools we are!”

The researchers and craftsmen of the team tasked with developing the propulsion device read the content and blamed themselves, slapping their foreheads.

Windmills were not unfamiliar to Joseon people. It was one of the toys that every boy had played with.

Called “pallanggaebi,” “doreurami,” or “hoehoi-a” depending on the region, windmills were toys that had been passed down since before Joseon. Initially, they had a strong magical character – typically attached to rice sheaves with five grains on the first full moon – wishing for a good harvest, but later became children's toys.

They blamed themselves for looking for answers in strange places despite having such an object that accompanied their childhood.

After this period of self-reproach, the researchers and craftsmen all had the same question.

“But why did it receive two extreme grades simultaneously?”

Unable to come up with a suitable answer no matter how much they thought about it, the researchers discussed with their colleagues.

“Do you know why it received such grades?”

“I’m not sure. Do you have any idea?”

“Should we ask His Highness?”

When one researcher mentioned Hyang, other researchers simultaneously replied.

“Would he answer?”

To the researchers and craftsmen of the research institute, Hyang was a ‘good but demanding boss’.

When they failed in their assigned tasks or missed deadlines, Hyang carefully examined the reasons. If it wasn’t due to the negligence or carelessness of those in charge, and if there were no human casualties, Hyang rarely punished them.

Instead, what Hyang wanted from those in charge was a clear lesson learned.

While Hyang seemed like a good boss in this regard, he was demanding in other areas.

There were two areas where Hyang was particularly fussy.

One was the budget, and the other was immediately asking questions about assigned tasks without even trying to figure things out.

‘Pondering why such a grade was assigned is the first step towards success.’

Because Hyang had said this, researchers had to rack their brains from the very beginning on the question of ‘why this grade?’

“His Highness always wants us to do our best.”

“Isn’t that because he trusts us so much?”

Although they had to struggle considerably from the start, the researchers believed that all of this was for their own good and did their best.

However, this was only half the truth.

“For development to continue across generations, we need to thoroughly digest and move forward.”

While one reason was the belief that what the researchers and craftsmen had learned needed to be properly digested to be passed on to the next generation, other aspects were due to Hyang’s selfishness and limitations.

“Are they trying to just piggyback? Even in group projects, you’d get cursed at for that. Is this deeply rooted piggybacking? And...”

Hyang examined the reports with a troubled face.

“I was the kind of geek who would make things first and think later, not good at using my head like this... If I was good at this, I would have gone into science, not liberal arts, right? Why was I said to have a 19th-century inventor style?”

The assessment of the doctor who consulted with Hyang in the 21st century was as follows:

‘An inventor type like Leonardo da Vinci, not a theorist type like Kepler or Einstein.’

‘Not good at advanced mathematics.’

Having reached his limit due to this limitation, Hyang gave up explaining under the pretext that ‘they need to find the answer on their own to make it their own’.

Anyway, since asking Hyang wouldn’t yield an answer, the researchers immediately began their research.

And as soon as they started researching, they could understand why it received two grades simultaneously.

Since the content already stated ‘model it after the shape of a windmill’, shaping it was very easy.

The researchers made rapid progress while making windmills using paper, bamboo, and reeds.

“As expected, four blades receive the wind better than two. Then wouldn’t four blades be better for the propeller as well?”

“That seems right.”

“Ah! Have you ever competed in flying windmills?”

“Yes, I have.”

“Then wouldn’t it be better to make the shape of the blades similar to windmills used for high-flying competitions?”

“Oh! That’s a great idea!”

Other researchers agreed enthusiastically at one researcher’s suggestion.

There were two ways to compete with windmills.

One was to run to a designated place or stand in place facing the wind and compete to see whose windmill spun better.

The other was to carve bamboo into wing shapes, connect them to a shaft, rub them between both hands, and compete to see whose flew higher.

Progress was rapid because they had memories of windmills, a toy that both noble children and commoner or slave children had played with familiarly in their childhood.

“At this rate, we’ll have results soon, right?”

“That’s right. Indeed, Lone Army’s Struggle – Lower grade.”

While the researchers were optimistic about the results, it wasn’t long before they understood why it had received the “Moving Mountains – Upper” grade.

The first thing that blocked their progress was finding the ‘optimal blade angle’.

“Simply put, these tilted blades push the water... so the angle should be...”

While researching to find the optimal angle, another variable emerged.

‘Even with the same angle, the efficiency changes when the shape and size of the blades change.’

“Damn it! Let’s give it a try, shall we!”

As variables appeared sneakily to trip them up, the researchers and craftsmen cursed, rolled up their sleeves, and threw themselves into design and experimentation.

The researchers and craftsmen carved wooden boards in various ways to create dozens of types of screw propellers.

They made versions where the shaft connection part and blades were made separately and combined, versions where the connection part and blades were carved as one piece, versions with narrow and wide blade widths, and

versions with varying numbers of blades such as 4, 6, and 8 blades, among others.

Before long, the workshop and warehouse of the Development Department were filled with so many wooden screw propellers that it was difficult to count them.

Amidst all these trials and errors, another variable tripped them up.

It was vibration.

In one corner of the Development Department's laboratory was a spring mechanism made by Jang Yeong-sil. The researchers investigated the performance by attaching screw propellers to the shaft connected to the spring mechanism.

Wiiing!

As the screw propeller connected to the spring mechanism began to rotate at high speed, the power shaft started to vibrate slightly up and down.

“Huh? Why is the shaft shaking? Hey, everyone!”

A sharp-eyed researcher noticed the anomaly and called his colleagues.

The colleagues also confirmed the vibration, but here the researchers made a fatal mistake.

“Isn't it vibration caused by the spring unwinding? We had something similar with the water wheel before, remember?”

“Is that so?”

“Let's quickly attach it to a ship and experiment.”

And so, a model ship equipped with the 8-blade screw propeller that had shown the best efficiency was floated in the water tank.

“Start!”

As the experiment using the model ship began, the researchers' faces turned pale.

“Why is the ship doing that!”

The ship began to shake back and forth, unable to move straight, and started moving diagonally while tilting to one side.

“Stop! Stop!”

The researchers urgently stopped the experiment and thoroughly examined the ship to find the cause, but they couldn't easily find the reason.

“We have no choice. Let's stop here for now and write up a report to submit.”

Hyang, upon receiving the report, had to forcibly restrain himself from speaking.

‘The ship's crooked movement is clearly due to torque, and the vibration problem... Could it be because they made an even number of blades? As far as I know, ship propellers always had an odd number of blades, right?’

In fact, large ships use two screw propellers to prevent the ship from deviating from its straight course due to the reactive torque pair (Heeling torque/moment) acting between the ship and the propeller.

And ship propellers are made with an odd number of blades. The reason is that with an even number, resonance frequencies occur as many times as the number of factors, but with an odd number, only one resonance frequency occurs, creating various problems including vibration.

‘That's why even in the 21st century, all sorts of cutting-edge technology was mobilized just to make that seemingly simple screw propeller, and in extreme cases, Japan even took a hit, right?’

During the Cold War era, Japan's Toshiba violated COCOM (Coordinating Committee for Multilateral Export Controls) contracts and exported ultra-precision large machine tools to the Soviet Union. As a result, NATO countries, including the United States, began to have trouble tracking Soviet submarines.

Upon discovering that Toshiba was the culprit, the United States immediately imposed an export ban on Toshiba, and from this point, the decline of Japanese electronic products and semiconductors began.

This happened long before Hyang was born, but Hyang remembered it because when Japan excluded Korea from its whitelist and imposed trade sanctions, the internet mentioned this incident, saying, "The Japanese make even bigger mistakes!"

Therefore, Hyang had to forcibly restrain his itching mouth.

'This is something they need to ingrain in their bodies through trial and error! Only then will they be able to use it better in the future!'

Issues like torque and resonance were applicable in various fields, so it was essential to understand them before moving on.

While they were pondering over this intractable problem, another variable tripped up the developers.

This time, it was the issue of the material used to make the screw propeller.

In the course of repeated experiments, the wooden screw propellers broke faster than expected.

"Wood won't do! Let's try other materials!"

And so, screw propellers were made of iron and copper.

Due to manufacturing technology issues, the prototypes made were quite large, and as a result, Jang Yeong-sil had to make a model ship 1/10 the size

of an actual ship.

The model ship, made larger and even equipped with a small steam engine, was experimented with on the Han River, and similarly failed.

In addition to the basic problems of vibration and deviation, this time the blades of the screw propeller were also deformed.

Finally, the researchers could understand why this task was graded “Moving Mountains – Upper”.

While the researchers were struggling like this, Jang Yeong-sil again sought out Hyang.

“Your Highness, I have an idea.”

“Let’s hear it right away!”

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BBCodes

Bold of you to assume I have a plan.

Deathbringer, emphasis on *death*.

I'm totally ~~crossed-out~~ by this.

- Listless I'm counting my bullets.



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... me like my landlord!

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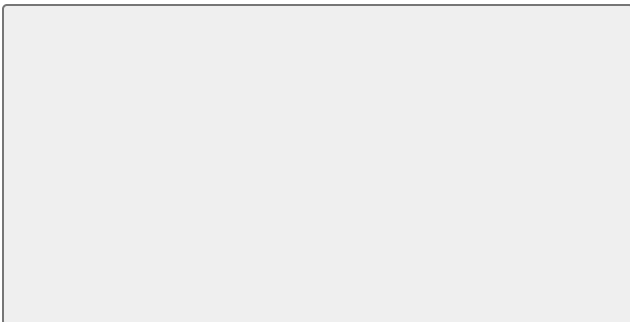
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Chapter 301 - 400

BCJ Chapter 388

He, Jang Yeong-sil

by *BlossomTL*Black Corporation: Joseon

At Hyang's command, Jang Yeong-sil opened the bag he had brought and took out two fist-sized objects.

“What are these?”

Seeing the objects Jang Yeong-sil had produced, Hyang inwardly exclaimed.

‘Archimedes’ screw?’

Meanwhile, Jang Yeong-sil began to explain.

“As you can see, this is a modified version of the drill used for digging wells. Since the way the windmill-type propeller pushes water is similar to how a drill bores into the ground, I thought it might work with a few adjustments, so I made this.”

“That’s true, but...”

‘Is this really something that can be done with just a few adjustments?’

Hiding the doubt creeping into his mind, Hyang nodded.

Seeing that Hyang seemed to understand properly, Jang Yeong-sil waved his outstretched hand and continued his explanation.

“As you can see, waving your hand in the air meets little resistance, but it takes much more force to move like this in water. Therefore, I thought that the problems with the windmill-type propellers we’ve been making were due to water offering more resistance than air. So I modified the drill. Since it digs into ground, which is even harder than water, I expected that using its shape and material would not cause the same problems as the propellers.”

As Jang Yeong-sil explained, Hyang kept nodding, but inwardly he was repeatedly exclaiming in admiration.

‘Even though starting from zero base allows for maximum imagination, does it really work out like this? Is such an idea even possible?’

While inwardly he was astounded by this situation that surpassed imagination, outwardly Hyang maintained a calm expression.

Hyang asked Jang Yeong-sil in a composed voice.

“Based on the explanation I’ve just heard, it seems very useful. However, considering our past experiences, no device has only advantages. What do you think are the disadvantages of this device?”

‘If this had only advantages, wouldn’t screw propellers have become the mainstream?’

Hyang’s thoughts contained a small error.

Even in the 21st century, research on ship propulsion devices similar to what Jang Yeong-sil had conceived was steadily being conducted by a minority of inventors.

To Hyang’s question, Jang Yeong-sil immediately affirmed.

“Your Highness is correct. This spiral propeller, ah, that’s the name I’ve arbitrarily given it. If we compare this spiral propeller with the windmill propeller, the windmill propeller takes up less space.”

“In other words, you’re saying that installing the spiral propeller would require more space, right?”

“That’s correct. I’ve tried to reduce the spacing between the spirals and deepened the grooves, but it still takes up more space front to back than the windmill. Additionally, there will be changes in the center of gravity due to the propeller’s weight, and design modifications will be necessary. So, I’ve pondered a bit more...”

Pausing briefly, Jang Yeong-sil rummaged through his bag and pulled out a paper, spreading it on Hyang’s desk.

“As you can see, the idea is to connect a long pipe from the bow to the stern of the ship and install the spiral propeller inside. This way, we won’t need to greatly alter the design. Also, by positioning the propeller to match the center of gravity, we can actually improve the ship’s stability.”

As Hyang examined the concept drawing while listening to Jang Yeong-sil’s explanation, he could only open and close his mouth.

‘I, I know this! I’ve seen something similar! This is a water jet!’

Once again confronted with something unexpected, Hyang was unable to recover from the shock for a while.

“Your Highness? What do you think?”

Recovering from the shock at Jang Yeong-sil’s question, Hyang once again seriously examined the concept drawing.

“How did you come up with this idea?”

“I started thinking about it while working on improving the bellows used in ironworks and workshops.”

“Hmm...”

‘How does one’s train of thought have to flow for these things to connect and produce something like this?’

Shaking his head slightly, Hyang examined the concept drawing again.

After scrutinizing the drawing so intently it might have burned a hole in the paper, Hyang shook his head.

“There’s a big problem. Right here.”

Hyang pointed to the bow and continued.

“Sucking in water from the bow is a good idea in some ways. However, if the waves become even slightly rough, the ship will shake severely. When that happens, this bow won’t be able to suck in water properly, and then...”

“Ah! The propeller won’t function properly. Hmm...”

Immediately recognizing the problem Hyang pointed out, Jang Yeong-sil glared at the blueprint and then took out his golden brush to modify the design on the spot.

“If we suck in water from the bottom at the center of the hull like this, wouldn’t that solve the problem?”

“There’s another issue. Current warships are made of wood. Installing mechanisms of this scale would require a complete structural redesign. It’s not simple.”

“Ah...”

Realizing the problem with Hyang’s explanation, Jang Yeong-sil’s face fell. Glaring at his creation in search of an answer, Jang Yeong-sil looked at Hyang.

“It seems that iron ships are indeed the only answer.”

“Iron ships would be the best solution to properly install and operate the mechanism you’ve conceived.”

“Ah...”

At Hyang's response, Jang Yeong-sil muttered with a dejected face.

“Iron ships are still far off... Should I just put these away then?”

At Jang Yeong-sil's muttering, Hyang suddenly shouted.

“Whatever it is, bring it out right now!”

“Pardon? These are just conceptual ideas, and they're impossible before the ones we've just submitted are completed...”

“Bring them out!”

At Hyang's firm response, Jang Yeong-sil rummaged through his bag and pulled out other papers. Spreading the first paper, Jang Yeong-sil began to explain, pointing at the drawing with his finger.

“I learned this while actually making and experimenting with the designs sent from the Development Department, but the more blades we attached, the better performance we got even with a smaller size. So...”

Jang Yeong-sil spread out the second paper and continued his explanation.

“I combined this multi-blade windmill with the tubular propulsion from earlier.”

“Oh my~”

Seeing the second paper, Hyang let out a long breath.

‘It really is a water jet...’

“Phew~ What's on the other paper?”

At Hyang's question, Jang Yeong-sil brought up the paper that had been at the bottom.

“When I experimented by combining the tube and multi-blade windmill, I found that overlapping the multi-blade windmills produced even better

performance.”

“If that’s the case, wouldn’t increasing the size of the windmill be good too?”

“Of course, that could be one answer, but when there are space constraints, I think overlapping like this is better. Of course, when there’s ample space, increasing the diameter and overlapping would be even better, but...”

“Haa~”

At Jang Yeong-sil’s explanation, Hyang let out a long sigh that could have been either admiration or lamentation.

‘After all this, now even a turbine pops up? Well, it’s not strange to go from a water jet to a turbine... What era is this anyway? Why are there so many extraordinary people, starting with Father?’

Shaking his head at the situation where monsters like Sejong, Yi Soonji, Kim Dam, Jang Yeong-sil, and others were popping up from all directions, Hyang soon positively summarized the situation.

‘Well, isn’t this good for me? Isn’t this the best possible situation? I have strong backing pushing me. If I’m reasonably careful, I don’t have to worry about the budget. And I have someone who will make whatever I think of. Isn’t this the best?’

With his face brightening, Hyang looked at Jang Yeong-sil.

“I’ll add everything to the Challenge Record except for the spiral propeller. You know the reason, right?”

At Hyang’s words, Jang Yeong-sil immediately nodded.

“It’s because of the material issue, isn’t it? The same problem as with the windmill-type propeller.”

“That’s right. So, I’ll add the screw-type propeller to the Response Record, and the rest to the Challenge Record.”

“Yes. I understand. I’m truly moved to tears that you value so highly the thoughts of this humble person who has no talent other than working with metal.”

Jang Yeong-sil was sincere as he expressed his gratitude with a voice full of emotion.

Before being selected by Taejong and entering the palace, he had been nothing more than a government slave. After that, his life, which would have ended with just being grateful for being freed from slavery, blossomed after meeting Sejong and Hyang.

“I look forward to Director Jang’s abilities in the future as well.”

“Yes! I will do my best!”

After sending Jang Yeong-sil out, Hyang looked at the papers and let out a long sigh.

“Phew~ This isn’t development, it’s almost at the level of warping...”

Suddenly stopping, Hyang muttered, looking in the direction Jang Yeong-sil had left.

“That man, could he be an alien?”

In the 21st century, when a romance drama about an alien crash-landing in Joseon became a hit, some people had strange imaginings.

‘If there really was an alien who crash-landed on the Korean peninsula like that, who would be the most likely candidate?’

Various figures were considered, but one of those who received the most votes was Jang Yeong-sil.

The reasons were that his birth and death dates were unclear in the records, he had no children, and his whereabouts after being dismissed from office

were unknown.

It was just a silly waste of time, but Hyang suddenly became suspicious.

“If he’s not an alien, this is too much even for him, right? Even for someone extraordinary.”

Hyang didn’t know what kind of evaluation he would receive in the future.

The screw-type propeller and various other proposals submitted by Jang Yeong-sil were immediately organized into documents and posted on the bulletin board.

“Huh? A Response Record entry has come out?”

“Response Record? In which field?”

As new notices were posted on the bulletin board, researchers and craftsmen gathered again.

Especially upon hearing rumors of an entry in the Response Record, the researchers and craftsmen read the contents carefully with intense curiosity.

“An initial solution for propellers?”

The researchers and craftsmen who had been pondering over the windmill-type propeller were excited to hear that a first answer had come out and clung to the bulletin board.

“Ah...”

“This method!”

The Development Department researchers who saw the screw-type propeller proposed by Jang Yeong-sil let out a long sigh.

“What’s this now? Both a response and a challenge?”

“Huh?”

“Is this also Director Jang?”

Reading the posts about ‘tubular propellers, multi-blade propellers, multi-layer multi-blade propellers, and tubular multi-layer multi-blade propellers’, the researchers and craftsmen were busy nodding and expressing admiration.

“Ah! This method...”

“If we continue our current research a bit more, it seems like we might see the answer.”

“By the way, how can Director Jang come up with ideas like this?”

Amidst the mixture of admiration and envy for Jang Yeong-sil, one person cried out mournfully.

“Ah! Why did heaven create me and Director Jang!”

“What are you saying?”

Faced with the incredulous reactions of those around him, the person who had spoken put on an embarrassed face and raised his voice.

“It’s a joke, a joke! Can’t I make a joke?”

After such commotion passed, the executives of the Development Department said to their subordinates.

“Come on! Let’s go back and get to work quickly. How long are we going to chase Director Jang’s shadow! Shouldn’t we try to get our names in the Challenge Record and Response Record too?”

“Yes! That’s right!”

Thus, the tradition of the Challenge Record and Response Record created by Hyang continued.

Even after hundreds of years, self-maintained Challenge Records existed in mathematics and engineering schools and graduate schools – universities and graduate schools – across the country. The faculty and research staff of these schools were required to submit research or development projects worthy of being registered in the Challenge Record at least once every two years.

And among these emerging challenge projects, those judged to be of high value were registered in the National Challenge Record directly managed by the government and received intensive support.

As this tradition continued, Korea was always able to stay at least half a step ahead in global technology and science competitions.

Because of this, the governments of other countries always growled at the Korean government.

“Korea must disclose the Challenge Record!”

“We’re not hiding anything, what are you talking about? We broadcast without fail whenever new things are registered in the National Challenge Record, don’t we?”

At the Korean government’s response, other countries snorted.

“Hmph! We’re not talking about that, show us the original Challenge Record! The Challenge Record created during the Great Leap Era!”

“Why do you want to see something from hundreds of years ago? Don’t you know how much science and technology have advanced since then?”

“Hmph! Who do you think you’re fooling? We have ears too! We’ve heard that the original Challenge Record is full of things that still haven’t been solved! Release it now!”

“Go ahead. If you’re confident you’ll be fine after ripping open your stomach, go ahead and try. How many countries have bled trying to do that?”

“Grrr!”

Every time the Korean government responded, the governments of other countries had to grind their teeth. And the Korean government launched a large-scale internal investigation.

“Which loose-lipped idiot blabbed about this?”

The ‘original Challenge Record’ created during the Great Leap Era was treated on the same level as the ‘Holy Grail’ or the ‘Ark of the Covenant’.

The early members who worked at the research institute and Area 51 created by Hyang used their imagination to the fullest to solve situations equivalent to starting from scratch. When Hyang’s MSG was added to these people’s imagination, the original Challenge Record contained tremendous challenge projects – which even Hyang evaluated as SF, or even magic.

Eventually, it was natural that intense espionage and criminal attempts occurred over this original Challenge Record.

Amidst this invisible bloody struggle, the original Challenge Record was accompanied by the following saying:

‘The original Challenge Record is stained with the blood of researchers and craftsmen who vomited blood, and the blood of secret agents who died protecting the Challenge Record.’

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-

BBCodes

[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.
Deathbringer, emphasis on [i]*death*[/i].
I'm totally [s]~~crossed out~~[/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

[img]https://www.agine.this[/img]
[link]http://topwebfiction.com[/link].
[link=https://www.n.ot]clickbait[/link].

[quote]... me like my landlord! [/quote]

[spoiler]Spanish Inquisition! [/spoiler]
[ins]Insert[/ins] more bad puns!
[del]~~Delete~~[/del] your browser history!

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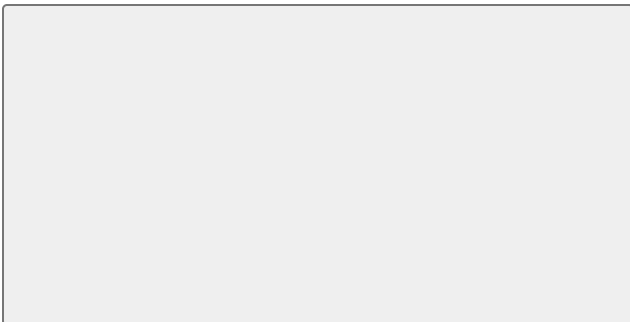
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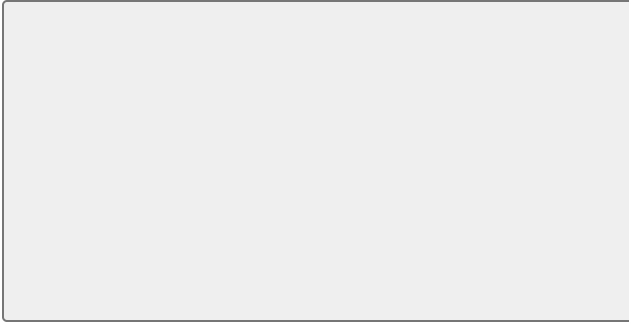
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Chapter 301 - 400

BCJ Chapter 389

Small Changes

by *BlossomTL*Black Corporation: Joseon

June, 15th year of King Sejong's reign (1433, Year of Gyechuk).

At the threshold of summer, new notices were posted on bulletin boards in government offices across Joseon.

“Huh? A new official document?”

“I hope it's about a discount event at the government monopoly store...”

“That would be nice! It's been quiet lately, hasn't it?”

As people gathered in front of the bulletin board, exchanging half-joking, half-serious conversations, they began to read the official document.

“Let's see... Uh... ‘Notice of Civil Service Examination System Reform’? Looks like they're changing the examination system?”

“Ah! This has nothing to do with me.”

“That's right. I wish they'd have a discount event at the government monopoly store instead.”

Most of the commoners lost interest after checking the title and left. However, there were quite a few who remained, staring intently at the bulletin board.

Most of those focusing on the bulletin board were nobles and a few women.

“They’re changing it again?”

“It’s been about 10 years since the last change, so isn’t it about time?”

The reactions of the nobles reading the bulletin board’s contents were cynical.

On the contrary, there were also those who were indignant.

“Sigh... If education is a hundred-year plan, the civil service examination should be a five-hundred-year plan...”

“This isn’t just changing morning and evening...”

Among those discussing, apart from those showing cynical reactions, the faces of other nobles were full of desperation.

‘There’s not much time left!’

This was because in as little as two years, or at most three years, children who had finished their education at public schools and middle schools would emerge as new competitors.

As mentioned before, the nobles of Joseon – more precisely, the civil service nobles – were desperately seeking a way out at a crossroads.

Due to the Gapsin Coup, a large number of nobles were purged, reducing the number of local nobles and greatly diminishing their influence on society.

These local nobles, whose numbers and influence had significantly shrunk, were divided into three main groups.

The first was the ‘local strongmen obsessed with the civil service examination’.

Although their economic power had decreased due to the disappearance of tax exemption benefits that had been in place since the founding of Joseon and the damned system of progressive taxation, the vast amount of land they owned still guaranteed them a comfortable life.

Based on this land, they were transforming into the most radical fundamentalist conservative forces.

These were the ones showing cynical reactions to the official document.

The second group was those actively trying to participate in public office.

These were people who were economically less well-off than the first group and had chosen public service as a means of survival.

However, as mentioned before, even though the court and King Sejong were struggling with a shortage of personnel, they were still picky about selecting talented individuals, so these people had to make desperate efforts.

To enter public service, they did their best not only to take the civil service examination but also to submit petitions.

The third group was those who had chosen a ‘new path’.

These were people who, seeing the explosive growth of commerce and industry as reforms progressed, were diving into becoming capitalists or managers.

Those reading the official document with desperate faces let out deep sighs.

“Haa~ To think that even women would be allowed to take the exam...”

“I thought it would take at least a few more years...”

Their eyes were fixed on the ‘Eligibility Requirements’.

Eligibility Requirements – Commoner men and women with education level of public school or middle school or higher.

-Addendum A

Those who have not completed public school or middle school are allowed to take the exam only if they receive certification through a qualification test that will be implemented soon.

-Addendum B

The application of Addendum A is deferred for the next two years.

This item made the nobles reading the notice realize even more that they were ‘running out of time’.

‘We must pass the exam within the next two years!’

With eyes full of urgency and desperation, the nobles continued to read the next item.

Examination Procedure.

-First Round

Written test on the Four Books and Five Classics.

A total of 30 multiple-choice questions.

Must answer at least 25 out of 30 questions correctly to pass.

Mathematics test.

20 multiple-choice questions.

Must answer at least 17 out of 20 questions correctly to pass.

-Second Round

For those who passed the first round.

Choose one of three topics presented by the examiners and write an essay.

Those who pass both the first and second rounds will receive the 9th rank.

Assignment of work locations.

Application of the rule to avoid assigning to one's home region.

- *Addendum A.*

Applied equally to both men and women.

- *Addendum B.*

Additional points for those who volunteer for outer regions such as the northern regions and Daesuldo.

- *Addendum C.*

For those volunteering for outer regions, priority is given to those skilled in horseback riding or archery.

“Huh?”

Those who saw the last addendum about work location assignments all tilted their heads.

“Wasn't this supposed to be for the civil service exam?”

As they tilted their heads, some who had heard related rumors nodded.

“I heard working in the outer regions was tough...”

Among those reading the notice were a small number of women.

“I’ve finished reading. Let’s go.”

As a woman wearing a veil turned after reading the bulletin board, her maid hurriedly followed and asked.

“Young lady, are you really going to take the civil service exam?”

“Isn’t that why we came to the government office in broad daylight?”

According to Joseon law, women of the nobles or merchant class, who were not commoners, were not allowed to go out freely during the day.

However, due to livelihood issues including farming, there was some flexibility in the current situation.

“Once women start entering public service, the curfew law will probably change too.”

“Is the current law the problem? I’m worried that the master will immediately issue a stern rebuke.”

At the maid’s whining, the woman smiled slightly and replied.

“Gannan-a. The world is changing.”

“A daughter of a noble family wandering the streets in broad daylight! Are you really in your right mind?”

Officer Ahn, known as the wealthiest man in Pyeongtaek County, shouted loudly while standing on the main floor.

In response to Officer Ahn’s scolding, his eldest daughter Munhye, who had taken off her veil, answered confidently.

“I went to the government office because I heard a notice about the upcoming civil service examination had been posted.”

“As a mere woman, do you really intend to take the civil service exam? Huh! How preposterous!”

Unlike Officer Ahn, who kept repeating how preposterous it was, Munhye continued to assert her intentions in a still confident voice.

“Father. The world has been changing since His Majesty implemented the reforms.”

“Even if the world changes, there are principles that must be upheld!”

“Father, even the princesses, the precious daughters of His Majesty, are learning medicine and studying mathematics to work as officials. How can there be a distinction between men and women in using what one has learned to benefit the country?”

“Aish!”

Faced with Munhye’s articulate response, Officer Ahn, at a loss for words, turned away in irritation.

After ending this round of verbal sparring, Munhye let out a long sigh as soon as she entered her room.

“Phew~ Thanks to the princesses moving first, we can breathe a little easier.”

As the princesses who moved first showed decent results, it gradually became easier for women to enter society.

Of course, in most farming households and lower classes, women were actively engaged in outside activities. However, this was a desperate struggle for survival, and in Joseon society, it was impossible for the middle class and above.

Therefore, allowing women to take the civil service examination from this year was truly revolutionary.

Munhye, who had sat down and opened a mathematics book, suddenly stood up.

“Didn’t they say there were additional points for volunteering for outer regions? And to go to outer regions, one needs to be skilled in horseback riding or archery...”

After briefly recalling her memory, Munhye took down the quiver hanging on one side and strung the bow that had been untied.

“Gannan-a! Let’s go to the archery field! Get ready!”

“Yes, young lady!”

While the maid busily prepared some snacks, Munhye, who had readied her quiver and bow, muttered softly.

“If I’m going to enter public service anyway, shouldn’t I aim to become at least a senior official?”

“Oh my!”

Munhye was dumbfounded when she arrived at the archery field. There were more women than usual drawing bows.

And among them, a considerable number were girls around her age.

“These girls... What one does, others follow...”

Munhye seemed to understand why the girls had come to the archery field.

It was certain that they had come with thoughts similar to Munhye’s.

As she observed the girls earnestly drawing their bowstrings, Munhye took a position next to one girl. She was the daughter of a family that was in competition with her own.

“What brings you to the archery field when you’ve barely started reading the Four Books?”

At Munhye’s words, the girl smirked and replied.

“What about you? I heard you haven’t even finished the Zhou Bi Suan Jing properly? Ah! That’s why you’re here? Right. With your math skills, you can’t even dream of the Ministry of Finance or General Affairs, so it’s fitting for you to be running around in the Ministry of Land and Infrastructure. If you don’t want to fall victim to tigers while running around in dangerous areas, you should properly learn archery.”

“Hey!”

“What!”

In an instant, the two girls grabbed each other’s hair and started fighting.

That evening, the mothers of both girls were lying down with their foreheads wrapped.

“What sin did I commit in my previous life...”

On the other hand, the fathers of the two girls made a different decision from their mothers.

“Fine! I’ll support you as much as you want.”

“Thank you!”

“But there’s a condition! You must pass the exam. If that damned family’s daughter passes and you fail? I’ll either marry you off immediately or shave your head and send you off to be a Buddhist nun!”

Hearing their fathers’ stern orders, the girls answered while breaking out in a cold sweat.

“I will definitely pass the exam!”

The number of women aiming for the civil service examination was larger than expected.

The reactions of their parents or husbands to this were largely of two types.

One was active support, and the other was active opposition.

Additionally, stimulated by the unsettling movement of women, men preparing for the exam also began to prepare more intensely.

However, there was something unexpected: the number of petitions opposing women's entry into public service was less than anticipated.

“Crown Prince, what do you think is the reason?”

To King Sejong's question, Hyang immediately answered.

“Isn't there already a precedent?”

“Precedent?”

After mulling over Hyang's words for a moment, King Sejong immediately nodded.

“I see, there are already quite a few women who have entered public service as teachers in public schools and middle schools. Hmm... Ministers, listen.”

At King Sejong's words, the ministers immediately bowed their heads and responded.

“Although it's difficult to predict the exact number now, it's certain that the number of women entering public service will not be small, so re-examine the measures related to this.”

“We receive your command!”

Following King Sejong's order, the ministers re-examined the relevant policies.

-Ensure thorough provision of government housing for those who have entered public service but are from humble backgrounds and unable to prepare their own housing.

-In cases where both husband and wife enter public service simultaneously, the issue of assignment location shall be handled as follows:

- 1. Both husband and wife shall be assigned to the same location.**
- 2. The assignment location shall be based on the location of the spouse with the higher rank.**

-Prepare dormitories for those who are still unmarried. However, as men and women should be separate, accommodate them in separate dormitories.

As Hyang checked these alternatives, he saw the part about dormitories and gave a wry smile.

“The country feeds them, houses them, clothes them, pays them, and works them to death... Isn't this just the military?”

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BBCodes

[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.

Deathbringer, emphasis on [i]death[/i].

I'm totally [s]~~crossed-out~~[/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

[img]https://www.agine.this[/img]

[link]http://topwebfiction.com[/link].

[link=https://www.n.ot]clickbait[/link].

[quote]... me like my landlord![/quote]

[spoiler]Spanish Inquisition![/spoiler]

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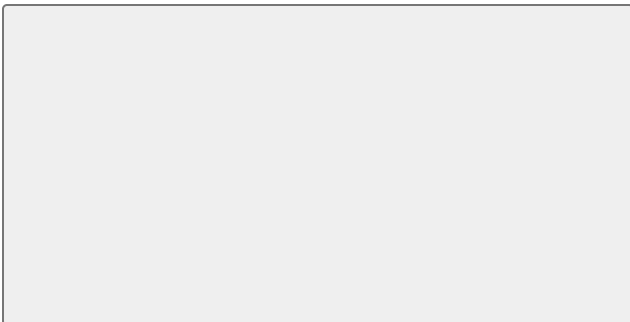
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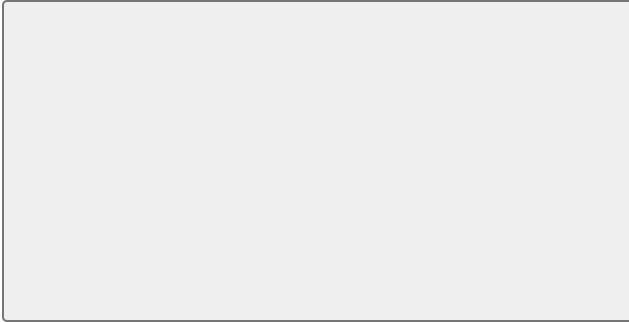
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Chapter 301 - 400

BCJ Chapter 390

Small Changes

by *BlossomTL*Black Corporation: Joseon

As July arrived, a significant change occurred in Hanseong.

The housing complex for officials who had been without homes was finally completed.

This housing complex for homeless officials was constructed outside the city walls of Hanseong, between Sungnyemun (崇禮門, South Gate) and Donuimun (敦義門, West Gate).

Building this housing complex took a considerable amount of time.

One of the reasons it consumed so much time was the installation of railway tracks for the officials residing in this complex.

Since passing through the existing Sungnyemun would interfere with regular traffic, the court had to reconstruct the southern wall of Hanseong.

Two railway tracks were laid through an arch-shaped hole made in the wall.

Of course, since a large hole was made in the intact wall, measures were taken to reinforce the compromised defense.

First, sliding iron doors were installed on both sides of the hole. If enemies were to reach Hanseong, these iron doors would be closed, and thick, heavy steel bars would be put in place.

Additionally, on the inside of the wall's iron door, a locomotive without passenger cars would be tightly placed as an additional measure.

With these railway tracks in place, it became more convenient for officials living in the housing complex to commute to and from work.

The second reason for the delay in the housing complex's construction was the time taken to build a proper water and sewage system throughout the complex.

To be precise, it was a process that consumed both time and resources significantly.

“Is this work absolutely necessary?” Kim Jeom, the Minister of Finance, asked with eyes full of doubt.

Hyang immediately nodded. “It is absolutely necessary.”

“Ah... The cost...”

“Your Excellency, think about it. Which would cost more? The expenses incurred if all the officials fall ill from drinking contaminated water, or the costs we're facing now?”

At Hyang's question, Kim Jeom stamped his seal on the approval document without further argument.

Thus, a proper water and sewage system was established in this housing complex.

To properly utilize this newly constructed water and sewage system, the first standing kitchens in Joseon were built in the houses of this complex. Next to the sink was a small pump-style water pump.

Now, women doing kitchen work in these houses could use water comfortably regardless of weather or season.

As soon as these infrastructure facilities were completed, the construction of houses began.

These newly constructed houses were equipped with ondol heating systems using the newly popularized *ongul* method.

“The ondol is good, but...”

Hyang was lost in thought over the heating method to be applied to the housing complex.

Winters on the Korean peninsula were cold in both the 15th and 21st centuries. Unlike the 21st century, where various insulation materials and thermal insulators were abundant, the 15th century Joseon winters were even colder, with cotton wool being the only insulation material available. Not only that, but the much cleaner air in Joseon compared to the 21st century made winters even colder.

“Dammit, without that fine dust insulation...”

Having experienced the harsh cold of winter, Hyang wanted to advocate for the widespread use of ondol, but for a while, he couldn't make that argument.

It was because of the fuel problem.

Before coal was properly supplied, wood was the only fuel for heating and cooking for both the palace and the people.

Because the Joseon court strictly enforced laws to prevent excessive logging for fuel, even the palace had to rely mostly on braziers for heating.

Of course, there were places that used *gudel* (floor heating). These were the places where the Queen and royal concubines of the Inner Court resided,

and where court ladies lived. Naturally, the gudel installed in the court ladies' quarters was unofficial.

The fuel problem in Hanseong and Joseon was resolved when coal began to be mined in earnest.

Even after the fuel problem was solved, Hyang hesitated to promote ondol.

“*Ongul*^[1] is better than *jjokgudel*, but it's not easy to solve the biggest obstacle of this ongul.”

The problem with ondol that tied Hyang's hands was carbon monoxide poisoning, commonly known as ‘briquette gas poisoning’.

“A boiler would be best to block the gas, but...”

However, with Joseon's current technology, the hot water pipes passing through the floor stones were the biggest problem. Because there was no synthetic resin, the pipes had to be made of iron or copper, and these materials had corrosion issues.

“It's like using the CPU cooler method in reverse, but...”

Finally, after racking his brains, Hyang created a large iron heat conduction network similar to a giant grill.

This network was laid on the floor, and the thick iron rods connected to the iron network were wrapped around a large container placed on the firebox.

Then, after filling this container with water and lighting a fire underneath, the heat was transferred to the floor through the iron container.

This method prevented burns or fires caused by overheating of the iron network, and allowed for ample hot water use even in the dead of winter. Also, even after removing the fire, the heated water continued to supply heat for a considerable time.

After renovating the rooms where the Crown Princess, Yangwon, and Yangje resided in the Eastern Palace in this way, Hyang reported to King

Sejong.

After inspecting the warm room and the firebox, Sejong's expression became troubled.

“It certainly looks useful, but the cost is the problem. Iron is not something that common people can afford cheaply, is it?”

“That is true, Your Majesty.”

“Let's think about it a bit more.”

“Yes, Father.”

Having been rejected like this, Hyang gritted his teeth and muttered.

“Ah! I miss plastic!”

However, to prevent excessive deforestation and maintain health during winter, the spread of ondol was essential.

Hyang gathered ondol craftsmen from all over the country to research economical methods of installing ondol.

It wasn't just ondol research.

He also focused on developing affordable fuel for the people based on coal available in Joseon – all types of coal from Gangwon-do, Hamgyeong-do, Daeseol-do, and other regions.

“Of course, the answer to this part is already set...”

The answer Hyang had in mind was briquettes.

As the development of briquettes progressed smoothly, Hyang began developing combustion chambers to maximize the performance of the briquettes.

To develop combustion chambers that allowed smooth inflow of outside air and induced complete combustion by reflecting the heat generated during combustion back to the briquettes, Hyang gathered not only blacksmiths but also potters and worked up a sweat.

And the result was being applied to this newly built housing complex.

As the housing complex was completed, houses were assigned to the officials who were determined to move in.

The smallest house had 3 rooms, and the average had 5 rooms.

“One is the main room, one is the guest room, two are for male and female servants. The last one is for children or elders...”

Hyang shook his head slightly as he counted the room names on his fingers.

“Compared to the 21st century, these are all high-class houses now. Basically five rooms... And even with maid rooms...”

It was a brief farce created by differences in lifestyle and social culture.

The criteria for assigning these houses in the newly built complex were not based solely on rank.

The number of family members living together – excluding servants – was also one of the criteria. Officials with many children or living with parents or grandparents were assigned larger houses regardless of their rank.

Therefore, there were often cases where officials of different ranks were assigned houses of the same grade, or even larger houses.

Another criterion was to ensure that those working in the same department never became neighbors. This was to prevent superiors from privately employing their subordinates.

On the day of housing assignment, officials who had escaped from rented houses shouted “Long live the King!” towards Geunjeongjeon Hall.

“Long live His Majesty! Long live!”

“Long live!”

And then the officials worked like mad.

“No matter what anyone says, I’m definitely resting on the next day off!”

“Of course! I have to go see my house!”

“It’s my house. It’s my house. It’s my house...”

There was even a hint of madness in the eyes of the frantically working officials.

Seeing the dazzlingly rising work efficiency, Kim Jeom stroked his chin beard and pondered.

“It seems we need to expand the housing complex?”

While housing complexes for homeless officials were being built in Hanseong, similar complexes were being constructed in major provincial cities.

As a result, around the same time as in Hanseong, homeless officials in the provinces were also able to move into official residences with their families.

This brought about several positive effects, one of which was a reduction in misconduct among officials.

With officials living together in one area, surveillance became easier, and the families of officials themselves began to be more cautious in their

behavior, mindful of the eyes around them.

As autumn began, the Commoner's School reopened for a new semester.

Especially since Hunminjeongeum, which had been in preparation until now, was becoming an official part of the curriculum from this semester, King Sejong and the court were showing extraordinary interest.

The Hunminjeongeum education that started this way began to show immediate effects.

“The speed at which children are learning Hunminjeongeum is very fast, Your Majesty!”

“The response to the Hunminjeongeum special lectures for adults is also very positive, Your Majesty!”

Satisfied with the positive reports coming from the Education Department and the General Affairs Department, Sejong asked Choi Man-ri, who had rushed in upon being summoned:

“How far has the vernacular translation of the law books progressed?”

“The translation of the law books has recently been completed, and we are now working on translating case precedents, Your Majesty.”

“Good. Listen, Ministers of General Affairs and Justice.”

“We await your command, Your Majesty.”

Nodding slightly, Sejong gave orders to the Ministers of General Affairs and Justice.

“Order the printing office immediately to print large quantities of the translated law books. And have the printed vernacular versions sent to courthouses nationwide for the judges to review.”

“By review, do you mean...?”

“Although those working in the Office of Correct Sounds are highly learned, they are not experts in law, so there may be errors in the translation. Therefore, have them compare with the original Chinese characters to find any errors.”

The two ministers bowed their heads at Sejong’s order.

“We will carry out your orders!”

“And the head of the Office of Correct Sounds, listen.”

“Yes, Your Majesty.”

“Besides translating case precedents, there is much more to be translated, so you must not show even a hint of laziness. Keep this in mind.”

“I will engrave it in my bones and mind, Your Majesty.”

“Remember that the names of those who undertake the translation and those who review it will remain forever. Make sure to convey this.”

“We will carry out your orders, Your Majesty.”

After settling the matters related to Hunminjeongeum, Sejong moved on to the next agenda.

“The state examination will be held soon. Are the preparations going well?”

“Yes, they are progressing smoothly, Your Majesty.”

“I’ll say it again, there must absolutely be no cheating. Make sure to thoroughly instruct the supervisors being dispatched to examination halls across the country about this.”

“We will carry out your orders!”

After ordering to do their best to prevent cheating in the examination halls, Sejong did not forget to add an admonition.

“Joseon has finally entered a period of stability. But remember that this is precisely the time for proper maintenance. Keep in mind that the next few years could determine the course of the next few hundred years.”

The ministers responded in unison to Sejong’s admonition.

“We will engrave it in our bones and minds, Your Majesty!”

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[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.

Deathbringer, emphasis on [i]*death*[/i].

I'm totally [s]~~crossed out~~[/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

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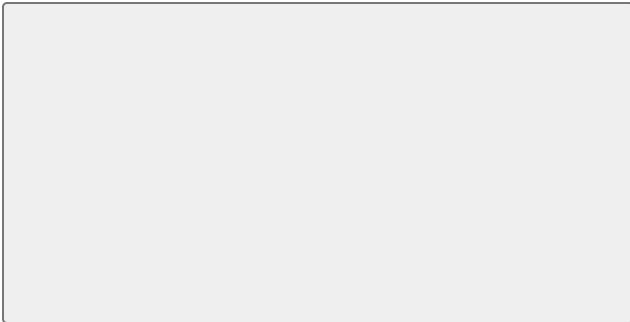
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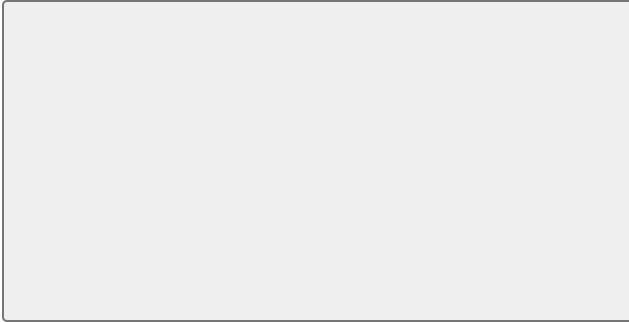
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Chapter 301 - 400

BCJ Chapter 391

Small Changes

by *BlossomTL*Black Corporation: Joseon

September, the 15th year of King Sejong's reign (1433, the year of Gyechuk).

For the first time in a long while, crowds gathered in front of government offices across the country.

Registration had begun for those intending to take the upcoming state examination.

At the government offices in the bu (府), the central cities of each province in Joseon, the General Affairs Department's section chief in charge of the examination was cautioning his subordinates.

"Registration will be open for three days from today. Keep this in mind."

"Yes, sir!"

"Don't do anything stupid like accepting latecomers who come with excuses about tigers blocking the road or whatnot! You've all heard about what happened in Gyeongsang-do last year, right? They accepted such people and got into trouble, ending up dragged to the Records Office. You know they can't leave there for 10 years, right?"

At the mention of the 'Records Office', the officials' faces turned pale. With ashen faces, they shouted loudly.

“Yes, sir!”

“So, handle it well.”

“Yes, sir!”

“Now go out and do your work.”

“Yes, sir!”

The disciplined officials hurriedly went out to the registration area.

Watching the officials heading to the registration area, the section chief let out a long sigh.

“Huu~. Despite giving notice a month in advance, there will surely be troublemakers who come on the fourth day and cause a scene, just like every year...”

A month before the state examination, notices were posted at government offices nationwide, and a three-day registration period was given. However, there were always those who missed the registration period and demanded to be registered.

“It’s not possible this year, so please try again next year. Ah! Next year, calculate the dates well and don’t be late!”

While many people turned away in disappointment at the official’s words, there were always some who couldn’t accept this and caused a disturbance.

These individuals were all arrested, fined 10 nyang of silver, and simultaneously received the punishment of ‘prohibition from taking the state examination for 5 years’.

“It’s about time for the gates to open...”

Many people had gathered on the road in front of the government office, waiting for the gates to open.

They were all waiting to register for the state examination. Males of various ages, from boys who hadn't even tied their topknots yet to middle-aged men, were waiting for the gates to open. A little distance away from the clustered men, women wearing veils or headdresses and long coats were huddled together, also waiting for the gates to open.

Shortly after, a side door of the government office opened, and soldiers poured out.

“Step back!”

“Move back!”

At the soldiers' shouts, the people who had crowded right up to the main gate stepped back.

After pushing the people back, the soldiers began dividing the space using small posts and ropes. They were setting up boundaries to prevent people from rushing in all at once.

Soon after, servants from the government office came out carrying desks and chairs to set up registration booths. Following them, officials carrying application forms and stamp boxes rushed out to take their positions.

“Registration will now begin!”

Ding!

As soon as the official's shout was followed by the ringing of a gong, people began to move with quick steps.

Thanks to the ropes, the applicants lined up in a winding queue like a moving snake, taking one step forward at a time as they waited for their turn.

“Name.”

“I am Han Yangsu.”

“Hand over your identification tag.”

At the official’s words, Yangsu searched his sleeve and took out his identification tag. The official who received the tag continued to question Yangsu.

“State your clan seat and place of residence.”

“My clan seat is Anpyeong, and I currently live in Namcheon down below.”

“Hmm...”

After confirming that there were no discrepancies with the personal information written on the identification tag, the official flipped it over and said to Yangsu:

“I’m sorry, but let’s see your face. Please remove your hat.”

“Yes, sir.”

At the official’s words, Yangsu took off his hat and showed his entire face.

In the process of creating identification tags, Hyang had referred a lot to 21st-century resident registration cards.

Therefore, similar to 21st-century resident registration cards, every time someone moved to a new place, their entry and exit records were engraved on the back of the identification tag.

Of course, this was closer to the 20th century rather than the 21st century with its computerized administrative network. In the 20th century, before proper computerization, whenever people moved and reported their

relocation, the rubber coating on the back of their resident registration card was peeled off to record the relevant information.

“The problem is the photograph...”

In an era without the most reliable means of proving one’s identity, Hyang employed other methods.

He divided the back of the identification tag in half, recording entry and exit records on one side and distinctive physical features on the other.

“It might be just ‘peeing on frozen feet’, but we need to have at least some minimal measures in place...”

“Hmm...”

The official made a nasal sound as he compared the facial features recorded on the back of the identification tag with Yangsu’s face.

“It’s indeed you. You can put your hat back on now. Thank you for your patience.”

“Yes, sir.”

While Yangsu put his hat back on, the official wrote down the name and personal information on the application form, then held out his hand.

“The stamp fee is 80 won.”

“Here it is, sir.”

The official who received the stamp fee attached the stamp to the form, stamped it with the official seal, then tore the form in half and handed one half to Yangsu.

“Here’s your exam ticket. You must submit this along with your identification tag when you enter the examination hall in a fortnight. You

won't be allowed in without this, so keep it safe.”

“Yes, sir.”

“Then, I wish you luck.”

“Thank you, sir.”

The idea of having examination takers submit applications and pay stamp fees was also Hyang's suggestion.

“Is it necessary to increase the procedures like this?”

To King Sejong's question, Hyang explained the reason:

“It's to prevent potential fraud, Your Majesty.”

“Even with a receipt, couldn't someone else take the exam in their place?”

“That's why we check it against the identification tag. Isn't it a serious crime to present someone else's identification tag?”

“Hmm... That's true.”

Nodding, Sejong pointed out another issue.

“But why charge a stamp fee? And 80 won in copper coins is not a small amount. We might be criticized for being merchants if we're not careful.”

At Sejong's point, all the ministers except Kim Jeom nodded in agreement.

But once again, Hyang answered clearly.

“It's to ensure that people approach the exam seriously, not out of a momentary burst of enthusiasm or immaturity. It also helps cover the financial costs incurred in preparing and conducting the examination.”

“To approach the exam seriously...”

Sejong, seemingly pleased with Hyang’s words, mulled them over a few times before turning to his ministers.

“What do you think...”

“It’s truly an excellent idea, Your Majesty! Of course, most of those taking the exam would have the mindset of serving the country after passing, but there are always a few who muddy the waters! It’s not a small amount, but it’s not so much that it would discourage those truly determined to challenge themselves!”

Before Sejong could finish speaking, Kim Jeom poured out his words, to which Sejong smacked his lips slightly and concluded:

“The Crown Prince’s proposal is appropriate. Refine it a bit more and implement it.”

“We will carry out your orders!”

The scribe who recorded all this added the following words:

-...Thus, His Majesty graciously accepted the Crown Prince’s proposal, and all the ministers followed suit.

The scribe says:

Charging money from those taking the state examination could be seen as materialism in a way. But the problem is that it’s not entirely wrong. Even when I took the exam, there were quite a few people who came to the big city not for the exam itself, but to enjoy entertainment.

While some struggle desperately to take the exam to improve their poor family circumstances, others do it merely for entertainment. These good-for-nothing...

The scribe suddenly poured out nearly three pages of harsh words.

This was one of the side effects that occurred as Hunminjeongeum became more familiar.

When only Chinese characters were used, scribes wrote everything they wanted to say, whether appropriate or not. Now that they had mastered Hunminjeongeum, it was like a tiger growing wings.

The registration process, which had been progressing smoothly, became awkward when women came to submit their applications.

“I’m sorry. I know it’s not proper, but for identity verification, I need to see your face.”

“Ah...”

“Oh my...”

Faced with the awkward issue of ‘identity verification’, both the women taking the exam and the officials in charge of registration could only sigh deeply in embarrassment.

According to the customs of the time, women of the nobility were not allowed to show their faces carelessly to outsiders.

Therefore, it was customary to wear a veil or a hat with a long coat when going out.

Even gisaeng wore hats when going out on the streets.

Eventually, to resolve this awkward situation, the female applicants had to make a decision.

“It can’t be helped. However, I won’t remove it completely like the men.”

“We don’t expect that much!”

With the official's agreement, the female applicant slightly lifted the face cloth of her veil to show her face.

As the female applicant revealed her face, the official compared it with the record on the identification tag as quickly as possible. Delaying could lead to rumors of taking advantage of the application process to dishonor women.

“That’s enough!”

At the official's hurried confirmation, the woman swiftly lowered her face cloth.

After receiving the stamp fee and handing over the receipt to send the woman off, the official muttered quietly.

“This is a problem, isn't it? This will happen again at the examination hall. We need an alternative.”

It seemed that many others had similar thoughts, as during and after the registration period, official documents requesting solutions to this issue flooded into the court.

“Hmm...”

After checking the report that came up through the royal secretariat, Sejong pondered for a moment and then immediately issued an order.

“Assign one female physician to each examination hall across Joseon. Have the female physicians take full charge of identity verification for female applicants.”

At Sejong's command, Heo Jo immediately responded.

“We will carry out your orders, Your Majesty.”

Thus, after the registration ended and time passed, the state examination began.

Straw mats were laid out according to the number of applicants in the examination halls set up at the provincial offices across Joseon, and wooden writing boards and inkstones were placed for writing on paper.

With these preparations in place, examination applicants were allowed to bring in only their writing brushes from among the four treasures of the study.

After completing the identity verification process through officials and female physicians, the examinees entered while receiving instructions:

“Sit on the straw mat with the number written on your exam ticket to prepare for the test! Good luck!”

“Thank you, sir.”

Having passed the preliminary check and entered the examination hall, the applicants looked around to find the straw mat with the same number as on their exam ticket.

“Ah! Here it is!”

Seated in their assigned place, the applicants took deep breaths to calm their hearts.

Shortly after, when all examinees had entered and taken their seats, the officials in charge of supervision came in and compared the numbers on the applicants' receipts with those on the straw mats.

After confirming that everyone was in their proper place, the provincial governor entered and took his seat.

When all those who would supervise and observe the exam were in place, a soldier with a good voice shouted loudly:

“Now, we will begin the first test!”

Thus began the first state examination of the stability period.

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-

BBCodes

[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.
Deathbringer, emphasis on [i]*death*[/i].
I'm totally [s]~~crossed out~~[/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

[img]https://www.agine.this[/img]
[link]http://topwebfiction.com[/link].
[link=https://www.n.ot]clickbait[/link].

[quote]... me like my landlord! [/quote]

[spoiler]Spanish Inquisition! [/spoiler]
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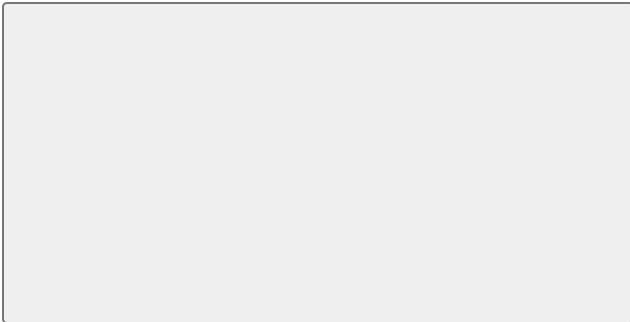
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Chapter 301 - 400

BCJ Chapter 392

Small Changes

by *BlossomTL*Black Corporation: Joseon

The state examination that began in this manner proceeded smoothly.

The supervisors who opened the sealed envelopes and took out the test papers and answer sheets began distributing them.

During this process, an unusual sight appeared: the supervisors distributed the test papers and answer sheets along horizontal rows.

This too was one of Hyang's clever tricks.

“To prevent any potential cheating...”

Following Hyang's suggestion, the test papers were divided into two types: A and B. And here, Hyang's cunning plan was in full effect.

There were two types, A and B, but they all had the same questions and the same correct answers. However, the order of the questions was different, and the positions of the correct answers were the same.

For example, question 1 on type A test paper was question 4 on type B test paper, and if the correct answer for question 1 on type A was 2, the correct answer for question 4 on type B would be 4.

Additionally, in the layout of the examination hall, while the front-to-back spacing was narrow, the left-to-right spacing was maximized.

The first test that started in this way ended after about 2 shichen (approximately 4 hours).

Ding~.

“Everyone stop! Submit your answer sheets!”

“Wait! Just a moment! Please give us a little more time!”

Some applicants pleaded for a bit more time, but the supervisors showed no mercy and collected the answer sheets.

“This can’t be!”

“People should be more flexible!”

Those who had to submit their answer sheets despite their pleas gathered in one place to vent their frustration.

“This won’t do! Let’s complain to the governor!”

“That’s right!”

The applicants who had agreed on this immediately rushed to the governor and raised their voices.

Faced with the applicants’ protests, the governor asked with an indifferent face:

“So what do you want me to do?”

“If we had been given a little more time, we could have easily written all the answers, but we couldn’t. Please allow us to take the test again! With ample time, of course!”

“Huh...”

The governor, who sighed briefly as if dumbfounded by the applicants’ protest, answered firmly:

“That’s not possible.”

“Your Excellency!”

“The state examination is also official business! How can we use as officials those who can’t properly complete their assigned tasks in the given time! There are no positions available for incompetent individuals who need two days to do what other officials can do in one day!”

“Your Excellency!”

“For people like you, it might just be a delay of one more day, but for someone else, it could be a day that determines life or death in official duties! Get out immediately!”

At the governor’s stern reprimand, the applicants had to retreat with dismayed faces.

While the confrontation between the applicants and the governor was taking place outside, the supervisors inside were checking the answers on the collected answer sheets.

The process of checking the answers was also quite unique, and this too was one of Hyang’s tricks.

“Even if it’s objective, or rather, a multiple-choice format, comparing and checking one by one would take time and increase errors...”

While searching for a usable method, Hyang rummaged through his memories of living as Jinho in the 21st century.

It's not only in the military that all sorts of people gather; homes with many siblings are the same. During holidays, such houses would be bustling with siblings and their families, overflowing with stories of experiences from various fields.

This was also true for Hyang's, or rather Jinho's, family. Among the relatives he met this way, there was a retired teacher whose reminiscences were quite interesting.

“Nowadays, even regular schools use OMR as standard, but until before the '88 Olympics, unless it was a nationwide mock exam, all answers were checked manually. At that time, what we did was...”

Recalling the method that relative had shared, Hyang immediately applied it.

First, he glued together several layers of paper that were meant to be discarded. Then, he attached an answer sheet to match the specifications, and punched holes in the number boxes corresponding to the correct answers.

By overlapping this paper template with the answer sheets submitted by the applicants, the correctness could be immediately checked.

Thanks to this method, most of the results of the first test could be known by the next morning.

The applicants who had taken the test the day before nervously paced in front of the government office's bulletin board.

As noon approached, an official came out and began to post papers on the bulletin board.

“Here's the list of successful candidates!”

Those who had taken the exam clung to the bulletin board, comparing their application numbers with the numbers posted.

It was a moment of joy and sorrow.

Those who passed the first test then met with the supervisors again to receive their exam numbers for the second test. Of course, they had to pay another 80 won stamp fee as well.

“The second test is in five days, so don’t be late!”

“Yes, I’ll keep that in mind!”

Five days later, the second test was conducted.

Generally, about 70% of the total applicants passed the first test. And in the second test, about half of them were eliminated.

As a result, those who passed both the first and second tests accounted for about 35% to 40% of the total examinees.

“Well, it seems like the number of successful candidates will increase a bit more this year...”

“Because the results of the first test were quite good?”

Even while having such conversations, the supervisors remained tense throughout.

The second test was an essay. It was a test where the subjectivity of the applicants and supervisors clashed, and it was the test where the most disputes arose.

Therefore, when the second test began, additional officials of at least junior 4th rank or higher were dispatched from the court in Hanseong, and the pass or fail was determined through a three-person consensus system.

After such a tumultuous examination ended, all the successful candidates who safely passed gathered in Hanseong.

Meanwhile, a new government building had been constructed in Hanseong, which was a training institute.

It was a building created because it was seen as inappropriate to use the palace for the residential examination process – a process of evaluating personality and ability by having teacher candidates live together – which was part of the teacher recruitment examination. However, after its completion, it became one of the buildings that proved useful in various ways.

The successful candidates who gathered at the training institute in Hanseong were provided with official uniforms and hats – in the case of female successful candidates, they were given garima (Note 1) made of blue cloth with gold lines. The successful candidates, now dressed as officials, had to pass the ‘devil’s 3rd examination’.

The training process involved living together while receiving practical education and handling basic practical work at government offices.

And throughout this entire process, supervisors and senior officials were watching with eagle eyes.

Having passed the exam, a government position was guaranteed. However, this training process determined whether one would continue to rise through the ranks or retire at the 8th or 7th junior rank.

That’s why it was called the ‘devil’s 3rd examination’.

After about a month had passed, the career paths of the applicants began to be determined.

Those who had excellent scores in the first and second examinations and received good scores in practical skills – especially in mathematics – were mostly dragged into the General Affairs Department and the Finance Department.

And those who were chosen in this way became objects of envy.

No matter what anyone said, the most powerful departments in the current court were General Affairs and Finance. Of course, the officials already working in those departments would curse whenever they heard such talk.

“Shit! We’re just good-looking crab apples!”

“The only good thing about coming here? We can eat as much health tonic as we want!”

As an aside, starting from the period of major reforms, Joseon’s medicinal herb industry developed remarkably, and later became the foundation of the bio-medical industry.

The remaining individuals were assigned to departments based on their aptitudes and practical skills that had been assessed during this time.

After the departments were decided, the next step was to determine the place of appointment.

“Those who wish to volunteer for the regions of Hamgil-do, Daeseol-do, and Unwol Peninsula, step forward.”

At the words of the General Affairs Department director who was conducting the appointment process, the successful candidates furtively glanced at each other. Seeing this, the director continued:

“As you already know, those who volunteer for these regions will receive additional points.”

However, not many stepped forward easily.

The additional points were tempting. But unlike Hamgil-do, which had become somewhat stable, Daeseol-do and the Unwol Peninsula were still risky ventures.

Moreover, if one stepped forward immediately, they might be talked about as ‘someone blinded by additional points’.

“No one? Then, I’ll have to assign randomly...”

“This girl will go!”

Just as the director was about to move on, a female successful candidate suddenly stood up. Following her, several men and women stood up and came forward.

The director gestured as he moved:

“Follow me.”

After moving to the adjacent office, the director looked at the volunteers, especially the women, and asked:

“Hamgil-do is one thing, but Daeseol-do and the Unwol Peninsula are harsh places. It might be difficult for women, so how about withdrawing now?”

“I entered government service with the sole intention of dedicating myself to the country. How could physical hardships be a problem?”

“That’s right!”

Hearing the female successful candidates’ responses, the director explained the situation to the woman who had stepped forward first and spoken first:

“To be honest, we can solve the problems of food, clothing, and shelter, but we don’t have the resources yet to make special preparations for your safety.”

To the director's words expressing concern for the safety of the female successful candidates, the woman responded firmly:

“I understand that officials going to outer regions must learn horseback riding and artillery skills. I, your humble servant, am lacking in horseback riding and don't know how to use artillery, but I'm confident I can learn better than anyone else. I also have some skill in archery, so I'm confident I can protect myself.”

“Hmm... Do the others feel the same way?”

“Yes! That's right!”

After confirming the spirit of the other successful candidates, especially the women, the director examined the records of the female candidate who had moved first.

‘An Munhye... Her grades are second-highest, but her adaptability and practical skills are top-notch. She's already assigned to the General Affairs Department... If she can endure safely in the outer regions, her future looks promising...’

The director, making a mental note, stood up.

“Follow me.”

The place they moved to next had a large circular board hanging on a pillar. The board was divided into sections of various sizes, and these sections were labeled with names of outer regions such as ‘Hamgil-do’, ‘Daeseol-do’, ‘Dongbinghang’, ‘Unwol Peninsula’, and so on.

“What is this, sir?”

To An Munhye's question, the director answered calmly:

“This is how you'll choose the regions you'll be appointed to with your own hands. We call it ‘bbaeng-bbaeng-i’.”

“Bbaeng-bbaeng-i?”

“It’s the fairest and most impartial method, free from any external pressure.”

In this way, those to be appointed to outer regions were determined through the ‘bbaeng-bbaeng-i’.

“We’ll still need to fill the remaining positions from outside. Check and implement it.”

“Yes, sir.”

As the vacant positions for those to be appointed to outer regions were added, the sections of the ‘bbaeng-bbaeng-i’ located on the outer part were readjusted.

There were eight ‘bbaeng-bbaeng-i’ in total, representing the eight provinces of Joseon. The applicants were divided into eight lines according to their province of origin.

“As you can see, your province of origin is excluded from these ‘bbaeng-bbaeng-i’. It’s to apply the rule of avoiding conflicts of interest.”

“Ah...”

The successful candidates standing in front of the ‘bbaeng-bbaeng-i’ nodded at the official’s explanation.

“Then, I wish you luck. Spin it!”

At the official’s command, a successful candidate vigorously spun the circular board.

‘Please Hanseong! Please Hanseong! Land on Hanseong!’

Note 1) Garima (加里尔)

Navigate to Other Arcs

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[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.
Deathbringer, emphasis on [i]*death*[/i].
I'm totally [s]~~crossed out~~[/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

[img]https://www.agine.this[/img]
[link]http://topwebfiction.com[/link].
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[quote]... me like my landlord! [/quote]

[spoiler]Spanish Inquisition! [/spoiler]
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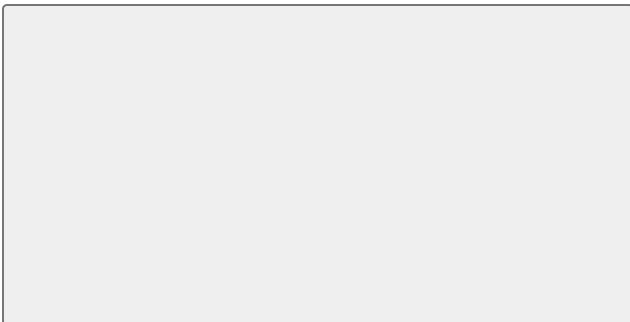
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Chapter 301 - 400

BCJ Chapter 393

Small Changes

by *BlossomTL*Black Corporation: Joseon

While the administrative organizations, including the royal court, were quietly and steadily improving their constitution and strengthening their foundations, the common people were also continuing to change.

As mentioned before, the growing economy through reforms led more and more people to venture into commerce and industry.

Among those who took the plunge, there were some who jumped in recklessly, but there were also those who dove in with their own calculations and prospects of success.

Fierce competition arose between these newcomers and those who had already established themselves.

In the process of this competition, quite a few were weeded out and disappeared. Many of those eliminated were the newcomers. For those who jumped in with only enthusiasm, lacking experience and capital, the world of commerce and industry was a cruel place. Of course, there were also some long-standing merchant groups from the Goryeo era that failed to read the trends and fell behind, disappearing as well.

Among those who were eliminated from the competition, some returned to farming, while others left for frontier lands like Hamgil-do and Daeseol-do

in search of new opportunities. Lastly, there were those who lost all hope and made extreme choices.

According to the laws of Joseon at the time, all incidents involving casualties, such as murder cases, suicide cases, or tiger attacks (虎患), were reported to King Sejong.

“Someone has taken their own life, you say?”

“Yes, and what’s even more unfortunate is that the entire family...”

“Oh my...”

As Minister of Justice Minister Jo trailed off, King Sejong exhaled with a face full of sorrow.

Seeing Sejong’s deeply furrowed brow, Hwang Hui asked Minister Jo on Sejong’s behalf.

“Why did they make such a choice?”

“They opened a shop, but it failed and went bankrupt. The creditors’ demands were severe, it seems.”

“Creditors? You mean they used private loans?”

“That’s correct.”

“Just how high was the interest rate?”

“Upon investigation, we found that the loan period was strictly one month, and the interest was twice the principal amount.”

“Twice!”

At the news that the interest on the debt of the person who committed suicide was twice the principal, the entire hall was in an uproar.

Hwang Hui, also with a shocked expression, asked Minister Jo again.

“It’s been years since His Majesty promulgated the ‘Interest Rate Limitation Law,’ yet there are still those charging such high rates?”

“That’s right. We’re currently pursuing the group that lent money at such rates.”

Listening to the explanation, Sejong strongly commanded Minister Jo.

“Order the officials in charge of the arrest to catch every single one of them without exception! Also, confiscate all their assets and secure a list of those who owed them money! We shall return the excess interest paid above the legal limit to those poor subjects!”

Minister Jo immediately bowed his head and replied to Sejong’s words.

“I receive your command!”

After giving the order to Minister Jo, Sejong closed his mouth and fell into thought. As Sejong’s silence lengthened, the ministers began to grow tense.

“Hmm, come to think of it... Why did the entire family of the person who took their own life make such a choice?”

“It wasn’t that they all committed suicide. According to the report, it appears the head of the household killed his wife and children before taking his own life.”

“Why did this head of household make such a choice?”

“It seems he feared leaving his wife and children to suffer alone if he died by himself.”

At Minister Jo’s answer, Sejong sighed and expressed his sorrow.

“Alas... No matter how much he was the head of the household, a couple is inseparable, and children are not livestock but human beings. How could he

make such an arbitrary decision! It's truly heartbreaking! This is my oversight!"

As Sejong blamed himself, the ministers all bowed their heads and responded.

"No, Your Majesty! This is the responsibility of the one who committed the act, not at all Your Majesty's fault!"

"That's right! This is not something Your Majesty should blame yourself for! It was just an unfortunate subject who made a wrong choice until the end!"

"No, the fact that these incidents keep occurring means that I have not been observing matters properly. This is indeed my oversight."

"No, Your Majesty! This is the mistake of those who took their own lives! They used high-interest private loans despite the existence of the royal treasury. This is their responsibility!"

"Sigh..."

After a long sigh, Sejong asked Kim Jeom.

"Minister of Finance."

"I await your question, Your Majesty."

"Why did they use private loans despite the existence of the royal treasury? As far as I know, one of the duties of the royal treasury is to provide seed money to subjects who want to start a new permanent business, isn't it?"

"That is correct, Your Majesty."

Answering Sejong's question, Kim Jeom searched through the pile of documents in front of him and pulled out a relevant report.

"When we created the Business Evaluation Department, we recruited officials from the Ministry of Personnel to form the department. And as

Your Majesty mentioned, we evaluated those who wanted to start new permanent businesses and lent them seed money.”

“Then why did they use high-interest private loans?”

“It seems those who were notified of rejection by the Business Evaluation Department did not give up their intentions.”

“So they borrowed from private lenders because they couldn’t borrow from the royal treasury?”

“That’s correct, Your Majesty.”

“Hmm...”

After pondering Kim Jeom’s answer for a moment, Sejong spoke.

“Then how about slightly relaxing the evaluation criteria?”

“That’s not possible, Your Majesty!”

Suddenly, Heo Jo, who had been listening quietly, shouted his objection.

“Why not?”

To Sejong’s question, Heo Jo explained the reason for his objection.

“The money lent by the royal treasury is the money that the people have entrusted to it. Even now, not a small number of those who received loans and started businesses are closing down, and the loans are not being properly recovered. If we relax the loan criteria, there will be even more loans, and the amount of unrecoverable funds will increase! If the royal treasury’s losses grow, the people will lose trust in it! Distrust in the royal treasury will lead to distrust in state affairs! Relaxing the loan criteria is absolutely not possible!”

Faced with Heo Jo’s strong opposition, Sejong turned to Hwang Hui.

“What does the Prime Minister think?”

“I also believe it’s not possible, Your Majesty.”

“Oh...”

With even Hwang Hui opposing, Sejong’s expression became troubled.

Once again closing his mouth and pondering an appropriate solution, Sejong made another proposal.

“Even if we can’t help those who attempted to start businesses and failed, as it was their own choice, their families are also a problem. The inheritance of wealth is an issue, but isn’t the inheritance of poverty also a problem?”

“That is true, Your Majesty.”

“So, isn’t it also the country’s duty to provide opportunities to escape from this cycle of inherited poverty? What do you think about relocating them to frontier lands like Daeseol-do and other areas that will be developed in the future? Of course, we would need to provide tax reductions and support for at least 3 to 5 years, but I think it could work.”

At Sejong’s proposal, the ministers calculated the pros and cons, considering various scenarios.

“It could be a good opportunity for the discouraged subjects, but it might be a burden on the finances, Your Majesty.”

To Kim Jeom’s point, Sejong immediately replied.

“Let’s release more of the gold and silver we’ve mined and stored. With Joseon’s current capacity, don’t you think we can manage even if we release a bit more of our reserved gold and silver?”

After considering various scenarios based on Sejong’s additional explanation, Kim Jeom bowed his head.

“I will soon prepare and submit a proposal, Your Majesty.”

“I look forward to it. And...”

Having resolved one problem, Sejong began to pour out various policies like a flowing river.

“Thinking about policies to help those who failed in their business ventures and their families, I’ve noticed that there are quite a few disabled people in Joseon. While many became disabled while working or fighting for the country, there are also many who became disabled due to unexpected accidents or congenital conditions. We’re already implementing veterans’ policies for the former, but the latter is the problem. Let’s think about ways for them to become self-reliant. Shouldn’t we move away from this situation where we treat those who became disabled due to accidents as ‘unlucky,’ and those with congenital disabilities as if they’re bearing ‘heaven’s punishment,’ treating them like criminals when they’re not?”

“That may be true, but...”

The ministers looked troubled at Sejong’s suggestion.

Sejong’s intention was certainly not bad. Rather, it was an idea worthy of endless praise.

After all, one of the king’s duties was to embrace the pain of his people and give them hope.

Therefore, the ministers put forth various opinions and continued their debate.

After a long discussion, Sejong’s proposal began to take shape. However, the ministers’ faces didn’t easily relax.

“For those who are disabled in only one part of their body and have sound minds, there are many options, but the problem lies with those who are not of sound mind, or those who are blind and deaf. These people need care rather than self-reliance.”

Following Hwang Hui’s point, Maeng Sa-seong immediately added.

“The problem is that because of this, they are either abandoned and die at birth, or become beggars, wandering and begging for food.”

“This is indeed a difficult issue...”

Listening to the ministers’ conversation, Sejong’s face became troubled.

“Let’s take a break for now.”

Declaring a recess, Sejong left Geunjeongjeon and took a walk around the palace. As he moved his steps to clear his stuffy mind and observed the scenery, Sejong’s eyes caught sight of monks heading towards the Queen’s quarters.

As he watched them without any particular thought, Sejong broke into a smile.

“It reminds me of the old days. Wasn’t it the Crown Prince who rushed in and said, ‘Let’s do business’?”

Smiling at the old memory, Sejong suddenly stopped in his tracks.

“Wait a minute!”

Sejong suddenly halted and fell into deep thought. Standing still like a statue, he nodded his head for a while and then shook it side to side. Then, with a brightened face, he turned his steps.

“If we do it right, we might have a good solution!”

Returning to Geunjeongjeon – as the reforms progressed, the spatially limited Sajeongjeon, which was the king’s private office, was pushed back, and Geunjeongjeon became the main place for state affairs – Sejong addressed the reassembled ministers.

“I have a good idea. How about mobilizing monks to prevent congenitally disabled people from dying at birth or wandering and begging?”

“Monks, Your Majesty?”

The ministers asked with slightly skeptical expressions at Sejong’s proposal. Sejong nodded and explained his thoughts further.

“Isn’t one of the monks’ duties to help sentient beings? So, let’s entrust them with the protection of these abandoned disabled people. In return, we’ll allow them to add 12 branch temples to the current 36 main temples, and we’ll differentiate between the Seon and Gyo sects based on their performance. And if necessary, we’ll provide appropriate amounts of food and resources.”

At Sejong’s explanation, the ministers once again started calculating various scenarios in their heads.

‘Oh my, even though our national policy is to respect Confucianism and suppress Buddhism... But they are indeed suitable for this kind of work...’

‘If we provide goods instead of farmland, it wouldn’t be bad.’

‘When I was a local official, I saw how one disabled person in a family could make the whole family suffer. No wonder they abandon them...’

After considering all sorts of possibilities and calculating the pros and cons, the ministers soon began to nod.

“If it ends with adding 12 branch temples, it doesn’t seem to be a big problem.”

“If we provide goods instead of farmland, we can prevent the evil practices of the past.”

“Good. I hope the General Affairs Department will refine this plan and report back to me.”

At Sejong’s order, Heo Jo bowed his head.

“I receive your command, Your Majesty.”

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[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.
Deathbringer, emphasis on [i]*death*[/i].
I'm totally [s]~~crossed out~~[/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

[img]https://www.agine.this[/img]
[link]http://topwebfiction.com[/link].
[link=https://www.n.ot]clickbait[/link].

[quote]... me like my landlord! [/quote]

[spoiler]Spanish Inquisition! [/spoiler]
[ins]Insert[/ins] more bad puns!
[del]~~Delete~~[/del] your browser history!

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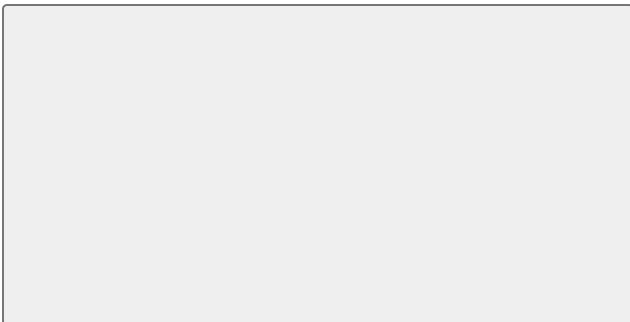
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Chapter 301 - 400

BCJ Chapter 394

Small Changes

by *BlossomTL*Black Corporation: Joseon

The next morning, seated in the royal court, King Sejong addressed the ministers.

“I’ve been thinking again. I’m concerned about those who attempted to start new businesses but failed.”

Hwang Hui, understanding the meaning of Sejong’s words, immediately asked.

“Do you wish to relax the loan criteria of the royal treasury, Your Majesty?”

“Wouldn’t it be good to consider ways that won’t cause undue strain? I find it distressing to see subjects striving for a better future.”

“Since Your Majesty is concerned, we will consider it.”

As soon as Hwang Hui finished speaking, Heo Jo immediately objected.

“It’s absolutely impossible! If we make a mistake, the people might lose trust in the country!”

At Heo Jo’s words, Hwang Hui raised his voice.

“These are people who, despite being rejected by the business evaluation, still insist on pursuing their ventures even using high-interest private loans!

If we leave them be, won't they start saying, 'What has the country done for me?' Aren't you worried about that?"

"We can't undermine the trust in the royal treasury because of a few such individuals!"

"Aren't people failing to repay loans even now? Isn't the ratio the same whether 1 out of 10 can't repay or 10 out of 100?"

"It's worrying enough when one person fails, but if 10 fail, that's a big problem!"

"Isn't it more beneficial for our Joseon if 90 people succeed rather than just 9?"

"Even if 90 people who borrowed 10 nyang of silver succeed, if 10 people who borrowed 10 nyang of gold fail, we're ruined! Don't just play with numbers!"

Hyang, who had been quietly observing since the meeting began, inwardly muttered while watching the two men's heated debate.

'A debate between a rational optimist and a rational pessimist...'

Both Hwang Hui and Heo Jo had the common trait of analyzing state affairs coldly. However, after such cold analysis, Heo Jo tended to produce negative results, while Hwang Hui often came up with positive ones.

This difference between them was due to their values. Both were royalists who prioritized royal authority over that of ministers, faithfully carrying out Sejong's wishes. However, when problems arose, they showed different approaches.

-If possible, follow the king's will even if it's somewhat risky.

This was Hwang Hui's stance.

-Persuade the king as much as possible to avoid risks.

This was Heo Jo's stance. He valued the country's survival as much as the king.

And now, these two were clashing.

“As Minister Jo said before, let's be a bit more positive! Come on!”

“If we're only positive, we might ruin the country! We need to face reality!”

Watching the two men's heated argument, Hyang stepped forward and addressed Sejong.

“Father, I have something I wish to propose to you.”

As Hyang spoke up, Hwang Hui and Heo Jo stopped their debate and immediately turned their attention to the Crown Prince.

It wasn't just them. The eyes of all the ministers present focused on Hyang.

‘What now!’

‘Judging by his stepping forward now, he's certainly going to meddle in this matter!’

‘Huh! We might hear that tongue-clicking sound again if we're not careful!’

While the ministers tensed up, Sejong looked at Hyang with a brightened expression.

“Go ahead! I permit it! Speak quickly!”

“I'm deeply grateful.”

Thanking Sejong for his permission, Hyang cleared his throat.

“Ahem! Ahem! As I was listening to the two gentlemen's discussion, an idea came to mind, so I've taken the liberty of interrupting.”

As Hyang apologized for his interruption, Hwang Hui and Heo Jo shook their heads.

“It’s alright.”

“No problem.”

Having subtly set up his defense, Hyang began to lay the groundwork.

“First, the General Affairs Minister’s words are correct. The money coming into the royal treasury is the people’s hard-earned money, so it’s natural that it cannot be used carelessly.”

Heo Jo’s face brightened at Hyang’s words supporting his view, and he nodded.

“Of course, of course!”

Glancing at Heo Jo’s face, Hyang continued.

“However, the Prime Minister’s opinion to give more people opportunities to succeed and strengthen Joseon is also a good one.”

This time, Hwang Hui’s face brightened, while the other ministers wore puzzled expressions.

‘What’s this? Both are right? What does he mean?’

Seeing the ministers’ faces, Hyang inwardly muttered.

‘I’m sorry, Elder Hwang Hui. I’ll borrow from you first.’

“Therefore, I wish to propose to Father the establishment of a ‘Venture Capital Fund’ (冒險資本金庫).”

“Hm?”

“Eh?”

At Hyang's proposal, Sejong and the ministers all uttered exclamations of confusion.

Among those analyzing the meaning of Hyang's words, Sejong and Kim Jeom were the first to understand.

“Crown Prince, are you suggesting we create a separate loan department for those who don't meet the Business Evaluation Department's criteria but still seem to have potential?”

“That's correct.”

“You mentioned ‘venture capital,’ so there must be differences from existing loans... Will there be a difference in interest rates?”

“Yes! You've understood correctly!”

Hyang explained in more detail.

-It will provide capital for starting businesses that show considerable potential, even if they didn't pass the Business Evaluation Department's criteria.

-However, it won't support unconditionally. It will decide whether to provide support based on the applicant's background and the relevance to their intended field of business. The criteria will just be more relaxed.

-As it's a loan that assumes the risk of failure, it will charge relatively high interest rates. While the Business Evaluation Department's loan interest rate is 35% per annum, the venture capital will apply an interest rate of 65% per annum.

-Due to the high rate, applicants will be given a choice:

- 1. Endure the application of the 65% annual interest rate.*
- 2. Transfer shares of the established business. It's a kind of partnership where the royal treasury takes 51% of the shares. If this is chosen, a 30% annual interest rate will be applied.*

“‘Taking shares’... Does this mean sharing profits if it succeeds later?”

At Sejong’s question, Hyang nodded.

“That’s right. That’s why we’re applying a 30% annual interest rate.”

“Hmm...”

As Sejong stroked his beard in thought, Hyang added more.

“The reason I added the term ‘fund’ is to create this as a separate department within the royal treasury.”

“A separate department?”

“From borrowing funds to operation, although it belongs to the royal treasury, it operates separately from the treasury’s main operations.”

Kim Jeom, who had been focusing on Hyang’s words as if not to miss a single one, asked a question.

“Does operating the fund-raising separately mean paying higher interest rates to those who provide the funds?”

“That’s correct.”

At Hyang’s answer, Kim Jeom muttered while calculating profits and losses.

“Hmm... If done well...”

This was the same for Sejong, who was considering various scenarios on his throne.

“Hmm... If done well, we could even absorb the wealth of those who were running high-interest private loans?”

“That’s right. On one side, we strongly crack down on illegal high-interest private loans, and on the other side, we guide them towards the Venture

Capital Fund, which offers lower profits than private loans but higher than regular savings, and is legal.”

‘Of course, underground finance will never completely disappear, but we should absorb as much as possible.’

“Hmm...”

Seeming to find Hyang’s words reasonable, Sejong nodded with a slightly brightened expression.

At that moment, Heo Jo raised a question.

“As it’s literally a venture, won’t people worry about losing their wealth if the investments fail?”

To Heo Jo’s point, Hyang immediately provided an answer.

“That’s why we’ll give investors two choices as well.”

- *A. Simply put money into the fund and leave investment choices to the fund.*
- *B. Directly choose investments for their funds based on information about businesses evaluated by the fund.*

“This way, in case A, we’ll operate on a collective basis to minimize losses even if it fails. However, the profits returned to investors will be smaller even if it succeeds. In case B, while the risk increases, the potential returns for investors become overwhelmingly larger.”

At Hyang’s explanation, Hwang Hui’s eyes sparkled.

“Whichever option is chosen, it would greatly reduce the burden on the court and the royal treasury, wouldn’t it?”

“Yes. That’s what we’re aiming for.”

Following Hwang Hui, Heo Jo also nodded.

“Whichever case they choose, it would be their own decision, making it difficult to hold the court responsible. Hmm... It seems quite good.”

‘Well, if things go wrong, there might be many people wanting to experience how sturdy their house beam is, or how deep the village reservoir is, or how warm the water flowing in the Han River is.’

While Hyang was muttering this to himself, Heo Jo addressed Sejong.

“I think it’s a good plan. It reduces the burden on the court and the royal treasury, and more people can have the opportunity to start businesses.”

“You think so too?”

Sejong’s face brightened as Heo Jo, known for his strictness, showed a positive reaction.

At that moment, Jo Gye-saeng, the Minister of Education, interjected.

“Your Majesty! While it’s a good plan, implementing it as is would be absolutely unacceptable!”

“Why is that?”

When Sejong asked for the reason, Jo Gye-saeng explained.

“Humans are inherently greedy beings, not thinking about the future...”

“You mean some people might push in all their assets without considering the risks.”

As Sejong finished the thought, Jo Gye-saeng, who had paused momentarily, immediately nodded.

“That’s correct, Your Majesty.”

“Hmm...”

After pondering for a moment, Sejong turned to Hyang.

“Crown Prince, would a fixed amount or a fixed rate be better?”

To Sejong’s question, Hyang immediately replied.

“Both, Your Majesty. When wealthy individuals invest privately, we should apply a fixed rate, and when those with less wealth want to invest, we should accept only a fixed amount determined by their wealth.”

“Will those with little wealth want to participate?”

“As the Minister of Education said, humans are inherently greedy beings.”

Sejong nodded at Hyang’s words.

“That’s right. People are greedy creatures. Minister of General Affairs.”

At Sejong’s call, Heo Jo immediately responded.

“It needs some refining, but I think it’s the best plan.”

“Prime Minister?”

“I agree with the Minister of General Affairs.”

“Then, lastly, what does the Minister of Finance, who will be at the center of this matter, think?”

To Sejong’s question, Kim Jeom immediately replied.

“While it’s a good plan, few people will step forward immediately. Therefore, I believe we should release more of the gold and silver we’ve accumulated to create initial capital and implement it. If the performance using this initial capital is good, everything else will follow easily.”

“Let’s do that.”

Immediately accepting Kim Jeom’s words, Sejong looked around at the ministers.

“As our people’s permanent assets increase and Joseon’s economic capacity grows, our Joseon will become stronger. I hope you all will do your best for this.”

“We receive your command!”

And so, the world’s first official – as recorded in definitive official documents – venture capital financing was born.

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-

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[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.
Deathbringer, emphasis on [i]*death*[/i].
I'm totally [s]~~crossed out~~[/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

[img]https://www.agine.this[/img]
[link]http://topwebfiction.com[/link].
[link=https://www.n.ot]clickbait[/link].

[quote]... me like my landlord! [/quote]

[spoiler]Spanish Inquisition! [/spoiler]
[ins]Insert[/ins] more bad puns!
[del]~~Delete~~[/del] your browser history!

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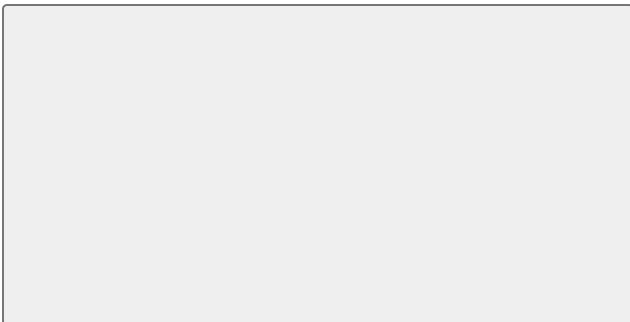
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Chapter 301 - 400

BCJ Chapter 395

Small Changes

by *BlossomTL*Black Corporation: Joseon

With the establishment and operation of the ‘Venture Capital Fund’ decided, personnel transfers took place across Joseon’s royal treasuries.

Those with good persuasive skills or those who had performed well in the Business Evaluation Department were largely recruited to the Venture Capital Fund from regional treasuries.

The treasury officials summoned to Hanseong for education on fund operation and business practices, as well as practical adaptation training, eyed each other keenly.

“So that’s the guy who...”

“Oh? He’s here too. As expected...”

The court operated an incentive system while managing the treasury. Those with good performance received not only bonuses but also favorable personnel evaluations, giving them an advantage in promotions.

Whenever such bonuses or rewards were given, notices were posted on employee bulletin boards in treasuries across Joseon.

As a result, ambitious individuals applied for sales or the Business Evaluation Department.

And here, the cream of the crop among those applicants had gathered, all burning with a sense of competition towards each other.

Education and training proceeded for these carefully selected personnel.

Upon learning about the fund's operational methods, the officials spoke with a half self-deprecating tone.

“Looks like we won't be going to entertainment venues anymore.”

“Seems we'll be gambling at a state-approved gambling den.”

“I feel ashamed that we studied the words of sages for this.”

Despite their words, once the work began, the fund's employees moved swiftly.

In Naju, Jeolla Province,

“Oh my! Have you been well, Master Cha?”

“Eh? When did you return? I heard you went to Hanseong.”

Cha, a well-known wealthy man in Naju, brightened up upon seeing the treasury employee he hadn't seen in a while.

Since opening an account at the Naju treasury, this employee had almost exclusively handled his banking affairs.

As Master Cha welcomed him, Ko Young-gu smiled broadly and responded.

“I returned from Hanseong yesterday. I have very good news.”

“Good news?”

“Well, you see...”

Having opened the conversation, Ko Young-gu began to explain about the 'Venture Capital' in detail.

“Hmm...”

When Ko Young-gu's lengthy explanation ended, Master Cha, sitting with his arms folded, looked at Ko Young-gu with a serious expression.

“Hmm... So...”

Master Cha, speaking leisurely, continued.

“So, according to what you're saying, you provide funds for businesses that, although they failed the business evaluation, seem to have some potential?”

“That's correct, sir.”

“How much potential are we talking about?”

“On average, 43 percent.”

“43 percent?”

At Ko Young-gu's answer, Master Cha's expression soured.

“Simply put, if you invest in 10 places, only 4 will succeed?”

“Master Cha, even those who pass through the Business Evaluation Department have a success rate of 68 percent. And why else would it be called venture capital?”

“Even so, it's almost gambling, isn't it?”

To Master Cha's words, Ko Young-gu nodded.

“That’s right. It is close to gambling. But where in this world isn’t there an element of gambling? Isn’t even farming a gamble? Although it rarely happens these days due to good water management, if there’s a drought or flood just once when the heavens are displeased, isn’t that year’s harvest a complete loss no matter how hard one has worked?”

“Well, that’s true...”

Nodding unconsciously at Ko Young-gu’s words, Master Cha pressed on another point.

“Then, if one puts money into this venture capital, what’s the interest rate?”

“We don’t call it an interest rate, but an investment success dividend.”

“Right, so how much is this investment success dividend?”

To Master Cha’s question, Ko Young-gu took out a small booklet from his breast pocket, flipped through it, and then opened to a certain page as he continued his explanation.

“It varies depending on how successful the invested business is, but on average, we expect a minimum of 20 percent.”

“A minimum of 20 percent?”

“Yes.”

“So if I put in 1,000 nyang of gold, I can receive at least 200 nyang of gold in a year?”

“To be precise, it’s 20 percent of the amount that actually goes into investments out of the 1,000 nyang of gold.”

“I don’t quite understand.”

As Master Cha tilted his head, Ko Young-gu explained in more detail.

“So... If you put in 1,000 nyang of gold, but only 200 nyang goes out as investment, we calculate the dividend based on the successful investments out of that 200 nyang.”

“So, out of the 1,000 nyang, 200 nyang is invested, but you don’t calculate based on all of that 200 nyang, just pay dividends on the successful investments?”

“That’s correct.”

“Why is it so complicated?”

To Master Cha’s grumbling, Ko Young-gu, still with a face full of smiles, placated him.

“Oh my! How could we carelessly use the precious money of our investors? We split it into small amounts and combine it with other people’s investments to minimize losses, that’s why.”

“Split into small amounts and combined?”

“Yes. For example, if 10 nyang of gold is needed for an investment, we split it into 1 nyang units and take 1 nyang each from ten different investment funds. This way, even if the startup fails, the loss is only 1 nyang of gold.”

“I see.”

Nodding his head, Master Cha frowned again.

“So, even if it succeeds, is that all the profit you get?”

“Unfortunately, yes. But doesn’t that also reduce the risk?”

“That’s certainly true.”

At Ko Young-gu’s words, Master Cha nodded as if entranced. Seeing this, Ko Young-gu inwardly muttered.

‘Whatever happens, the court is the one that loses the least, though.’

Although Master Cha had more or less understood Ko Young-gu's explanation, there was still something unsatisfactory.

"It all sounds good, but... Isn't the dividend too small?"

"Well, there are quite a few costs involved. Secondary evaluation fees, investment agency fees, audit agency fees, and so on. Quite a lot."

"You evaluate again?"

"How could we carelessly use the precious money of those who decided to invest? We need to evaluate once more to select those with the highest probability of success."

"I see."

Master Cha nodded at Ko Young-gu's explanation, but his face was not satisfied.

"Still, the dividend ratio is low..."

"There is a way to increase the ratio, but it's quite risky."

At Ko Young-gu's words, Master Cha's eyes sparkled.

"What is it?"

"You decide directly."

"Directly?"

"Yes. You come to the fund next to the Naju treasury in person, check the businesses hoping for investment, and then choose what you think is best and decide how much to invest. You can invest the full amount the investment seeker wants, or you can invest a suitable proportion. However, there is a minimum ratio for direct investment; you must invest at least 20 percent."

"Then how much does the ratio increase?"

“At least 40 percent. At least.”

“At least 40 percent...”

“However, in the case of direct investment, you must also bear the loss if the startup fails.”

At Ko Young-gu’s answer, Master Cha closed his mouth and began to weigh the possibilities.

After pondering for a while, Master Cha sighed and grumbled.

“Phew~. Oh my, this is really something!”

It was a momentary lapse of his usual dignity, but it was a complaint that revealed Master Cha’s true feelings.

After letting out this complaint and smacking his lips, Master Cha finally made up his mind.

“I’ll trust you and try investing once.”

“Thank you!”

“How much should I invest? Surely I don’t have to put in all my assets?”

“No, not at all. His Majesty the King said, ‘This should benefit both those who wish to start businesses and succeed, and those who wish to grow their wealth in the light. Therefore, let those who invest determine their investment amount according to the extent of their wealth.’”

“As expected, His Majesty is wise. So what are the criteria?”

“It’s based on the property tax payment records in the treasury. However, the maximum amount you can invest at once is between a minimum of 30 percent and a maximum of half of your total assets. And once you invest, you can’t make additional investments for a year.”

“What if I invested and suffered some losses? Can I immediately recover the remaining investment if I want to?”

“That’s also possible after a year.”

“So I have to just watch for a year?”

“Yes. Because it’s rare for the success or failure of a startup to be determined immediately.”

“Hmm...”

After calculating the pros and cons again at Ko Young-gu’s words, Master Cha finally gave in.

“I’ll visit tomorrow.”

“Thank you! Ah! When you come tomorrow, you must bring your treasury account ledger and seal. We need those to make the contract.”

“I’ll make sure to bring them.”

That evening, Master Cha’s wife, Lady An, sought out Master Cha.

“I heard that Ko from the treasury came by this afternoon. What was that about?”

“Ah! That...”

After listening to Master Cha’s explanation, Lady An thought for a moment and then turned to Master Cha.

“When you go to the treasury tomorrow, I’d like to go with you.”

“You too? Why?”

“Don’t I have some assets that I received as my portion? Shouldn’t we try to grow them a bit to distribute to our children?”

“Ah...”

Nodding lightly, Master Cha agreed to his wife’s request.

The next day, when the Cha couple visited the fund, Ko Young-gu welcomed them with a pleased face.

“Welcome!”

“Not only me, but my wife also wants to invest, so we came together.”

“Thank you! It will be a good choice!”

Ko Young-gu guided the Cha couple to a separate room in the fund and came back with another employee, carrying various types of documents.

“I’ll explain again.”

“But why is that person here with us?”

“Ah! This friend is here to make sure I explain everything accurately to you both and don’t miss anything, so you don’t misunderstand.”

“Quite cautious.”

“We can’t be careless when receiving precious investment funds, can we?”

At Ko Young-gu’s answer, the Cha couple nodded with satisfied faces.

“Indeed, it’s trustworthy since it’s a government operation!”

After the explanation was given once more, Ko Young-gu asked the Cha couple.

“I’ll ask again. Would you like to make a contract?”

“Yes, I will. How much is possible?”

“And you, madam?”

“I’ll make a contract.”

“Then...”

From there, everything proceeded smoothly. The maximum possible amount was determined based on the records they brought. When the Cha couple decided to invest the maximum limit, someone from the treasury came immediately to transfer the amount from the Cha couple’s accounts to the newly created account in the fund.

And as they stamped the document confirming that there were no issues with the entire process, the Cha couple let out tired sighs.

“Phew~. Is it finally over?”

“This is just the beginning. How would you like to invest? Would you like to invest directly? Or should we do it for you?”

At Ko Young-gu’s words, Master Cha pondered for a moment and asked.

“Is it possible to do half and half?”

“Yes, it is.”

“Then, let’s do that.”

“Understood. And how would you like to proceed, madam?”

“I’d like to do half and half as well.”

“Understood. Then, this way please.”

Ko Young-gu guided the Cha couple to the largest room in the fund.

“This is the situation room. As you can see, the bulletin board on that wall lists the names of businesses in Naju that need investment, and the next column shows the current investment status for each business.”

“They’re all about half full?”

“That’s the government’s support funds.”

“I see...”

“Please, have a seat here for a moment.”

After offering seats to the couple, Ko Young-gu sat across from them and continued his explanation.

“The papers on top here are, in order, the 5-day report, the 10-day report, and the monthly report. The 5-day report is updated every five days and records information about those needing investment within a 50-li radius of Naju. The 10-day report is updated every ten days and covers investments across the entire Jeolla Province, and the monthly report covers all of Joseon.”

“Is that so?”

As they listened to Ko Young-gu’s explanation, the Cha couple examined the papers. The papers contained detailed records of people starting new businesses in all sorts of fields and their chances of success.

That day, the Cha couple decided to invest in a mix of businesses starting up in Naju and those in Jeolla Province. Of course, the investment amount was not all of their investment funds, but only a portion.

“Thank you! We’ll do our best!”

“We’re counting on you.”

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BBCodes

[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.
Deathbringer, emphasis on [i]*death*[/i].
I'm totally [s]~~crossed out~~[/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

[img]https://www.agine.this[/img]
[link]http://topwebfiction.com[/link].
[link=https://www.n.ot]clickbait[/link].

[quote]... me like my landlord! [/quote]

[spoiler]Spanish Inquisition! [/spoiler]
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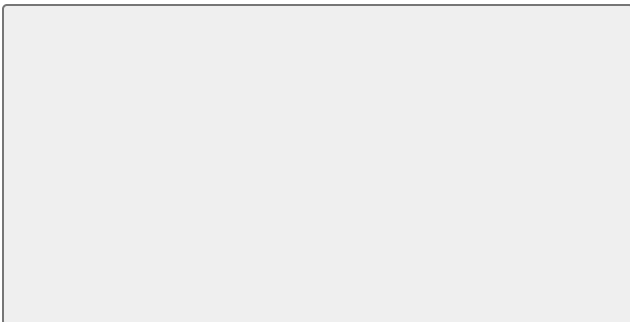
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Chapter 301 - 400

BCJ Chapter 396

Small Changes

by *BlossomTL*Black Corporation: Joseon

The next day, Master Cha visited the fund again.

“Master Cha, what brings you here?”

“Can I see those lists again?”

“Of course, but...?”

“Let me take a look.”

That entire day, Master Cha settled in at the fund and meticulously combed through the lists.

“Ah, would you like a cup of tea?”

“Oh! Yes, please give me a cup.”

This wasn't happening just in Naju. Across Joseon, those who had decided to invest would come to the fund daily, take a seat, and pore over the lists.

This was not only to grow their wealth but also became a new form of entertainment that satisfied their vanity.

“Why should I demean myself with lowly commerce? For someone in my position, it's more fitting to invest.”

Sitting in the situation room, reading information sheets about newly starting businesses, enjoying the attentive service of fund employees bringing tea and snacks – this became their daily routine.

As more people started camping out like this, funds across Joseon had to print large quantities of 5-day, 10-day, and monthly reports. And the situation rooms of the funds became social gathering places for local dignitaries.

This wasn't limited to men. Due to the strict separation of sexes, women gathered at nearby tea houses, and people would shuttle between the situation room and the tea houses every 30 minutes to relay information.

The women who gathered at these tea houses soon formed small communities called “tea meetings.” Of course, rankings were established within based on asset size, but they were still communities of women from families considered local dignitaries. Tea meetings, which sprang up at least one per tea house near the fund, soon began to engage in subtle competition with each other.

For women from families with slightly less economic power, these tea meetings became something they desperately wanted to join.

However, even the women who entered these tea meetings weren't fully satisfied. Their ultimate goal was to enter tea meetings in larger cities, and ultimately, the famous tea meetings in Hanseong, Gaeseong, and Dongnae.

Even the smallest tea meetings in these three cities were dealing with more capital than the largest tea meetings in most provincial cities.

And among these three cities, the one that could be called the best was, of course, Hanseong.

Hanseong was able to surpass Gaeseong, which had accumulated commercial experience through a long history symbolized by the Song merchants, and Dongnae, which had accumulated capital through the Japanese trading post, because of “Area 51.”

It had the advantage of being able to see new artifacts and technologies created in Area 51 before anyone else. Being able to gauge whether these would go to the royal workshop or be released to the private sector was an absolute strength.

The formation of these tea meetings, allowing women to engage in public activities, became possible when women were able to enter official positions.

With Neo-Confucianism as the state ideology, Joseon strictly applied the law of separation between men and women.

This strict application began to loosen slightly when women started to become teachers at the public schools.

Of course, there was initially some criticism. However, since most of the female teachers at the public schools were those who had received national commendations for being filial daughters-in-law or devoted wives, such criticism became mere criticism for the sake of criticism.

Moreover, since they didn't leave the school from the start of classes in the morning until they ended at dusk, there was no room for fault-finding.

And as women formally entered official positions, it became possible for women to move about freely in broad daylight.

Depending on the department, they had to work outside, and there was simply not enough manpower to keep women indoors just because they were women.

“I've finally gotten an official position, and you want me to just stay inside? And who's going to do my work while I'm in there? Are you telling me not to go home?”

“And if only female officials are allowed to move around in broad daylight, wouldn't that cause even more gossip?”

For these practical reasons, the law of separation was avoided when it came to movement. Thanks to this, women, regardless of status, were able to move about freely.

Another positive change occurred as women entered official positions.

The practice of “*myeonshinrye*” (a hazing ritual for new officials) completely disappeared.

This wasn’t just about new officials treating their seniors to a meal as a gesture of goodwill; it involved all sorts of bizarre harassment.

Since it was officially recorded during the reign of King Woo of Goryeo, there had been continuous attempts to eradicate this bad practice of *myeonshinrye*. Furthermore, King Sejong would immediately banish those caught to the archives, but the practice stubbornly persisted.

However, doing such things to women would no longer be simple harassment, but a crime. With more than 70% of the newly appointed female officials being daughters of noble families, doing such things would make one a serious criminal.

Thanks to this, *myeonshinrye* disappeared.

‘Gather small amounts of money to create large capital.’

‘Split large sums to invest in many.’

After some time, the fund’s operational methods began to show positive results.

Those who had failed the Business Evaluation Department prepared more thoroughly to seize this second chance.

As preparations became more thorough, the success rate of startups gradually increased. As people succeeded in starting businesses and

growing their wealth, more people began to prepare for startups, following their example.

As this happened, Joseon's previously passive society gradually became more active.

Local gentry also began to change little by little. While some still relied solely on their land holdings, others began to actively move their wealth as they became aware of the concept of "capital investment."

Those who had tasted success through investment began to dive more actively into the financial market. As investment through the 'Venture Capital Fund' was limited, they began to look for new investment opportunities.

And as these capital holders began to move actively, existing merchant groups also started to change.

They began to grow the size of their merchant groups by receiving external capital infusions.

The 'Park Family Merchant Group' in Jemulpo.

"Hmm... At this rate, our profits will keep decreasing..."

The heads of various departments, chief clerks, and ship captains nodded at the assessment of Park Sang-wook, the head of the merchant group and chief manager.

"The Shandong route is too competitive."

"It's not just the Shandong route. The Tsushima and Kyushu routes are just as competitive."

Listening to the words of the captains and department heads, Park Sang-wook's expression worsened.

“The conclusion is, as always, that we need to go further...”

“The Ryukyu Kingdom is the most feasible option.”

“The problem is that the Honam merchants have already established trade relations there.”

“I hear that competition is fierce even among the Honam merchants because the Ryukyu Kingdom is small.”

After considering various rumors and facts in search of a breakthrough, they finally reached one conclusion.

“So you’re saying we need to go even further.”

“That’s right. We need to go at least as far as Siam, Dai Viet, or Malacca.”

“The further we go, the bigger the profits. We should go as far as India.”

When one of the captains mentioned India, ridicule erupted from those around.

“Why stop there? Why don’t we go all the way to Alexandria? Isn’t Alexandria where we can make the most profit?”

“You need to say something that makes sense...”

At the criticism from those around, the captain who first raised the suggestion shouted angrily.

“Why doesn’t it make sense!”

“We need ships to go there. Ships!”

“To go that far, we need large ships like the navy uses! Even the largest ship our merchant group has now is like a rowboat compared to the navy’s large ships!”

The captain who first spoke didn't back down from the subsequent rebuttals.

“If the ships are small, can't we just build bigger ones?”

“Where are we going to get such big ships built? Only the government can do that! Are you going to go to the government and throw a tantrum asking them to build us ships?”

“Why can't we? Didn't we have the example of rickshaws?”

“Are you comparing rickshaws to ships?”

“What's the difference!”

“Talk sense!”

As voices rose among the people, Park Sang-wook shouted.

“Quiet! Quiet!”

At Park Sang-wook's shout, the loud voices subsided. As the commotion died down, Park Sang-wook spoke.

“It seems we'll have to go to Hanseong. Let's send a message to the Ministry of Finance.”

At Park Sang-wook's words, the department heads looked at him with surprised faces.

“Surely you're not going to buy a large ship?”

“Aren't we in a tight spot anyway? We should try everything we can.”

“That's true...”

As the department heads acquiesced, Park Sang-wook added.

“But before we go, we should check everything we can in advance. Find as many ways as possible to bring down the price.”

A month later, Park Sang-wook visited the Ministry of Finance building in Hanseong.

“This is the fifth visit...”

Park Sang-wook’s quietly muttered words were full of desperation.

As he said, this was his fifth visit to the Ministry of Finance.

“This is beyond my level of authority. I’ll send word, so could you come back in a few days?”

With such words, Park Sang-wook had to keep visiting the Ministry of Finance. And each time he returned, he had to talk with someone higher up.

“Again, at my level...”

“Hmm... I’ve reviewed it, but it’s difficult for me to decide...”

“There’s a lot of talk, so it’s been decided to make the decision at a higher level. Come back when you’re called.”

“Follow me.”

Guided by an official, Park Sang-wook arrived at Kim Jeom’s office.

Upon seeing Kim Jeom’s face, Park Sang-wook bowed at a 90-degree angle in greeting.

“I pay my respects to you, Your Excellency. I am Park, who runs the Park Family Merchant Group.”

“Sit there.”

“Thank you.”

Kim Jeom, who had offered a seat, sat opposite Park Sang-wook and opened the relevant report.

“Hmm... Let’s see...”

After examining the report, Kim Jeom asked Park Sang-wook a question.

“So... You want to acquire a large ship used by the navy?”

“Yes.”

“Why a large ship?”

To Kim Jeom’s question, Park Sang-wook explained the reasons in detail.

After listening to Park Sang-wook’s explanation, Kim Jeom soon checked the contents of several types of reports and nodded.

“Hmm... I see... Then, what the merchant group leader wants is a challenger-class warship.”

“By challenger-class large ship, do you mean the largest warship?”

“That’s right.”

“Yes, that would be the best.”

At Park Sang-wook’s answer, Kim Jeom immediately got to the point.

“Do you know how much it costs to build one of those ships?”

“I’ve heard rumors that it costs 100,000 nyang of gold...”

“These days, it’s 68,000 nyang of gold. The production cost has decreased a bit as we’ve been able to secure large quantities of quality timber. With the

cannons added, it's about 110,000 nyang. Can you manage that?"

"110,000..."

"And that's in gold."

At Kim Jeom's words, Park Sang-wook continued with a pale face.

"What our merchant group wants is not a warship, but a merchant ship. We don't need to carry cannons. Please remove that part."

"How will you ensure safety without armaments?"

"We can move along with the regular service to Alexandria."

"You mean to tag along? Hmm..."

As Kim Jeom trailed off, Park Sang-wook spoke more earnestly.

"What I want is a merchant ship. A ship that benefits from carrying more cargo in place of cannons. Of course, it may not look good to tag along with the navy, but as a merchant seeking profit, we have no choice."

"I understand, but His Majesty won't easily allow that."

"Then please allow us to carry a minimum amount, and have the navy be in charge of operating the cannons. Isn't it already the law that only soldiers can handle cannons?"

"That's a good idea!"

Kim Jeom showed a positive reaction to Park Sang-wook's proposal.

After writing something on a piece of paper next to him, Kim Jeom said to Park Sang-wook.

"I'll contact you again soon. I'll do my best to get a good answer."

At Kim Jeom's words, Park Sang-wook stood up abruptly and bowed.

“I am truly grateful!”

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[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.
Deathbringer, emphasis on [i]*death*[/i].
I'm totally [s]~~crossed out~~[/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

[img]https://www.agine.this[/img]
[link]http://topwebfiction.com[/link].
[link=https://www.n.ot]clickbait[/link].

[quote]... me like my landlord! [/quote]

[spoiler]Spanish Inquisition! [/spoiler]
[ins]Insert[/ins] more bad puns!
[del]~~Delete~~[/del] your browser history!

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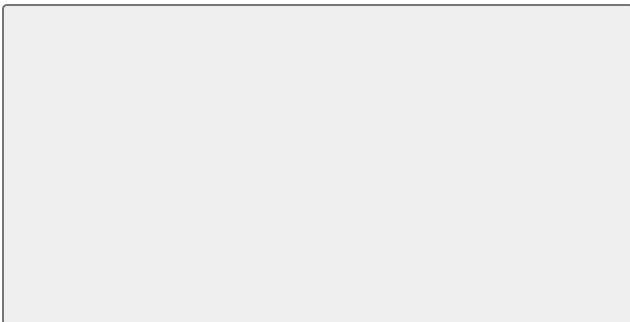
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Chapter 301 - 400

BCJ Chapter 397

Small Changes

by *BlossomTLBlack Corporation*: Joseon

Park Sang-wook's proposal was immediately brought to King Sejong. After hearing the story through Kim Jeom, Sejong first summarized the issue.

“Hmm... It's true that a merchant ship, not a warship, can't be arbitrarily armed. However, with pirates rampant on the seas now, we can't let them move unarmed. So, this merchant Park Sang-wook said he would move along with our navy, correct?”

“That's correct, Your Majesty.”

“Hmm...”

Stroking his beard and pondering Kim Jeom's answer, Sejong turned to Jo Mal-saeng.

“Minister of Defense, what do you think of Park Sang-wook's proposal?”

To Sejong's question, Jo Mal-saeng immediately replied.

“It's true that arbitrarily mounting cannons on a merchant ship is not appropriate. However, the trade that this Park Sang-wook wants to do requires going long distances, and in this case, the situation is different.”

“How is it different?”

“Yes. The current trade between Ming, Japan, and Ryukyu falls within the patrol range of our Haeung-class warships, so the bows, spears, and swords that the crew equips themselves with are sufficient. However, pirates operating in deep waters often swarm in multiple ships at once, inducing chaotic battles. In such situations, it becomes difficult for our naval warships to pay attention to each one individually, so armament with cannons is essential.”

Jo Mal-saeng’s answer was a polite refusal.

“Hmm...”

As Sejong’s deliberation deepened, Kim Jeom continued.

“Park Sang-wook had considered that point, as did I. Therefore, Park Sang-wook proposed to mount a minimum number of cannons, but leave their operation to the navy.”

“The reason he wants to trade so far away even with such conditions... Is it indeed because of competition?”

To Sejong’s question, Kim Jeom immediately nodded.

“That’s correct, Your Majesty.”

“Hmm...”

Once again considering the possibilities, Sejong turned to Hyang.

“I’ll ask the Crown Prince who designed the Challenger-class and Haeung-class warships. What do you think of this Park Sang-wook’s opinion?”

To Sejong’s question, Hyang answered without hesitation.

“It’s not a bad idea. Looking at the situation in Alexandria and India, they’re in a position where they can’t sell enough. However, simply increasing the number of Challenger-class warships is limited given our budget execution and manpower supply situation. Therefore, drawing in private funds and manpower to fill the gaps is a good method.”

“Then how should we handle the mounting of cannons?”

“As Park Sang-wook suggested, we should mount only the minimum level necessary for self-defense and have the navy operate them.”

At Hyang’s answer, Sejong looked at Jo Mal-saeng.

“Minister of Defense. The one in charge of design and production has answered thus. What do you think?”

“If the self-defense armament is sufficient, I think it’s fine.”

When even Jo Mal-saeng answered positively, Sejong turned to Kim Jeom.

“I like that this Park Sang-wook thinks broadly, but I want to add one condition.”

“What condition do you mean, Your Majesty?”

“If a crisis befalls the country and we need warships, he must agree to requisition. Of course, if he agrees to this, we’ll reduce the construction cost by 10%. Tell him we’ll build the ship if he accepts this condition.”

“I receive your command!”

“Also, order the Minister of Defense to dispatch a practical officer from the Defense Ministry to inform them of the appropriate number of cannons needed for self-defense.”

“I receive your command!”

Two days later, upon receiving word, Park Sang-wook visited Kim Jeom’s office with a face full of desperation.

“Please, sit down.”

“Yes.”

After offering a seat to Park Sang-wook, Kim Jeom introduced the official sitting opposite Park Sang-wook.

“Let me introduce you. This is Im Hae-sul from the Defense Ministry.”

“Pleased to meet you.”

“Pleased to meet you too.”

After the two exchanged greetings, Kim Jeom, seated at the head, got to the point.

“I reported your request to His Majesty, and received a reply.”

“By reply, you mean...”

At Kim Jeom’s words, Park Sang-wook’s face brightened. If Sejong had refused, he wouldn’t have started like this.

“His Majesty said he would permit it if you accept the following conditions. First, mount the minimum number of cannons necessary for self-defense. The navy will be in charge of their operation. Second, agree to requisition when the country faces a crisis and needs warships.”

“By requisition, do you mean we just need to provide the ship?”

“The ship and the crew.”

“Ah...”

At Kim Jeom’s words, Park Sang-wook trailed off.

Closing his mouth, Park Sang-wook weighed the possibilities.

‘If we get requisitioned, we’ll have to give up the ship we worked hard to build and the crew we carefully trained! But wars don’t happen easily... And from what I hear, no one can match our navy... It seems unlikely it would come to the point of requisition... But...’

Seeing Park Sang-wook's indecision, Kim Jeom threw out a bait.

“His Majesty said that if you accept this condition, he will not only have the ship built for you but also reduce the construction cost by 10%.”

“Did you say 10%?”

“That's right.”

At Kim Jeom's confirmation, Park Sang-wook took the bait.

“I accept!”

‘10% of the construction cost is 6,800 nyang of gold! With that money, I can buy even more goods to depart with!’

As Park Sang-wook accepted the conditions, the conversation moved on.

“How many cannons should be mounted?”

To Park Sang-wook's question, Im Hae-sul immediately replied.

“20 small cannons for close combat, and 40 large cannons for destroying pirate ships.”

“How many are loaded on the current warships?”

“The number of small cannons is the same, but there are 50 large cannons.”

“That's too many! This ship is a merchant ship, not a warship. I think 10 small cannons and 10 large cannons should be enough!”

“Have you ever seen the pirates causing trouble out there in the deep sea? Do you know how vicious they are? With just 10 small cannons and 10 large cannons, half your crew will be gone by the time you return.”

“It's still too many!”

After that, there was a long back-and-forth between Park Sang-wook and Im Hae-sul. After intense negotiation, they were able to agree on '20 small cannons, 16 large cannons'.

“Hmm... Then... You there!”

Calling a waiting official, Kim Jeom handed over a note.

“Go calculate how much the construction cost would be with these conditions and bring it back.”

“Yes, sir.”

Half an hour later, the subordinate returned with an estimate.

“Let's see...”

Kim Jeom took the estimate, checked its contents, and then handed it to Park Sang-wook.

“Construction cost of 68,000 nyang of gold, reduced by 10% to 61,200 nyang. Add 10,000 nyang of gold for the cost of armaments to be mounted. The total comes to 71,200 nyang.”

“Phew~.”

Taking the estimate, Park Sang-wook sighed and muttered without realizing it.

“I expected it, but it's enormous.”

“It's a ship worth that price. Didn't you prepare for at least this much?”

“That's true.”

“Then let's draw up a contract when you're ready.”

“If we contract, how long will I have to wait?”

At Park Sang-wook's question, Kim Jeom turned to Im Hae-sul. At the silent question, Im Hae-sul stepped forward to answer Park Sang-wook.

“If we prioritize it from the ships currently under construction, you could receive the ship within two months.”

“Is that so? Then... let's see...”

‘I can just barely catch up with this year's departing merchant group.’

As Park Sang-wook unconsciously counted on his fingers and made a schedule, Im Hae-sul, who had been watching him silently, spoke up.

“This might be clumsy meddling... but if you want to do business far away, it would be better to go to Alexandria or India rather than Dai Viet or Siam.”

“Why is that?”

“Chinese merchants have already firmly established themselves in Dai Viet and Siam, so there's not much profit to be made there. That's why our government only goes to Alexandria or India. Do you understand what I mean?”

“Ah! Thank you!”

Understanding Im Hae-sul's words, Park Sang-wook immediately stood up, bowed, and expressed his gratitude.

If he moved as Im Hae-sul said, he could receive strong escorts from the Joseon navy throughout the round trip, and make even more profit.

“Thank you so much for this advice, as valuable as gold and jade. Is there anything else you could tell me?”

At Park Sang-wook's words, Im Hae-sul thought for a moment and then spoke.

“Hmm... If you make a profit from trading, definitely get another ship. No, it would be good to start with two ships from the beginning. Do your merchant group’s sailors know how to use tailwinds?”

“They’re very skilled at it.”

“Then you can make two trade voyages a year. If you have two ships, you can alternate them and consistently make profits. Not only that, but you can also more quickly notice how the tastes of those Westerners change, reducing your chances of loss. Also, ships need constant inspection, and with two ships, you won’t have to stop trading, right?”

“Ah...”

At Im Hae-sul’s explanation, Park Sang-wook showed various expressions.

As Park Sang-wook left with a face full of contemplation, Kim Jeom turned to Im Hae-sul.

“You’ve worked hard.”

“Not at all. As one who receives the country’s salary, it’s only natural.”

“By the way, about those 40 large cannons you mentioned at first. Were that many really necessary?”

“Honestly, if we’re just limiting it to self-defense for a merchant ship, about 16 would be appropriate.”

“Then why did you call for so many?”

“Isn’t it a merchant’s specialty to haggle? It’s advantageous to haggle first.”

“Huh...”

Making a face of disbelief at Im Hae-sul’s answer, which seemed more merchant-like than a merchant, Kim Jeom asked again.

“Then, what about the advice on the number of ships?”

“That was genuine advice. Of course, I did add a bit of seasoning.”

“Huh...”

At Im Hae-sul’s answer, Kim Jeom continued to wear an expression of disbelief. There was nothing wrong with Im Hae-sul’s words. Therefore, Park Sang-wook would undoubtedly seriously consider it. And the conclusion he would reach was also visible.

If he had enough funds, he would immediately acquire two ships, and even if he didn’t have enough, he would do his best to get another ship as soon as possible. And the more profit he made, the more ships he would try to acquire.

If Park Sang-wook’s merchant group made big profits that way, other merchant groups would naturally follow suit.

If that happened, the navy would be able to secure spare warships and sailors that could be immediately mobilized in case of emergency without much effort.

‘They say the Crown Prince’s influence is most strongly felt among those in the military...’

Shaking his head lightly, Kim Jeom soon asked Im Hae-sul.

“Say, would you consider working at the Ministry of Finance?”

To Kim Jeom’s words, Im Hae-sul answered firmly.

“As a military examination passer, my resolve to root myself in the military remains unchanged!”

“That’s a shame. You’ve worked hard. You may go now.”

“Yes, sir.”

After paying respects to Kim Jeom and coming out, Im Hae-sul muttered while looking at the Ministry of Finance building.

“Am I crazy? Why would I enter that overtime hell?”

Along with the Seungjeongwon, which had to assist with all duties right next to Sejong, and the Research Institute and Area 51, which had to solve all sorts of outlandish artifacts and problems presented by the Crown Prince, the Ministry of Finance was a department avoided by all officials, boasting the worst work intensity. And the General Affairs Department was right behind it.

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[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.

Deathbringer, emphasis on [i]*death*[/i].

I'm totally [s]~~crossed out~~[/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

[img][/img]

[link]<http://topwebfiction.com>[/link].

[link=https://www.n.ot]clickbait[/link].

[quote]... me like my landlord! [/quote]

[spoiler]Spanish Inquisition! [/spoiler]

[ins]Insert[/ins] more bad puns!

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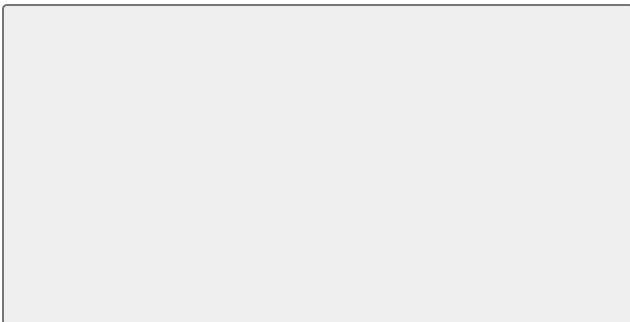
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Chapter 301 - 400

BCJ Chapter 398

Small Changes

by *BlossomTL*Black Corporation: Joseon

Meanwhile, Park Sang-wook returned to the merchant group and gathered people again.

“How did it go?”

“I received conditional approval.”

Park Sang-wook explained about the ‘conditions’ and ‘discount’.

After hearing Park Sang-wook’s explanation, everyone nodded.

“Not bad conditions.”

“The requisition issue is something we should endure as citizens of Joseon.”

While everyone was showing positive reactions, Park Sang-wook mentioned Im Hae-sul’s advice. After hearing Im Hae-sul’s advice, everyone’s faces turned serious.

“It’s a good opinion, but...”

“If the government gives us a discount like now, we could manage two ships if we add a little more to the funds we’ve already prepared.”

“Where are we going to add from? Even this prepared fund is almost all the money our merchant group has saved so far!”

“Couldn’t we do something like credit or installment payments?”

“Are you suggesting we offer a promissory note to the government? As if they’d accept it!”

“Then what should we do? This is a golden opportunity when others aren’t moving! We need to surge ahead now to keep pushing forward in the future!”

“The problem is funds! Where are we going to borrow the lacking funds from? Are we going to use high-interest private loans?”

“That’s it!”

At the sudden shout, the noisy room instantly fell silent.

The captain who shouted spoke to Park Sang-wook.

“How about talking to the Venture Capital Fund?”

“The Venture Capital Fund...”

Park Sang-wook showed an intrigued expression. At that moment, one of the department heads listening to the conversation pointed out a problem.

“The Venture Capital Fund is literally for supporting startups with low chances of success. Would we qualify?”

“Huh?”

“Ah...”

At the department head’s point, people’s faces became serious again.

While they might not compare to large merchant groups like the Song merchants (Gaeseong merchants) who boasted the longest history, they

were still considered a large merchant group. Thanks to that, they were able to prepare the construction costs for a Challenger-class warship to some extent. And it was this very point that was being pointed out as a disqualifying factor.

Park Sang-wook and the others gathered in the room muttered with slightly bitter faces.

“They say life is like a seesaw...”

As mentioned before, there were significant changes in the commercial sector as the reforms progressed.

Some merchant groups with histories ranging from 30 to over 100 years disappeared, while others emerged as new powers by seizing the opportunity of the reforms.

The Gyeonggang merchants (merchants of the Han River) were representative of the former case, while Park Sang-wook’s merchant group was representative of the latter.

The downfall of the Gyeonggang merchants was, in a way, an inevitable result.

The main commercial activity of the Gyeonggang merchants was transporting the government’s tax grains and the rent grains of the nobility.

While they received considerable legitimate shipping fees in this process, the profits from illegal activities during the process were not insignificant.

They grew their wealth through various fraudulent practices such as “*hwasu*” (mixing water with grains to match the weight after stealing some), “*tusik*” or “*gopae*” (falsely claiming that a perfectly good ship had sunk and then embezzling the goods).

It was natural that these fraudulent activities were caught by the government’s increasingly sharp eyes as the reforms progressed.

As these illegal activities were caught, many river merchants were arrested and their properties confiscated.

The final blow that brought down these critically wounded river merchants was the road improvement project carried out by the government.

With improved roads, most of the grains and goods exchanged for people's money were transported by land.

Unable to adapt to the changes brought by the reforms, and with experienced merchants being arrested, the Gyeonggang merchants disappeared from history.

Despite this negative atmosphere, the captain who first made the proposal didn't back down.

“Of course, it could be a disqualifying factor! But this is navigation, and ocean navigation at that! No one knows what dangers lurk in those distant seas! Why else would even the navy offer sacrifices to the Sea God before every departure?”

Hearing this, the other captains all nodded. Although the threat from pirates and Japanese raiders had greatly decreased due to the activities of the Joseon navy, natural disasters were still uncontrollable. Even now, one or two ships among those traveling to Shandong and Japan would inevitably meet with disaster and sink.

“That's true, but... Wouldn't the size of our merchant group be a problem? They might say we're borrowing money to avoid our own losses.”

“Don't we distribute profits according to how much we borrow? And even if we can't borrow from the Venture Capital Fund, we must visit the fund.”

“Why?”

“We need to catch those idling in the situation room!”

“Ah!”

At the captain’s last words, people’s faces brightened.

“That’s right. All the richest people in Hanseong gather there.”

Nodding, Park Sang-wook turned to the department heads.

“Let’s draw up the plan again. This time, for two ships.”

“Yes, Chief Manager!”

Five days later, Park Sang-wook visited the Venture Capital Fund located at the Bell Tower.

“What brings you here?”

As Park Sang-wook sat opposite a desk with a sign reading ‘Investment Consultation’, a tired-looking official in charge asked the question.

“Yes, our merchant group is going to build ships, so I came to arrange some funds.”

“Ships?”

As soon as he heard the word ‘ships’, the official in charge quickly drank the lukewarm black bean tea placed beside him in one gulp and forcibly gathered his wits.

“Ships... The shipping industry is fiercely competitive these days, what kind of goods will you be handling?”

“We will be handling various types of goods.”

“That’s even worse... Why don’t you specialize in just one type? If you wait a moment, I can find some information and recommend suitable options.”

“We’re thinking of shipping to Alexandria, not to Shandong or Japan.”

“Wait!”

The official who stopped Park Sang-wook’s words stood up and turned around. He went into the tea preparation room set up behind the counter, poured black bean tea from a kettle, drank two cups in succession, and assessed the situation.

“This must be that merchant the rumors were talking about recently...”

Both the investment fund and the treasury belonged to the Ministry of Finance. And due to their location in Hanseong, the fund and treasury were receiving information about what was happening in the Ministry of Finance almost in real-time.

Slap!

The official slapped his own cheek and gave himself a hypnotic suggestion.

“Pull yourself together, Choi Seong-su! This is the chance of a lifetime!”

Choi Seong-su, who had sharply gathered his wits, returned to his seat and gestured to Park Sang-wook.

“This doesn’t seem like a conversation to have here, shall we move to another place?”

“Yes.”

Park Sang-wook and Choi Seong-su moved to a separate room prepared in one corner of the fund.

“You said you’re going to trade as far as Alexandria?”

“That’s right.”

“Huh... Then you’ll need quite a large ship, right?”

“That’s why we’re thinking of getting a ship like the large ships used by the navy.”

“How many ships?”

“Two ships.”

At Park Sang-wook’s answer, Choi Seong-su’s face became even more serious.

“You’ll need considerable funds, do you want to borrow the entire amount?”

To Choi Seong-su’s question, Park Sang-wook shook his head.

“No. We have our own prepared funds, so we want to borrow the lacking portion.”

“So how much do you want?”

“80,000 nyang of gold.”

“80,000 nyang of gold...”

At Park Sang-wook’s answer, Choi Seong-su calculated internally.

‘Since the fund has only been open for a few months, not many loans have gone out yet... We have about 400,000 nyang of gold left now... If we do well?’

Thinking there was some possibility, Choi Seong-su spread out a paper on one side and started asking more detailed questions.

“When you say a large ship used by the navy, you mean a Challenger-class warship, right? You know how much it costs to build one of those, don’t you?”

“Yes, the Minister of Finance explained it to me, so I know. Including the cannons to be mounted, it’s 71,200 nyang of gold. But for two ships, it’s 142,400 nyang. Our merchant group has prepared 110,000 nyang, but to build two ships and buy goods to load on them, we’re short by 80,000 nyang.”

Choi Seong-su, who was nodding while diligently writing down numbers, asked again.

“Then what type of loan do you want? A loan with 60% annual interest? Or a loan with 30% annual interest, but you have to entrust 51% of the shares?”

“A loan with 60% annual interest.”

“Ah... I see...”

‘As expected of a seasoned merchant.’

Choi Seong-su smacked his lips, feeling slightly disappointed. It was more profitable for the fund to secure shares.

However, Park Sang-wook wanted a loan that, despite the high interest rate, would allow him to keep his shares. He too had heard the rumors about Alexandria.

‘One round trip can bring at least 10 to 20 times profit!’

If he could successfully complete a few proper voyages, he could pay off not only the interest but also the principal, so he couldn’t give up the shares of his merchant group that he had built with blood, sweat, and tears.

After conducting a bit more consultation, Choi Seong-su organized the papers and stood up.

“I’ll organize what you’ve told me and proceed with the evaluation.”

“Then when can I expect to know the result?”

“You should be able to know the result within five days, I’ll send word when the result comes out.”

At Choi Seong-su’s answer, Park Sang-wook bowed and made a request.

“I’ll be counting on you.”

“I’ll do my best.”

Five days later, Choi Seong-su informed Park Sang-wook of the result.

“I’m sorry. The result came back as not possible.”

“May I know the reason?”

“The conclusion was that venture capital is meant to help those without capital start businesses, and your merchant group doesn’t fit this criteria. Especially, since you already have enough funds to build one ship but are trying to arrange funds to build two ships, the conclusion was that it’s even more impossible.”

“Ah...”

As Park Sang-wook couldn’t hide his disappointment, Choi Seong-su continued.

“I’m sorry. It seems starting with one ship would be the best option.”

“Yes. Thank you for your hard work.”

Standing up, Park Sang-wook asked Choi Seong-su.

“May I stop by the situation room for a moment?”

“The situation room? Ah! You want to persuade the rich people there?”

“That’s right.”

At Park Sang-wook's words, Choi Seong-su pondered for a moment and then nodded.

“As long as you don't cause too much commotion, it should be fine. Again, I'm sorry about the result.”

“No, it's alright.”

After saying goodbye to Choi Seong-su like this, Park Sang-wook entered the situation room.

‘So these are Hanseong's greatest wealthy individuals!’

Seeing the rich people gathered in the situation room, chatting or flipping through information sheets, Park Sang-wook gathered his wits and raised his voice.

“I hope you're all well! I am Park, leading the Park Merchant Group! I've been given the opportunity to speak to you all for a moment!”

At Park Sang-wook's self-introduction, the rich people's attention focused on him.

When Park Sang-wook's explanation ended, the wealthy individuals started sharing opinions either alone or in groups of two or three.

“80,000 nyang of gold... That's not a small amount, is it?”

“Indeed. With 80,000 nyang of gold, even if we're talking about rice... and even the most expensive Icheon rice or Naju rice...”

The rich people spread out papers and did some quick calculations.

As the reforms progressed and people's earnings improved, the price of rice continued to rise. The government was trying to prevent it from rising too much, but it was still steadily increasing.

Looking at recent market prices, ordinary white rice was about 1 nyang and 40 won of silver per seom, while the famously delicious Icheon rice or Naju rice averaged 2 nyang of silver per seom.

In that case, 80,000 nyang of gold was equivalent to 400,000 seom of Icheon or Naju rice.

400,000 seom was an amount that even a wealthy person with ten thousand seok would need to save for almost a lifetime, or rather, for about three generations including grandchildren.

“But...”

However, Park Sang-wook’s plan was too sweet in its results to immediately refuse.

-If the voyage goes well, it yields at least 10 times profit. Even if we don’t receive interest, calculating just the profit distribution leaves plenty!

In the end, the wealthy individuals gathered in the situation room accepted Park Sang-wook’s proposal. The rich people would receive shares proportional to the amount they agreed to invest.

It was the birth of a rudimentary joint-stock company.

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[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.

Deathbringer, emphasis on [i]death[/i].

I'm totally [s]~~crossed out~~[/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

[img]https://www.agine.this[/img]

[link]http://topwebfiction.com[/link].

[link=https://www.n.ot]clickbait[/link].

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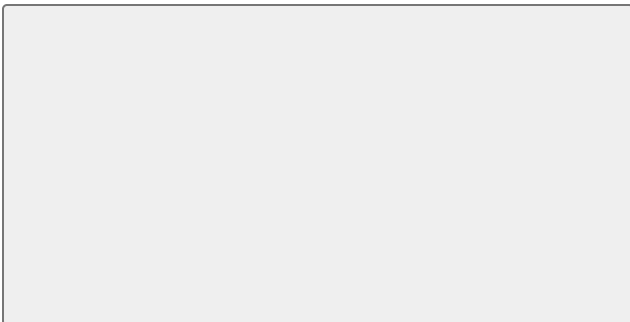
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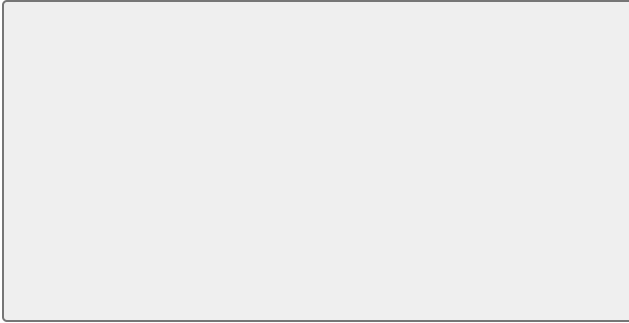
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Chapter 301 - 400

BCJ Chapter 399

Higher Education Institutions

by *BlossomTL*Black Corporation: Joseon

In the late summer of the 14th year of King Sejong's reign (Imja year, 1432), not long before Chuseok.

Hyang, who had voluntarily entered Geunjeongjeon after a long time, reported to King Sejong.

“Your son has something to report to Father.”

“If it's about the budget, there isn't any.”

At Sejong's firm answer, Hyang slightly turned his head and pouted. But soon, composing his expression, Hyang reported to Sejong again.

“The first round of translations of the medical texts is complete.”

“Really!”

Sejong brightened at Hyang's report.

Hyang gestured to the eunuch who had followed him. At Hyang's hand signal, the eunuch handed thick books to the Chief Royal Secretary.

Receiving the books through the Chief Royal Secretary, Sejong examined their contents.

“They’re all written in Jeongeum (the vernacular form of Hunminjeongeum)?”

“Yes. Thanks to that, the work was greatly reduced.”

“Even if reduced, it wasn’t an easy task. We should reward those who did the translations.”

“They will consider it an honor.”

Listening to Hyang’s answer, Sejong looked at the books again and spoke.

“Now we can make progress in training military doctors.”

“That’s right.”

The books Hyang presented to Sejong were translations of Ibn Sina’s “Canon of Medicine” (القانون في الطب) and parts of various medical texts written by Galen (Claudius Galenus).

As the regular Alexandria route was established, Hyang imported large quantities of medical texts from the Byzantine Empire and Islamic countries.

The reason for importing these medical texts in large quantities was to train a large number of medical personnel, especially military doctors.

“We need to establish a Military Medical Department at the Military Academy.”

As the reforms began, Hyang had early on insisted on the need to establish a Military Medical Department at the Military Academy. The ministers showed a somewhat lukewarm reaction to Hyang’s assertion.

“Military doctors? Is it really necessary to create a Military Medical Department?”

“Wouldn’t it be an unnecessary expenditure?”

“If a war breaks out or there’s a conflict and soldiers need to be deployed, we can mobilize doctors from the Royal Clinic or nearby villages. That’s how it’s been done until now, and there haven’t been any particular problems.”

Seeing the ministers who thought it was ‘unnecessary expenditure’, Hyang strongly emphasized its necessity.

“If doctors are drafted when a war or conflict occurs, what will we do if an epidemic breaks out in another region?”

“Then, we could mobilize doctors from nearby areas...”

“Are you suggesting we rob Peter to pay Paul?”

“...”

“Moreover, as our naval warships increasingly venture further into distant seas, shouldn’t we assign at least one military doctor to each ship?”

“...”

The ministers fell silent at Hyang’s points.

“I’ve been thinking, and I find the Crown Prince’s proposal reasonable. The territory under our Joseon’s rule is gradually expanding, and will continue to do so. And as the Crown Prince said, our navy’s ships will be venturing increasingly farther. We need someone who can devise countermeasures if illness strikes in unfamiliar foreign lands. So, let’s establish a Military Medical Department in the Military Academy that we’re preparing to set up.”

“We receive your command!”

Though Sejong’s order was given like this, progress was not quick. It was repeatedly pushed back due to the establishment of public schools and

middle schools, and then because of the Giyubangyan rebellion and the Horun (barbarian invasion) caused by Yi Manchu and Mengtemu.

However, this delay was paradoxically fortunate for the Military Medical Department.

Hyang muttered while flipping through reports.

“They say life is like a seesaw...”

Through the Giyubangyan rebellion and the Horun, limitations in mobilizing doctors were discovered. Then, as the navy advanced to Alexandria and sweeping operations against pirates and Japanese raiders occurred in Joseon’s coastal waters, the necessity for doctors was acutely felt.

Eventually, though it started as a forced measure, the ministers began to seriously review the plan.

“It would be good to focus the medical skills taught in the Military Medical Department mainly on treating external injuries.”

“That seems right, doesn’t it? Looking at the recent rebellion and Horun...”

Among the ministers reviewing the plan, Hyang voiced his opinion.

“We should add not only external injuries but also diseases and pharmacology.”

“Diseases and pharmacology, you say?”

“Isn’t the battlefield not a clean place? Isn’t the battlefield a place where even clean water, which is most important, is hard to obtain? Isn’t it naturally a place where diseases are rampant?”

The ministers nodded at Hyang’s point. Especially, military commanders like Jo Mal-saeng nodded so vigorously it seemed they might strain their

necks.

“That’s right! Even in military tactics, polluting water is listed as the first method of the scorched earth tactic to break the enemy’s offensive!”

“Water can somehow be solved with purification frames, but when fighting in unfamiliar places, the spread of diseases is inevitable. To properly maintain combat power, preparation for this is certainly necessary! We’ve already experienced this in the recent Horun.”

In the process of suppressing the Horun caused by Yi Manchu and Mengtemu, a considerable number of soldiers were incapacitated by disease – according to reports, influenza was the most likely culprit.

Upon examining the reason, it was found that unlike soldiers from Pyeongan-do and Yeongan-do (Hamgil-do) who were accustomed to the harsh northern environment, soldiers who came as reinforcements from the south were overwhelmed by the harsh northern winter.

Later, after checking the related reports, Hyang muttered with a deflated expression.

“Even on this palm-sized Korean peninsula, the natural environment differs between north and south? Is that so? No, the ones who went up were from the Gyeonggi garrison, so that’s just a quarter of the way, isn’t it?”

With the strong support of the military department who had experienced this firsthand, Hyang went a step further.

“And I believe we should also teach basic military tactics in the Military Medical Department.”

“Military tactics, you say?”

At Hyang's proposal, not only the ministers but even the military department all looked dumbfounded.

Seeing this reaction, Hyang added a more detailed explanation.

“Let's imagine an epidemic breaks out. The doctors in the area where the epidemic first occurs will step up first, and the court will also send out doctors and female physicians from the Royal Clinic, but won't the military doctors located closest be the first to be mobilized?”

The ministers and commanders nodded as they considered Hyang's point from various angles.

“That's the most likely possibility.”

“There won't be time to wait for support from Hanseong with doctors right next door.”

“What does treating an epidemic mean? Isn't it a war to stop and repel the existence of an epidemic that has invaded to kill our people of Joseon? Think back for a moment. How similar are the activities to prevent an epidemic and the movements to prevent the invasion of foreign enemies?”

At Hyang's words, the ministers and commanders who briefly recalled their memories nodded once again.

When foreign enemies invade, the first step is to confirm where they've attacked and what their scale is.

Next, defensive lines are formed around the enemy's occupied areas to block the enemy's advance while simultaneously cutting off their supply lines.

By tying down the enemy's feet like this, they are gradually annihilated.

This was the most basic defensive tactic written in military manuals. And the method of dealing with the outbreak of an epidemic was similar to this.

The ministers and commanders who understood the example Hyang gave agreed to add 'basic military tactics' to the curriculum.

The problem was that this 'basic military tactics' was "The Art of War" by Sun Tzu.

"The Art of War? Isn't that too advanced?"

To Hyang's point, the commanders asked back with faces that said it was nonsense.

"The Art of War is a must-read that anyone applying for the military exam should read and master, isn't it? Isn't it?"

"Well, that's true, but... Well. Let's do it that way."

Stepping back, Hyang muttered inwardly.

'I sometimes feel that there are many things reversed when comparing the 21st century and now.'

Things that were considered basic in the 21st century were either very advanced knowledge or skills in the current Joseon, or vice versa, frequently.

'Anyway, my condolences to the gentlemen who will study what's considered both the beginning and the ultimate in military tactics...'

Hyang was turning his head away after starting this himself.

After overcoming one hurdle like this, Hyang, the ministers, and the commanders moved on to the next issue.

The next problem waiting was related to the overall Military Academy – the issue of the education period.

Regarding this education period, the military insisted on 10 years, while others argued for 6 years.

“6 years? That’s too short! Military texts are just as deep as the Confucian classics if we consider their depth! 6 years is too short!”

“It took at least 10 years of study to apply for the military exam! At least!”

The ministers standing at the opposite end of the military department arguing for 10 years didn’t back down either.

“10 years? Even if you study for 20 years, not just 10, aren’t you the ones who treat them as novices if they haven’t experienced actual combat? It’s better to teach only what’s necessary and then finish in actual combat! 10 years? Are you going to earn that budget?”

“Even if it’s 10 years, doesn’t that include the time to learn basic studies like the Thousand Character Classic? Since they’ll come through public schools and middle schools anyway, can’t we subtract that time?”

“This is discriminating against the military class!”

“Don’t be ridiculous! Even for selecting civil officials, it’s stated that they can apply for the civil service exam if they complete public school or middle school! What nonsense about discriminating against the military class? If you argue like that, it’s discriminating against the civil class!”

The confrontation between both sides showed no signs of backing down. However, both sides had valid reasons. The military wanted well-polished talents, while the ministers wanted to supply talents with necessary abilities within a limited budget.

As this confrontation between the two sides continued, Hyang intervened.

“How about going with a 6-year course for now? I said ‘for now’.”

“Did you say ‘for now’, Your Highness?”

“Yes.”

Nodding, Hyang explained in more detail.

-For the first 3 years at the Military Academy, students learn the most basic military knowledge, weapon skills, and unit operation methods.

-After learning for 3 years, they take an exam, and those who fail are assigned as lower-ranking officers like military instructors or garrison commanders.

-Those who pass the exam learn advanced military knowledge and unit operation techniques for the next 3 years.

-Those who pass this total 6-year course are appointed and placed as patrol officers or acting officers according to their rank.

-Afterwards, those who have worked with excellent performance evaluations for at least 5 years are tested and promoted to high-ranking officers starting from commanders of 10,000.

-Those who start as military instructors or garrison commanders can be promoted to flag bearers or patrol officers if they record excellent performance evaluations for 3 years. Subsequently, if they record excellent performance evaluations for 5 years, they are given the opportunity to challenge the promotion exam.

“What do you think?”

The ministers immediately agreed with Hyang’s proposal.

“It’s a good plan! Since the current promotion process for civil officials also goes through a similar process, we can solve the issue of fairness!”

Having received the support of the ministers, Hyang turned to the military personnel.

“What do you think?”

“Please give us some time...”

“Of course.”

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BBCodes

[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.

Deathbringer, emphasis on [i]*death*[/i].

I'm totally [s]~~crossed out~~[/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

[img][/img]

[link]<http://topwebfiction.com>[/link].

[link=https://www.n.ot]clickbait[/link].

[quote]... me like my landlord! [/quote]

[spoiler]Spanish Inquisition! [/spoiler]

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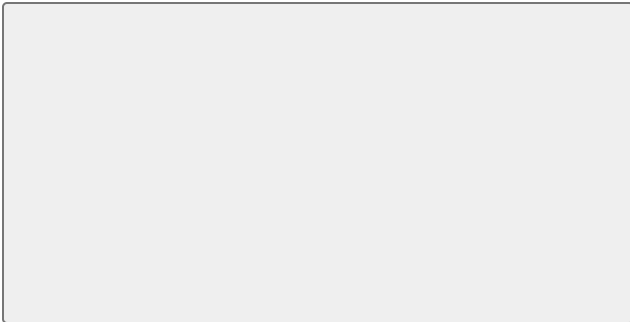
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Chapter 301 - 400

BCJ Chapter 400

Higher Education Institutions

by *BlossomTLBlack Corporation: Joseon*

As Hyang took a step back, Jo Mal-saeng and the military personnel came out separately to discuss.

“What do you all think?”

“It’s not bad. As the civil officials said, we can reduce that time since we’re selecting those who have already learned basic studies through public schools and middle schools.”

“Even those who fail and drop out in the first 3 years can have a chance to rise if they serve properly in the military, so it’s not entirely disadvantageous.”

“However, quite a few hidden talents might be lost, unable to show their abilities due to the record of ‘failing in the 3rd year’.”

At the point that they might miss hidden talents who give up after failing in the third year, Jo Mal-saeng spoke up.

“Let’s filter them out.”

As the military personnel made uncomfortable expressions at Jo Mal-saeng’s cold words, he added more.

“If they’re truly late-blooming talents, they’ll overcome those hardships and shine. Rather, it’s more troublesome if those who give up during that process rise to the top.”

“...Understood.”

“Then the conclusion is settled.”

And so, the education period for the Military Academy was decided.

It was the birth of a brutal commander training process, called ‘The Rebirth of Sparta’, where only those who proved themselves through practical work and actual combat could rise to the top.

Through this process, the Military Academy was steadily preparing for its establishment.

However, the biggest obstacle was still the Military Medical Department.

To be precise, it was the issue of surgery that would be in charge of treating external injuries.

The issues of diseases and pharmacology could be solved with traditional Korean medicine that had been passed down until now.

The problem was that this was difficult with surgery.

Like Hua Tuo, who lost his life after telling Cao Cao he would drill a hole in his skull and perform surgery to treat him, there were techniques related to surgery in Korean medicine.

However, the level of these passed-down external injury treatment methods was very low.

“Of course, if we’re talking about levels, it’s the same on both sides...”

Hyang pouted with a face full of dissatisfaction as he summarized the situation.

Whether it was this side where specialized tools for surgical procedures barely existed, or the other side that had properly squandered things more precious than the gold accumulated since ancient Roman times. He was equally displeased with both.

“Even until the 18th century, surgeons also worked as barbers, right?”

While grumbling and recalling the origin of the three-colored advertising lights that used to spin next to barber shop signs, Hyang moved ceaselessly.

At first through bookstores in Beijing, then through Mansur, and then using the navy’s warships that regularly traveled between Alexandria and Joseon, he collected medical texts that remained in the Byzantine Empire and Islamic countries.

“It’s not just medical texts that are important.”

After securing a considerable number of medical texts – nearly 600 volumes – Hyang next collected medical instruments.

“Oh, this...”

Seeing the surgical instruments passed down from Roman times, Hyang lightly shook his head.

The surgical instruments, almost unchanged from Roman times, were quite similar to the modern ones he had seen in dramas or movies in the 21st century.

“That drama’s line really hits home now...”

It was a line spoken by a leading character in a drama about people traveling between stars through gates made by ancient civilizations.

‘If we hadn’t squandered what we accumulated in Roman times, we might be freely traveling between stars by now!’

Although there might be some exaggeration, Hyang thought there was still some possibility.

Anyway, after collecting these surgical instruments, Hyang gathered those said to be most skilled in surgical treatment from the Royal Clinic and showed them the tools obtained from the West and documents translating their usage methods.

“Do you understand how to use these?”

“We understand roughly, but...”

“Then can you use these in treatment?”

At Hyang’s question, all the doctors shook their heads.

“There’s a world of difference between guessing and actually knowing how to use them. Especially with items directly related to life, we absolutely must not use them based on guesswork.”

“Is that so?”

“Yes, it is!”

Hearing the doctors’ firm answers, Hyang returned to the Crown Prince’s palace and shouted at the medical texts piled knee-high on the floor due to lack of bookshelves.

“When am I supposed to translate all of this!”

Hyang’s hardship was somewhat resolved when monks and alchemists came from Italy.

“These need to be translated too.”

At Hyang's order, Angelo, who was examining the books, turned to him.

"These are medical texts. I see many of Galen's works in particular."

"I've heard he's the most famous doctor."

Angelo nodded at Hyang's words.

"First, I want you to translate the books related to surgical techniques."

"...Understood."

After passing the work to the monks and alchemists like this, Hyang also passed work to Hassan.

"I've obtained a medical text left by a famous scholar named Ibn Sina."

"Yes. He was a renowned doctor and scholar since ancient times. Which one should we translate first?"

"Start with the Canon of Medicine. The Book of Healing (كتاب الشفاء) might be politically problematic."

"As far as I know, politics is omitted from the Book of Healing?"

"Instead, it includes religion."

At Hyang's words, Hassan immediately nodded.

"I understand. I will prioritize translating only the Canon of Medicine."

"I'm counting on you. There might be rewards if the results are good."

"Yes, Your Highness."

Not long after assigning the work like this, Angelo reported to Hyang.

"There are several duplicate books."

“Duplicate books?”

“Yes, books with the same title but written in Latin and Greek.”

At Angelo’s words, Hyang immediately gave an order.

“Cross-verify them.”

“Cross... verify?”

“Unless they’re both originals, there could be errors, right? So, cross-verify the contents with the alchemists before translating.”

“... Yes.”

“Good work. I look forward to good results.”

After quietly bowing and leaving, Angelo looked up at the sky and unconsciously muttered.

“Damn it! Shit!”

Having momentarily cursed, Angelo diligently crossed himself and asked for forgiveness.

Meanwhile, Hyang, left alone, was grumbling on his own.

“Damn it! Duplicate purchases! This isn’t some random box! ‘Don’t ask, just buy’ is the problem here! It’s not like I can go there myself!”

As he was grumbling like this, Hyang suddenly stopped talking and his eyes sparkled.

“Should I go there myself?”

His eyes sparkling like this, Hyang soon shook his head.

“Impossible. If I bring it up to Father, I’ll be hit not with a rod but with a pillar from Geunjeongjeon.”

Shaking his head like this, Hyang's eyes sparkled again.

“But maybe? No... No...”

Hyang was wavering back and forth over an event that stimulated his collector's heart.

The translation work, which was expected to progress well after being handed over to experts like this, was sluggish.

What made the work speed sluggish was, of course, Chinese characters. Translating Arabic, Latin, and Greek into Chinese characters was a murderous task.

Eventually, Angelo, tired of translation, went to find Hassan.

The two were in a relationship that might be as immiscible as oil and water – a Catholic priest and a Muslim. However, thanks to the common point of being ‘beings ground down by Hyang’, they were able to build a sort of friendship.

“How did the department head manage all those translations until now?”

At Angelo's complaint, Hassan answered with a bitter smile.

“Among those translations, what I did doesn't even amount to 1 percent.”

“Then the rest?”

“His Highness the Crown Prince did them.”

“That's impossible! That amount would take at least 10 years!”

To Angelo's words full of disbelief, Hassan added.

“He started translating at age 8. And that wasn't dedicating all day to it, but in between his Crown Prince lessons and Area 51 work.”

At Hassan's answer, Angelo let out a long sigh and leaned back in his chair, muttering.

“Is he even human?”

“He was born as the first son of His Majesty. Sigh~.”

Hassan, sighing and drinking coffee, said to Angelo.

“If Europeans were to learn of His Highness the Crown Prince's existence, they would immediately call him a ‘living wonder’.”

“To that extent?”

“Among the things made in the research institute and Area 51, there's little that hasn't passed through His Highness's hands. Ah! Except for the craftsman named Jang Yeong-sil! Come to think of it... if Jang Yeong-sil's existence were also known...”

Hassan paused for a moment, counted on his fingers, and then continued.

“There would be three living wonders in this Joseon.”

“Three?”

“His Highness the Crown Prince. Jang Yeong-sil, and...”

Hassan pointed towards Gyeongbokgung Palace as he concluded.

“Lastly, His Majesty the King.”

The translation work, which had been sluggish like this, gained speed after Hunminjeongeum was created.

Even before being publicly promulgated to the people, Hunminjeongeum began to be used in government offices and educational institutions, and the research institute and Area 51 couldn't be left out.

No, the research institute and Area 51 were the first to use it.

This was inevitable given the characteristics of the research institute and Area 51. Just looking at the languages used by the members, there were four: Korean, Arabic, Latin, and Greek. On top of that, Chinese characters were used for documents.

“We need to use Hunminjeongeum for our own convenience!”

As the difference between using Chinese characters and using Hunminjeongeum was clearly visible, the research institute and Area 51 rather actively used Hunminjeongeum.

“For now, let’s put aside proper nouns and translate general sentences using Hunminjeongeum first.”

“Yes, Your Highness.”

The people who resumed translation work after receiving Hyang’s order shook their heads at the greatly increased efficiency.

“The king created such a convenient writing system alone? While handling such busy state affairs?”

“Is he human?”

“Both the king and prince are wonders.”

“Look at the craftsman called Jang Yeong-sil. Everyone in this country is a wonder.”

“I agree.”

The conversation shared like this was soon recorded in Angelo’s letter and headed to Italy.

And Hyang, who was censoring this letter, did not erase that part.

“Does this become evidence of historically and traditionally recognized national pride acknowledged by the world?”

It was Hyang, selecting here and there with a face full of mischief and blacking out parts.

The translation work, which had overcome one hurdle like this, came to have fierce debates over proper nouns related to diseases and body organs that included medical terms.

“It’s to be used by us Joseon people in our Joseon, so of course it should be in Korean!”

With Hyang’s strong insistence, everything was translated into Korean as much as possible.

While directing this entire process, Hyang inwardly muttered.

‘I absolutely refuse to hear specialists mumbling unintelligible Latin when getting a medical examination at the hospital!’

And the results of such intense work were the books that were presented to King Sejong’s hands.

“Good work. With this, the establishment of the Military Medical Department will gain speed.”

“That’s right.”

“Hmm...”

Flipping through the translations once more, Sejong turned to Hyang.

“The Royal Clinic will need surgery too, right?”

“That’s correct.”

At Hyang’s answer, Sejong pondered for a moment and soon reached a conclusion.

“Since we’re planning to establish a medical academy to train doctors anyway, we should include surgery in the medical academy as well. What do you all think?”

At Sejong’s question, the ministers answered in unison.

“It’s truly a beautiful decision!”

“It’s truly a beautiful decision as the treatment of injured people will become easier!”

As the ministers agreed, Sejong turned to Hyang.

“Then. Mass print these translations.”

“We’re a bit short on budget.”

“Hey!”

Sejong, who was about to shout angrily, soon let out a long sigh.

“Sigh~. Minister of Finance.”

At Sejong’s call, Kim Jeom forcibly opened his mouth.

“I will allocate the budget.”

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[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.
Deathbringer, emphasis on [i]*death*[/i].
I'm totally [s]~~crossed out~~[/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

[img]https://www.agine.this[/img]
[link]http://topwebfiction.com[/link].
[link=https://www.n.ot]clickbait[/link].

[quote]... me like my landlord! [/quote]

[spoiler]Spanish Inquisition! [/spoiler]
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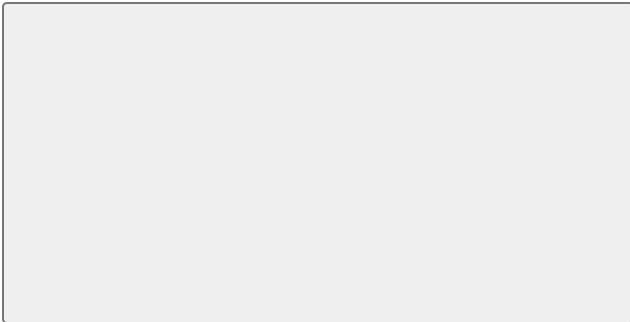
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Chapter 401 - 500

BCJ Chapter 401

Higher Education Institutions

by *BlossomTLBlack Corporation: Joseon*

The Medical Academy was one of the higher education institutions that King Sejong decided to establish through the reforms.

As the reforms entered their later stages, Sejong, after reviewing the process so far, once again publicly expressed his intention to establish official higher education institutions.

Until then, being “someone’s disciple” or “someone’s child” was what proved a person’s level of education and ability. However, this lacked objectivity to become an official certification standard.

Of course, people were filtered through the civil service examination, but those who entered through hereditary privilege were a problem. Simply trusting and appointing someone because they were “someone’s disciple” or “someone’s child” was becoming increasingly problematic. As the reforms progressed, the work of the government running Joseon became incomparably more difficult in both quantity and quality compared to the past.

In this process, Sejong and the ministers trained by him began to strictly evaluate the work performance of officials.

This came as an enormous burden to both those who appointed middle managers through hereditary privilege and the appointees themselves. Those who had appointed people lost points in their personnel evaluations for not properly judging people, and those who had taken on positions without proper practical experience received painful deductions along with evaluations of insufficient ability.

Being able to enter through hereditary privilege meant that one's father was a high-ranking official. However, the ministers who had witnessed what happened to Hwang Hui because of his sons had to evaluate work more thoroughly than anyone.

Therefore, as mentioned before, cases of entering official positions through hereditary privilege gradually decreased.

As such cases arose, Sejong decided to establish higher education institutions.

“Entering as a disciple of a famous scholar is not fair from the start, and it's not easy to say that the result is universally acknowledged. Therefore, we need a certification that anyone can recognize as proof of learning.”

According to Sejong's strong will, higher education institutions were created.

The higher education institutions created in this way were primarily the Academy of Mathematics, the Academy of Engineering, the Medical Academy, and the Military Academy.

The Academy of Mathematics, which the ministers decided to establish first, was to meet the needs of the government.

As the reforms progressed, the government's work broke away from old practices in both quantity and quality.

In this process, arithmetic ability was most strongly demanded from officials.

More important than that was writing ability, but Sejong and the ministers all had the same opinion on that part.

“Hah! If you can’t write properly after passing the civil service exam, you should just submit your resignation and go back to farming!”

In Hyang’s terms, writing ability was the most basic passive skill.

Therefore, the most important ability that officials had to hone was mathematics.

From the ministers at the top to the lowest officials in local government offices, mathematics became important as numbers became indispensable in all policies implemented by the government.

Even in the reports on the trends of neighboring countries submitted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs – formerly the Ministry of Rites before the reforms – physical information expressed in various tables and numbers was never missing.

While the content of reports submitted before the reforms was written in abstract sentences like “Their power has strengthened” or “The disparity between our and their abilities is clear as day”, reports after the mid-point of the reforms had to be written precisely like “They showed * times growth compared to previous years” or “Compared to our Joseon, there is a gap in the ratio of about * : *”.

As the content of reports changed like this, officials began to be strongly required to have mathematical calculation and analytical abilities.

However, as there was a shortage of both personnel and capacity to solve this problem immediately, researchers from the research institute had to be drafted.

“We already have a mountain of work to do! And if you drag us away to work, shouldn’t you pay us! Why is the budget still the same!”

Hyang, as well as Jeong-cho, Jeong Inji, and Lee Chun, all rose up in protest. Of course, they couldn’t say such things directly to the ministers – especially Kim Jeom – but long petitions were submitted to Sejong.

“Hmm... They’re not wrong...”

Given Sejong’s opinion after reading the petitions and the ministers’ weariness of relying on others – especially the Crown Prince’s – hands, they immediately began to promote the establishment of the Academy of Mathematics.

Thus, the Academy of Mathematics, whose establishment was decided, opened its first academy in Hanseong.

The plan was to nurture mathematics specialists and faculty through this Academy of Mathematics and gradually establish more academies.

And the faculty of this first Academy of Mathematics to be established in Hanseong was initially set to be recruited from the research institute.

When the establishment of the Academy of Mathematics was announced, officials’ interest was focused.

And the official document delivered to the officials gave them confidence.

-Although mathematics is included in the civil service examination, its level is insufficient for immediate practical application.

-Therefore, mathematics education is included in the training course for successful candidates, but it is still insufficient as it is a short-term course.

-Therefore, officials with aspirations are encouraged to challenge the entrance examination conducted by the Academy of Mathematics and enter.

-For officials who take classes at the Academy of Mathematics, working hours will be adjusted from 5 half-days to 3 half-days per week.

-However, if one fails the tests given at the Academy of Mathematics more than 3 times, they will be immediately expelled.

-Officials who successfully complete the 3-year course at the Academy of Mathematics will receive additional points for promotion.

-Officials of senior 6th rank or above who have completed the Academy of Mathematics and have worked with excellent performance evaluations for more than 2 years will be granted the qualification to take the entrance examination for Sungkyunkwan.

It was at this point that the officials' eyes began to sparkle fiercely.

Sungkyunkwan had strengthened its characteristics since the early stages of the reforms.

After passing the lower civil service examination, those who successfully passed the curriculum at Sungkyunkwan were given the qualification to take the higher civil service examination.

And those who passed that higher examination received the privilege of starting at the 6th junior rank.

As the reforms progressed, this part was greatly strengthened. First, those who could enter Sungkyunkwan were those who had received the senior 5th rank and had excellent performance evaluations.

Sungkyunkwan's new mission was to rigorously educate and filter out those with solid practical experience to nurture the next generation of high-ranking officials.

In other words, it was an upgrade of the mission that Sungkyunkwan had been carrying out from the beginning.

Therefore, being given the qualification to enter this Sungkyunkwan meant that one could get ahead in the competition to reach the pinnacle of power,

which was only a handful of high-ranking officials.

As the establishment of the Academy of Mathematics was announced like this, officials belonging to local government offices across Joseon began to submit petitions.

-Although academies of mathematics will be established in other regions besides Hanseong over time, unfair competition will occur during that empty period. An alternative is needed to solve this.

“Their words are not wrong. It’s natural for dissatisfaction to arise if one is pushed back just because they went down to the provinces despite passing the same examination. Then, what do you think would be a good alternative?”

At Sejong’s question, the ministers put forward various proposals.

“How about establishing academies of mathematics across Joseon from the beginning?”

“If we do that, there won’t be a single person left in the research institute and Area 51.”

“For the provinces, how about providing intensive education using the vacation periods of the Academy of Mathematics or the officials’ holidays?”

“Are the mathematics instructors made of iron bodies? They need time to rest too!”

Whenever the ministers put forward various alternatives, Jeong-cho and Jeong Inji vigorously refuted.

In the midst of this fierce debate, Hyang put forward a new proposal.

“How about printing and distributing textbooks and lecture notes?”

“Print textbooks and lecture notes?”

As Sejong showed interest, Hyang explained in more detail.

“Yes. Although it may be inferior to learning directly by seeing and hearing at the Academy of Mathematics in Hanseong. With textbooks and lecture notes, and with their own efforts added, they won’t fall far behind in the competition. Of course, it will be necessary to reduce their work schedule to alleviate excessive burden.”

“Let’s say lectures are possible that way, no, they will be possible. But how should the exams be conducted?”

“We should distribute pre-printed exam papers and conduct them. Like when taking the civil service examination. However, the grading will be done collectively in Hanseong.”

“Hmm, wouldn’t that take a lot of time?”

To Heo Jo’s point, Hyang immediately answered.

“We should use the express courier system.”

“The express courier system, you say?”

“Yes.”

At Hyang’s answer, Heo Jo nodded, and Jo Mal-saeng’s face turned pale.

Seeing Jo Mal-saeng’s face, Hyang continued his explanation a bit more.

“If we actively operate the express courier system across Joseon, we can continuously monitor the condition of the road network we’ve developed so far, which will help with maintenance. Also, in the process of operating the express courier system, we can find and quickly improve any deficiencies. Lastly, while operating this express courier system, we can select horses with excellent qualities and raise even more superior breeds of horses.”

“Hmm... Are there any other objections?”

At Sejong's question, the ministers closed their mouths. It seemed clearly better than the proposals they had put forward.

“Then, I hope you will organize a plan based on the Crown Prince's proposal and submit it.”

“We receive your command!”

After ending the meeting like this and coming out, Jo Mal-saeng looked up at the sky and let out a long sigh.

“Sigh~. Delivering court gazettes, census registers, documents from the treasury and investment funds, and now even the Academy of Mathematics... Ah~.”

Seeing Jo Mal-saeng sighing, Kim Jeom, who was passing by, lightly patted Jo Mal-saeng's shoulder.

“You're working hard, Your Excellency. Instead, I'll take responsibility and pay attention to the budget, so I'm counting on you.”

At Kim Jeom's words, Jo Mal-saeng's face brightened.

“Make sure you keep that promise!”

And so, express courier horses began to run frantically on all roads across Joseon – from newly built roads to small paths.

Later, it would reach the point where people would feel uneasy if express courier horses weren't passing by on the roads.

And thus, the world's first correspondence education and systematic postal service were born.

As these higher education institutions were created, the research institute and Area 51 became frantically busy.

This was because the research institute and Area 51 were where people with the highest level of knowledge – not just in Joseon, but in the world – in mathematics and engineering were gathered.

“Just endure for a few years! And by doing so, won’t your work become easier once you discover new talents?”

“Yes...”

Although the researchers responded weakly to the encouragement from Hyang, Jeong-cho, and Jeong Inji, they did their best when it came to teaching.

As one of the ‘Three Pleasures of the Gentleman’ was ‘the joy of teaching excellent disciples’, there was fulfillment in teaching students who were trying hard to learn.

Especially, the researchers who lectured at the Academy of Engineering watched for talents with burning eyes. This was because it wasn’t just the research institute and Area 51 that were aiming for those learning at the Academy of Engineering.

Merchant groups that were gradually growing in size, especially those with manufacturing industries, began to target those attending the Academy of Engineering.

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BBCodes

[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.
Deathbringer, emphasis on [i]death[/i].
I'm totally [s]~~crossed out~~[/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

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[link]http://topwebfiction.com[/link].
[link=https://www.n.ot]clickbait[/link].

[quote]... me like my landlord! [/quote]

[spoiler]Spanish Inquisition! [/spoiler]
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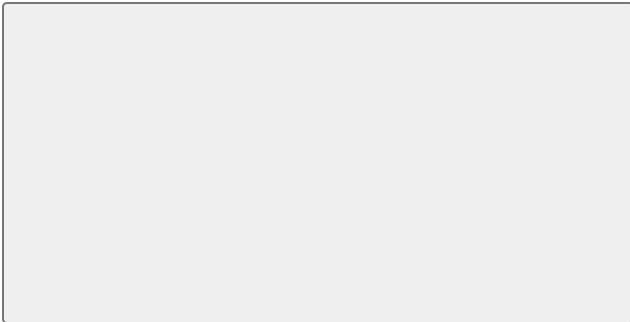
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Chapter 401 - 500

BCJ Chapter 402

Higher Education Institutions

by *BlossomTL*Black Corporation: Joseon

To acquire those who entered the Engineering Academy, the merchant guilds implemented scholarship programs.

As the reforms progressed, Joseon's educational institutions were advancing from the most basic institution, the Commoner's School, to the Higher Institute and various other academies.

All children enrolled in the Commoner's School received free education.

This was King Sejong's decision.

“It is right that all people living in this Joseon, except for slaves, should know the minimum of learning and principles. That is why we created the Commoner's School, and it is not right to charge tuition for it.”

Thus, the Commoner's School was entirely free, and children attending the academy were provided with one free meal.

However, from the Higher Institute onwards, tuition had to be paid.

“This is appropriate as the people have chosen to learn more advanced knowledge, so they should pay tuition. This is not simply to make money from teaching, but to instill a sense of responsibility for their choices.”

King Sejong wanted the people to internalize the ‘responsibility that comes with choice’ early on.

Therefore, students who advanced to the Higher Institute had to pay 2 nyang of silver as tuition for each semester that lasted half a year.

Hyang quietly worried about King Sejong’s decision.

“In the past, they just learned at home. Won’t people feel reluctant to pay for education?”

However, this was Hyang’s needless worry, or more precisely, a misunderstanding that arose from not knowing the full picture.

Looking back, private educational institutions like Goguryeo’s Gyeongdang (肩堂) had continued to exist.

This tradition was recorded even in the ‘Goryeo Dogyeong’ written by Xu Jing of the Song Dynasty, as follows:

-On the streets where commoners’ houses are located, government offices and writing houses face each other in twos and threes. Here, the children of the people gather in groups to learn books [經] from teachers, and when they grow a little older, they choose friends with similar aspirations and go to temples to study. And even down to snot-nosed children, they also learn from village teachers. (Note 1)

Because of this, even in the early Joseon period, there were private academies in every village.

There were various types of private academies:

Private schools or reading halls operated by noble families or influential yangban families who invited retired officials or unsuccessful exam candidates;

Village contract academies operated by influential local families, running separate school fields to educate children of their family and clan;

Or self-operated academies established by scholars themselves for livelihood and pastime.

In addition to these representative types of academies, there were various other kinds, but as the late Joseon period approached, they transformed into power maintenance bases for the local yangban class.

However, with King Sejong's reforms, as Commoner's Schools and Higher Institutes replaced the academies controlled by local literati, the private academies began to disappear.

The central government's influence started to work more strongly instead of the power of local literati in rural villages.

However, unable to shake off his worries, Hyang had no choice but to make a suggestion to King Sejong.

“There may be those who have the enthusiasm and talent to learn but are too poor to fulfill their wishes. We need measures for them.”

“Hmm...”

“If they cannot fulfill their aspirations, where will their resentment be directed?”

Understanding Hyang's implication, King Sejong immediately nodded.

“That would be the case. Looking back at the records so far, there were not a few who achieved success through studying by day and night, using the light of fireflies and the reflection of snow. I had momentarily forgotten about that.”

Thus, King Sejong created a scholarship law.

-Those who are in the top 20% in academic performance and whose family circumstances fall in the bottom 30% shall have their tuition waived by the country.

-Those who fall under this category must submit copies of their family register and tax payment records to the school.

In this way, Joseon officially operated a scholarship system.

The ministers who were summarizing the operation status of the scholarship system soon reported positive results to King Sejong.

“Those who have benefited from the scholarship system are more actively promoting national policies and strongly supporting the court’s events.”

It was natural to be loyal to the country and the king, but the size of the royalist faction that was acting more proactively was gradually increasing.

Seeing the increase in the number of royalists, or pro-king factions, through the scholarship system, merchants quickly applied this to those who entered the Engineering Academy and the Mathematics Academy.

They approached those who had talent but were poor or not wealthy, offering to provide tuition.

If they had only offered simple tuition support, it would not have been much different from the policy implemented by the court, but the merchants’ scholarships were a bit different.

The qualification conditions were broader than those required by the state, and they not only supported tuition but also living expenses needed while living as a student.

The conditions that merchants who supported tuition and living expenses required from students were as follows:

-Maintain grades while attending the academy.

-Work for the merchant guild for at least 10 years after completing the academy.

After the 10-year contract period, they were given the option to either continue working for the merchant guild or become independent and start their own business.

The merchant guilds that presented these conditions had their own calculations.

“In 10 years, they’ll have reached quite a high position. Give that up and leave? Is that possible?”

Amid this competition between the government and the private sector, a rumor spread among those challenging various academies:

‘Just getting into an academy changes your life path.’

Most of the educational institutions created through the reforms were related to economy, technology, and practical skills, such as the Mathematics Academy, Engineering Academy, Medical Academy, or Military Academy.

As a result, petitions flooded in to King Sejong.

-In general, for a person to live as a proper human being, one must live according to the words of the ancient sages and in accordance with principles, and the basis of learning is to ponder what these principles are!

But look at the educational institutions being created now!

Looking at the educational institutions being created now, they are all teaching only the principles for profit!

This is not right!

We must create educational institutions that research the principles of the sages!

Petitions full of such content came up, but King Sejong scoffed.

“Hah! What are principles? Didn’t the words of ancient sages, Buddha, or that Christ from the West all say the same thing? How is it different from the words of Hwanung, ‘to widely benefit mankind’? And aren’t these principles already taught and learned in the Commoner’s School? Yet they say we need to research principles? What did those who only sought and pondered principles do? Wasn’t it rebellion?”

At King Sejong’s cold words, not only the ministers but even the court historians broke out in a cold sweat.

Listening to this from below, Hyang inwardly muttered.

‘That damned rebellion really gave him a big trauma. By the way... looking at the history before I intervened, he was quite a moderate person, but now he shows such a hardline response... Is this also the butterfly effect?’

At that moment, Hyang’s train of thought drifted off on a tangent.

‘Wait, hearing Father’s words reminds me of a book title? Was it “All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten”?’

“However, their opinion is not entirely wrong.”

Even while observing King Sejong’s cynical reaction, Hwang Hui spoke up against it.

At Hwang Hui’s remark, King Sejong’s expression turned fierce, but he forcibly suppressed his anger and asked Hwang Hui.

“For what reason?”

It was a short question full of the threat ‘I’ll crush you if I dislike it even a little!’, but Hwang Hui did not back down.

“Of course, learning from the Commoner’s School alone is enough to learn and practice the minimum principles. But this is the minimum, Your Majesty. Please compare the time before the reforms began and now. It has changed to the extent that the phrase ‘the world has turned upside down’ is fitting. If it changed that much in nearly 10 years, how much more will it change in the future? To establish the right principles in such a changing world, it is absolutely necessary to ponder principles. We must ponder principles to establish the right ones, and refine laws according to those principles. In addition, please consider the barbarians who are now submitting to Joseon. To educate them, who have different lifestyles and habits, we need to establish proper principles.”

“Hmm...”

At Hwang Hui’s words, King Sejong calmed down and began to seriously consider.

“The Prime Minister’s words are not wrong. Indeed, the world is changing faster and faster, and if we don’t properly establish principles, they will become outdated and treated as relics, and eventually, it will become a world without morality. Hmm...”

As he mulled over Hwang Hui’s words, King Sejong turned to look at Hyang. As King Sejong gazed at him with thoughtful eyes, Hyang suddenly began to break out in a cold sweat.

‘Why me? What? Why? How come?’

Because of King Sejong’s sudden gaze, Hyang fell into a state of panic.

“Come to think of it, didn’t the Crown Prince say that?”

“Me?”

“Yes. Didn’t you say to those Western monks? ‘The word of God may be infallible, but can you be sure that what was written down is also infallible?’ It was quite a refreshing statement.”

At King Sejong's words, Hyang bowed his head and replied.

"It was just the immature words of a young child."

'Where on earth is it leaking from?'

Grumbling at the fact that even King Sejong knew about his remarks, Hyang soon gave up.

'Damn it! There are too many leaks!'

There were too many possible sources, from the officials present to even the eunuchs.

"It's not wrong, so there's no need for such excuses. It was truly a good statement."

After positively evaluating Hyang's words, King Sejong turned to the ministers.

"There are many in our Joseon who need to hear those words. Don't you think?"

"There are some narrow-minded individuals, Your Majesty."

At Hwang Hui's answer, King Sejong revealed his true thoughts.

"As far as I know, after the burning of books and burying of scholars, weren't they rewritten? As they were rewritten, and as they were discussed, and as those discussions were written down, and as those writings were again translated into our Joseon language, can you be confident that there wasn't a single error in even one sentence or character?"

At King Sejong's statement, the atmosphere in the hall froze.

King Sejong's current statement was a shocking one that shook the foundations of Neo-Confucianism, the national ideology of Joseon.

Not only the ministers but even Hyang turned pale with shock at King Sejong's words.

'Wow! Wow! Wow! Father, you've just seriously crossed the line! In the late Joseon period, this would have caused an uproar about being a traitor to Confucianism!'

Looking at the pale expressions of the ministers, King Sejong continued.

"Even if what Zhu Xi said is not wrong, as it became sentences, was transferred into books, came to our land in the East, and was discussed orally, could there not have been a single error? What do you think, Prime Minister?"

Singled out, Hwang Hui chose his words as carefully as possible to answer.

"Of course, how could there be no errors? However, as there are many excellent scholars in our land as well, such errors would be very rare."

"That would be the case... Hmm..."

As King Sejong trailed off and fell into thought again, the ministers swallowed dry saliva and just stared at him.

Note 1) Encyclopedia of Korean Culture. Entry on Private Academies.

<http://encykorea.aks.ac.kr/Contents/Item/E0027680>

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[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.
Deathbringer, emphasis on [i]death[/i].
I'm totally [s]~~crossed out~~[/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

[img]https://www.agine.this[/img]
[link]http://topwebfiction.com[/link].
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[quote]... me like my landlord! [/quote]

[spoiler]Spanish Inquisition! [/spoiler]
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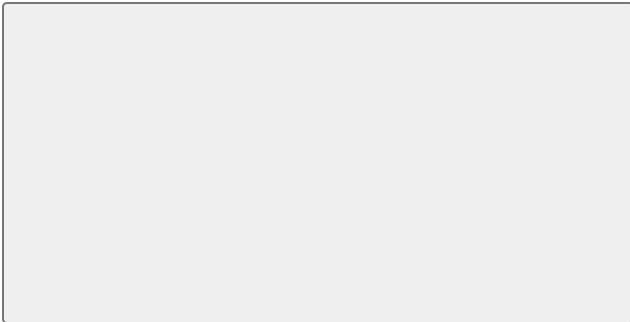
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Chapter 401 - 500

BCJ Chapter 403

Higher Education Institutions

by *BlossomTLBlack Corporation: Joseon*

After pondering silently for a long time, King Sejong soon opened his mouth.

“I will establish specialized educational institutions and research institutes to study the words of the sages and contemplate principles. Therefore, ministers, deliberate on this plan and present it to me.”

At King Sejong’s words, the ministers bowed their heads and replied.

“We humbly accept your command.”

After the meeting in Geunjeongjeon Hall ended, the ministers who left moved to the Prime Minister’s Office.

Naturally, the topic of discussion among the ministers gathered in the Prime Minister’s office meeting room was the educational institution King Sejong had mentioned.

“What do you think we should do?”

To Maeng Sa-seong’s question, Jo Gye-saeng answered with a matter-of-fact expression.

“What do you mean what should we do? His Majesty has commanded it, so of course we must create it.”

“Who doesn’t know that? How exactly should we frame it, what kind of faculty should we fill it with, and who should be the target for admission? Don’t we need to decide all these things?”

“Can’t we just proceed by drawing on our previous experience?”

At Jo Gye-saeng’s reply, Hwang Hui intervened with an exasperated expression.

“Is that what His Majesty wants?”

“...”

At Hwang Hui’s point, Jo Gye-saeng fell silent. Seeing this, Hwang Hui placed his hand on his forehead and made a remark.

“Do you still not know what the result will be if we proceed so comfortably? Do you feel at ease only after hearing His Majesty’s tsk and reproach?”

“N-no, that’s not it.”

At Jo Gye-saeng’s answer, Hwang Hui burst out shouting.

“You sir! Then why say such things! Have you only known His Majesty for a day or two? It’s gotten easier lately! Agh! Every time you do this, my insides burn black! Do you understand?”

“Lord, Lord, please calm down...”

As Hwang Hui exploded, Maeng Sa-seong intervened to calm him down.

“There, there. Have a cup of cold water and cool down for a moment.”

“Whew~. I was just so frustrated...”

While Hwang Hui emptied several cups of cold water in succession, Maeng Sa-seong continued the ministers' meeting in his stead.

“The Prime Minister has a point in getting angry. His Majesty ordered us to establish specialized educational institutions to study the words of the sages and contemplate principles. But don't we all know to some extent how he thinks about the Confucian scholars who will be in charge of this important task?”

At Maeng Sa-seong's words, the ministers nodded.

Unlike when he first ascended to the throne, King Sejong now viewed Confucian scholars and local gentry with a very cynical eye.

The change in King Sejong's view was not just because of the Giyuban Rebellion.

The spark was lit by the clash between Ryu Jeong-hyeon and King Sejong, which brought a bloody wind to the court just before the reforms began. Subsequently, the corruption of officials and the problem of local gentry privatizing power that emerged as the reforms progressed added fuel to the fire.

And what turned the problem, which was at a bonfire level, into a massive conflagration was the Giyuban Rebellion.

The Giyuban Rebellion, which had turned into such a massive conflagration, reduced the local gentry society of Joseon to ashes.

And it would have been good if it had ended there, but a considerable number of the surviving local gentry were still showing conservative attitudes and rebelling against King Sejong.

Because of this, King Sejong's gaze towards the local gentry was like ice.

Until now, the situation had been somewhat tolerated because most of those who were educated enough to be properly utilized were such gentry.

However, once the educational institutions started functioning properly, the local gentry would be the first to become obsolete.

Most of the ministers who had worked alongside King Sejong for a long time and had become familiar with him knew well that he was not favorable to this matter. That's why Jo Gye-saeng, who had spoken carelessly without grasping the situation, ended up being scolded.

“Let's be a bit more careful, shall we? Every time we relax a little, something always goes wrong...”

“Ahem! I apologize!”

At Hwang Hui's rebuke, Jo Gye-saeng apologized with an uncomfortable expression.

As the small commotion settled down, Jo Geuk-gwan, the Minister of Justice, opened his mouth.

“However, we do need a specialized educational institution. Looking at the cases of lawsuits that have rapidly increased since the establishment of the Judgment Office, there are many problems arising because common sense, or rather principles, are outdated while the world is changing.”

As the reforms progressed, the Ministry of Punishments was divided into the Ministry of Justice, the Public Security Office, and the Judgment Office.

With this division of ministries, the duties of litigation and public security were separated from the tasks of local officials.

Criminal cases were handled by the Public Security Office up to the level of county, and from smaller counties to villages, military police from both army and navy were dispatched to maintain public order.

Civil lawsuits and criminal trials between the people were to be handled by the Judgment Office.

The judges of the Judgment Office were first appointed from those who had worked in local administration or the Ministry of Punishments and were renowned for their fair judgments.

The plan was to establish the foundation with these individuals and then have it taken over by those who had been properly educated and trained.

All sorts of lawsuits flooded into this newly created Judgment Office like a deluge.

Most of these incoming lawsuits were related to ‘intellectual property rights infringement’.

“...Until before the reforms, there wasn’t even a concept that knowledge was property, was there? We were the same, weren’t we?”

At Minister of Justice Jo Geuk-gwan’s point, the ministers nodded.

Until before the reforms, the concept of intellectual property rights did not exist.

If there was a precious book containing the words of ancient sages, or a collection of writings by a famous scholar, people would go to borrow it or make a copy, but there was no payment of compensation. Rather, it was natural to think that receiving compensation for such things was a lowly act that would tarnish one’s reputation.

This was the same among common people.

“The good thing is good! Really! How narrow-minded!”

Most of the time, if someone demanded compensation while sharing knowledge or skills that only they possessed, they would hear words like the above.

Of course, they never dared to say such things in front of blacksmiths or pottery craftsmen.

However, while techniques could not be shared, copying the end products was a common occurrence. Therefore, when rumors spread that a certain craftsman had created something unique and popular, it was a daily occurrence for nearby craftsmen to produce items that exactly imitated that product.

Because of this, when the law regarding intellectual property rights was first promulgated, there was a lot of opposition.

“Good knowledge should be widely shared! How can you put a value on something intangible like knowledge!”

“Come on! Isn’t it good if we all live well together? Why so stingy! Ah! The world is coming to an end, I tell you!”

Complaints and dissatisfaction erupted from all directions like this, but due to strong law enforcement, these complaints gradually subsided.

However, such intellectual property rights infringements occurred in increasingly sophisticated ways, and the Judgment Office was bustling with people filing lawsuits related to this.

“As new things like intellectual property rights infringement cases that didn’t exist in the past are popping up, it’s right that people’s thinking should change too. However, it’s only proper that changing thoughts should be directed towards the right direction.”

At Jo Geuk-gwan’s point, the ministers nodded.

While the ministers were mulling over Jo Geuk-gwan's words, Jo Mal-saeng, who had been sitting quietly, opened his mouth.

“Creating an educational institution, and having that educational institution contemplate the words of the sages to rediscuss principles suitable for changing times, are all right things to do. Of course, it's what we should do. But isn't the problem the teachers who will contemplate and teach at that educational institution? Setting aside the words of ancient sages, how much of Zhu Xi's recorded sayings are out of touch with reality when applied to the present age? How much have we struggled with this problem while working all this time? Therefore, the most important thing is how to find the faculty. If we're not careful, we might end up with people playing at being immortals up in the clouds.”

At Jo Mal-saeng's point, the ministers nodded.

Afterwards, the ministers furrowed their brows and pondered repeatedly to find a solution to this.

At that moment, Kim Jeom opened his mouth.

“Even if we struggle to find faculty, it's clear that they will be playing at being immortals in the clouds before long. Because there are hardly any scholars who know reality among those with big names. No, the higher their reputation, the more they will try to return reality to the age of ancient sages. Then, how about we change our approach?”

At Kim Jeom's remark, the ministers' eyes began to sparkle.

“Change our approach?”

“Yes. Even if we find new principles to fit such changed times, it's useless if not applied in practice, isn't it? So, let's establish it as a research institute rather than an educational institution. And let's put in people who have experienced sufficient practical work in the Ministry of Personnel, Ministry of Education, and Ministry of Finance and Economy as members of that research institute.”

At Kim Jeom's words, Hwang Hui shook his head.

“A war will break out.”

“It's something we must endure. What else will come out of those who sat in their studies saying ‘Confucius said, Mencius said’ discussing principles other than empty words? As Jo said, how much have we struggled too?”

At Kim Jeom's words, the ministers were lost in memories.

They remembered the times when they first entered office at the end of Goryeo and the beginning of Joseon, when they proudly proclaimed to create an ideal country according to the ideology of Neo-Confucianism, but ended up spitting blood when faced with the wall of reality.

“The problem is that there will be quite intense conflicts.”

At Hwang Hui's point, Kim Jeom scoffed.

“Hah! Who do you think will drop out first in that conflict?”

“Probably the scholars.”

At Maeng Sa-seong's answer, Kim Jeom immediately followed up.

“Eight or nine out of ten, those so-called scholars will drop out first. They have the biggest weakness of not knowing reality well. And are there only one or two scholars in this Joseon?”

At Kim Jeom's remark, Maeng Sa-seong pointed out a problem.

“There may not be just one or two, but have you forgotten that the majority of those scholars are rebels?”

Since the introduction of Neo-Confucianism to Goryeo, there were many scholars who studied Neo-Confucianism. However, a considerable number of them – especially those with high reputations – either went into seclusion claiming that Yi Seong-gye's dynastic revolution was unjust, or were purged after rebelling.

Despite Maeng Sa-seong's point, Kim Jeom did not back down.

“How many of those who went into seclusion claiming that the founding of this Joseon was unjust are still alive? And even if some are still stubbornly alive, would their disciples want to live a life of seclusion just reading classics? And would there be only one or two of such disciples? If we can get just two or three of those disciples, we can fill the scholars' positions. After that, we just need to watch them fight fiercely and properly collect the results. Isn't this a familiar task?”

At Kim Jeom's words, the ministers unconsciously nodded strongly.

Pitting those with opposing opinions against each other and then reaping the results was Hyang's specialty, and before they knew it, even King Sejong had learned and was using this method quite effectively.

“But will they really come if we call?”

Seeing Maeng Sa-seong's continued negative reaction, Kim Jeom pointed out the reality.

“Look even now, do you think those who submit petitions whenever something happens are doing so out of true patriotism? Aren't they just using a shallow trick to stand out and make a name for themselves? If we call them, there will be more than enough people running over in their socks. So, let's be positive about this, shall we?”

“...”

As Maeng Sa-seong closed his mouth, Hwang Hui concluded.

“Then, let's decide on its character as a research institute rather than an educational institution and draft a plan accordingly.”

“Which ministry are you thinking of assigning it to?”

“Everyone's busy these days...”

Sensing the ministers' strong reluctance to take on the task, Hwang Hui stood up and went outside.

“Jong-seo! You rascal! Come here right now!”

Five days later, Hwang Hui submitted the plan to King Sejong.

“Hmm... A research institute rather than an educational institution... This might be more appropriate.”

“Yes, Your Majesty. As it is to contemplate the principles of the sages and research new principles suited to the changing times, a research institute is more fitting than an educational institution.”

“The establishment of the research institute is three years later...”

“At least that much time is needed to find good talent, Your Majesty.”

After listening to Hwang Hui's explanation and reviewing the plan, King Sejong soon reached a conclusion.

“I approve. Implement it as planned.”

“Yes, Your Majesty.”

“Ah, and there's something to add. Add the study of the philosophy of Rome and Greece that existed in the land of the Westerners called Europe, as well as Christianity and Islam.”

“The Western philosophy and religions as well, Your Majesty?”

“Our Joseon's footsteps have reached there, so shouldn't we know the differences? No, not just know the differences, but if there's something good, shouldn't we adopt it? If necessary, I'll even bring in scholars.”

At King Sejong's words about even bringing in scholars, Hwang Hui carefully asked.

“Is this ‘using barbarians to control barbarians’, Your Majesty?”

To Hwang Hui’s question, King Sejong silently nodded. At King Sejong’s answer, Hwang Hui quietly bowed his head.

This is how the ‘Institute of Philosophy’ was born.

This Institute of Philosophy – later renamed as the Institute of Social Sciences – along with the Military Medical Department and the Medical Academy, came to boast the most intense academic atmosphere. The heated debates between idealists and realists were literally a war. However, because of its results, Joseon was able to guide society in the healthiest direction possible.

As a side note, Hyang was most responsible for the Military Medical Department and Medical Academy having such an intense academic atmosphere as the Institute of Philosophy.

“Read widely, examine, and contemplate.”

With this brief order, he simply threw them translated medical books, so the faculty of the Medical Academy and Military Medical Department had no choice but to start their research based on the traditional Korean medicine knowledge they knew.

In the process of this research, all sorts of theories emerged to resolve the differences between Eastern and Western medicine – notably the difference between the theory of mutual generation and mutual overcoming based on yin-yang and the five elements, and the theory of the four humors. Fierce debates broke out over whose theory was correct.

And Hyang was watching with great interest while occasionally giving his input.

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BBCodes

[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.
Deathbringer, emphasis on [i]*death*[/i].
I'm totally [s]~~crossed out~~[/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

[img]https://www.agine.this[/img]
[link]http://topwebfiction.com[/link].
[link=https://www.n.ot]clickbait[/link].

[quote]... me like my landlord! [/quote]

[spoiler]Spanish Inquisition! [/spoiler]
[ins]Insert[/ins] more bad puns!
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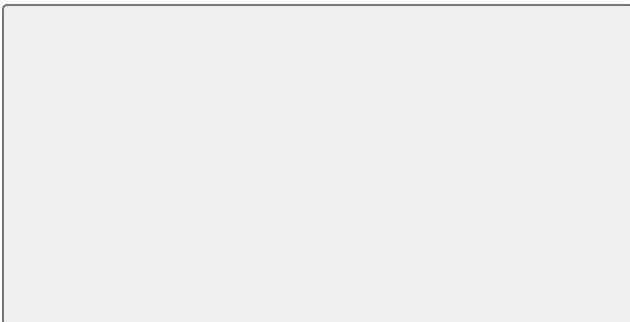
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Chapter 401 - 500

BCJ Chapter 404

Short Stories

by *BlossomTLBlack Corporation: Joseon*

Late March, 15th year of King Sejong's reign (1433, Year of the Gui-chuk)

King Sejong was set to depart for a retreat to Onsu County (present-day Onyang).

On the day the retreat was decided:

“I heard you tried your best?”

“I did. In my own way...”

As Hyang questioned him with a sulky face, King Sejong answered with an embarrassed expression, looking into the distance.

Although Hyang had been at the center of intensively managing King Sejong's health, unfavorable symptoms began to appear little by little.

The biggest cause of this was King Sejong's overwork.

Of course, King Sejong's eating habits of loving meat very, very much were also a problem, but that could be seen as trivial in a way.

“In the 21st century, even people who did zero-carb diets were living just fine. The important thing is that he’s not burning off as much as he’s taking in.”

Looking at King Sejong’s belly that was gradually protruding forward, Hyang grumbled and continued to pressure King Sejong to exercise.

However, as mentioned above, overwork was the problem.

The regular Royal Lectures^[1], though not held every morning and evening like before.

Following that, he had to deal with various issues that popped up while carrying out the reforms, and even had to pass judgments on various major crimes.

Finally, after finishing all that work, he had to use the remaining time to the fullest to create Hunminjeongeum.

As a result, King Sejong’s body, unable to withstand the overexertion, began to make small cracking sounds.

The first thing to start showing problems was his skin. Sitting for most of the day to handle work caused circulation problems, and various inflammations began to appear on his skin.

In response, all the clothes King Sejong wore were kept meticulously clean, and various boils on his skin were treated. As a bonus, the ointment created jointly by Hyang and the physicians of the Royal Clinic played a great role in this process.

However, skin disease became King Sejong’s chronic illness.

The next thing to cause problems was King Sejong’s eyes. Working late into the night, King Sejong’s eyesight gradually worsened. Not only was his vision a problem, but eye diseases also developed.

Eventually, Hyang and the Royal Clinic physicians reached an agreement.

“Rest is the best, Your Majesty!”

“I agree.”

This is how King Sejong’s retreat was decided.

King Sejong’s retreat was on an enormous scale.

It was a massive movement that included not only King Sejong, but also Queen Soheon and the royal concubines, the Crown Princess and the two consorts Yangwon and Yangje, as well as the grand princes, princes, princesses, royal princesses, and even the royal clan members.

It wasn’t just the royal family members who were moving. The ministers and vice ministers of each department also moved.

It was as if the entire Joseon government was moving to Onsu County, and because of this, elite soldiers selected from the Inner Palace Guard and the Ten Offices escorted the procession.

Behind the soldiers at the front, the palanquin carrying King Sejong moved. Behind the moving King Sejong, Hyang rode on horseback, and the ministers, vice ministers, grand princes, princes, and royal sons-in-law followed on horseback. And behind them, eunuchs and soldiers followed on horseback.

If King Sejong and the Crown Prince’s group was the first unit, the second unit behind them was centered around Queen Soheon and the personnel of the Queen’s Palace.

Behind the palanquin carrying Queen Soheon, the center of the Inner and Outer Court Ladies, followed the sedan chairs carrying the concubines. And behind them, the junior concubines, princesses, royal princesses, and court ladies followed on horseback. (Note 1)

This massive procession moved towards Heunginjimun Gate.

Outside Heunginjimun Gate, the officials and palace personnel who were to remain in Hanseong, as well as the people of Hanseong, had gathered to send off King Sejong.

Finally, as the palanquin carrying King Sejong appeared, all those gathered raised their voices to shout “Long live the King!”

“Long live His Majesty the King!”

“Long live!”

“May you enjoy longevity and good health!”

King Sejong lightly raised his hand in response to the people’s cheers. Looking at the people with a pleased expression, King Sejong turned to Hyang.

As Hyang rode his horse closer upon seeing King Sejong’s gaze, King Sejong opened his mouth.

“Isn’t it truly good to see the people like this?”

“Yes. It’s all thanks to your efforts, Father.”

“How could it be just my achievement? It’s thanks to the efforts of many, including you.”

After praising Hyang, King Sejong continued speaking while looking at the people shouting “Long live the King!”

“We must do our best to ensure they can continue to smile like this.”

At King Sejong’s pledge, Hyang quietly bowed his head.

The procession that left Heunginjimun Gate headed towards Dumulmeori. At Dumulmeori, where the Jungnangcheon Stream and the Han River meet, there was a port called Dumopo^[2].

And now, at Dumopo, a pontoon bridge had been laid under Hyang's direction.

“A pontoon bridge... You must have worked quite hard.”

At King Sejong's words, Hyang answered with a small smile.

“The engineers worked hard.”

At Hyang's answer, King Sejong's eyes sparkled.

“The engineers? I see... It would be difficult to lay such a bridge without the engineers.”

“That's right.”

The engineer corps, which was established while carrying out the reconstruction project after the great fire of Hanseong, was increasingly recognized for its usefulness and grew larger and more specialized.

And in this process, what received concentrated attention from the military was the pontoon bridge.

When projecting power to deal with the Jurchen tribes in the north, the biggest obstacles were the rivers spread across the Liaodong region, starting with the Yalu and Tumen Rivers.

Previously, they had crossed at shallow points, but as the size of the artillery grew, such primitive methods began to cause difficulties.

Therefore, Hyang introduced the construction of pontoon bridges using engineers.

The boats composing the pontoon bridge were also supplied by making dedicated vessels. Although not exactly the same as those used in the 20th and 21st centuries, it was an innovative item in the 15th century that shattered the thinking up to that point.

Of course, there were drawbacks. Since there were no small, high-powered motor boats like those used by the engineer units of the 21st century Korean military, the engineers had to use oars and poles. As a result, the soldiers, especially those in units operating pontoon bridges, boasted physiques of a different dimension compared to other soldiers.

As a side note, thanks to this size and strength, the soldiers of the engineer units were the number one choice for brides in the neighborhood.

King Sejong, who had dismounted from his palanquin and was crossing the pontoon bridge on foot for safety reasons, turned his head to look at one place.

“The bridge still doesn’t show its form, does it?”

“The cofferdam work has just finished, and they’re now digging out the riverbed. Once the foundation is properly laid, the speed will increase.”

The subject of the conversation between Hyang and King Sejong was the construction site of the Han River Steel Bridge, located a bit downstream from the pontoon bridge.

According to the plan devised by Hyang and approved by King Sejong, two bridges each were to be built at two locations across the Han River, for a total of four bridges.

One crossed the Han River passing west of Neobeol Island and Bam Island, while the other connected Jamsil and Oksu.

The former connected the railways and roads coming from Jemulpo, Honam, and Uiju, while the latter connected the railway and road starting from Dongnae to Wonsan and Gilju.

The reason for this division was, amusingly, because of Area 51 and the research institute.

Due to Area 51 and the research institute located in Yongsan and nearby areas, the Han River Steel Bridge connecting Noryangjin and Yongsan, as in the history before Hyang's intervention, could not be built.

“Well, that Han River Steel Bridge was also placed there due to the Japanese military calculations...”

There were stories that both the pontoon bridge laid by Jeong Yak-yong during King Jeongjo's era and the Han River Steel Bridge were placed there because the flow of the Han River slowed down near Noryangjin, but there were also stories that the bridge was placed at that point to quickly support the Japanese army stationed in Yongsan.

However, thanks to Area 51 and the research institute born due to Hyang's intervention, a bridge connecting Noryangjin to Yongsan could absolutely not be built.

Anyway, with these two bridges being built, there was also an advantage: there would be no straight line running all the way to Gyeongbokgung Palace.

After King Sejong crossed the pontoon bridge, Hyang addressed him.

“We've prepared a new mode of transportation.”

“A new mode of transportation?”

King Sejong's eyes sparkled at Hyang's words.

“Is that so? I'm curious about what kind it is. Where is it?”

“This way.”

“Let's see...”

King Sejong, guided by Hyang, moved his steps and seemed slightly disappointed when he saw what was before his eyes.

“Isn’t it an iron horse and passenger car?”

“It’s a traction engine and a road passenger car.”

“Traction engine? The one I’ve only seen in reports?”

“Yes.”

At Hyang’s answer, expectation replaced disappointment on King Sejong’s face.

What Hyang showcased was a steam tractor.

The reason Hyang created the steam tractor was that the size of the cannons operated by the land and naval forces was gradually increasing.

True to being the “original artillery unit,” the Joseon military wanted cannons with increasingly powerful firepower. And this also satisfied Hyang’s desire for benevolence.

The problem was that “greater power = increasing size.”

Because of this, in the case of the artillery currently being prepared for field deployment, its size was considerable.

Even the giant horses brought in from the West and mass-bred were struggling to move it with just one horse.

It was a natural progression for the military, which was agonizing over solving this problem, to think of the iron horse.

‘Please develop an iron horse that can move even where there are no rails.’

Receiving this order from the military, Hyang had to concentrate hard to keep the corners of his mouth from rising.

‘Come on! Finally, it’s steampunk Joseon!’

The process of creating the iron horse named 'traction engine' was smooth.

This was because the mobility required by the military could be sufficiently demonstrated even with the already-made iron horse. Thanks to this, the part that the people from the research institute and Area 51 focused on was 'making it as small as possible while reducing power loss.'

"If this succeeds, we can reduce the size of high-powered iron horses!"

Thanks to their dedication, they were able to reduce the size while minimizing power loss.

However, they soon got stuck in the next process.

"The wheels are the problem..."

Wheels with iron flesh and wooden rims couldn't move properly on even slightly soft ground.

"Why?"

After various trial and error to solve the problem, the conclusion was that 'the wheels are too small and thin.'

The weight applied was too heavy compared to the area in contact with the ground.

"This didn't happen with the iron horse and rails, right?"

"The rails distribute the load. And the ground where the rails are laid is extremely compacted..."

"But there's a limit to just making the wheels bigger and thicker..."

While the researchers from the institute and the craftsmen from Area 51 were pondering, Hyang quietly intervened.

“I have an idea...”

As Hyang quietly opened his mouth, people looked at him with brightened expressions.

‘That’s right! We have the Crown Prince!’

‘If it’s His Highness, he’s sure to have a good idea!’

What Hyang proposed, receiving everyone’s attention, was ‘caterpillar tracks.’

“That’s an excellent idea, Your Highness!”

The first to cheer upon hearing Hyang’s suggestion was Jang Yeong-sil. As he had been constantly agonizing over creating a self-moving palanquin, or self-propelled palanquin, Jang Yeong-sil immediately understood.

“This has its own path to travel on, so if we adjust the width well, there’s no road it can’t travel! It’s truly, truly an ingenious idea!”

Thanks to the approval of Jang Yeong-sil, who was called ‘incomprehensible,’ the caterpillar tracks were adopted, and the traction engine was able to take shape.

It was the birth of another monster that would later make historians tear their hair out.

Note 1) Annals of King Sejong and Royal Medicine (14). Market Economy. 2018.03.15.

<http://www.meconomynews.com/news/articleView.html?idxno=12085>

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


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1. 經筵[↔]

2. 豆毛浦[↔]

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BBCodes

[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.
Deathbringer, emphasis on [i]*death*[/i].
I'm totally [s]~~crossed out~~[/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

[img]https://www.agine.this[/img]
[link]http://topwebfiction.com[/link].
[link=https://www.n.ot]clickbait[/link].

[quote]... me like my landlord! [/quote]

[spoiler]Spanish Inquisition! [/spoiler]
[ins]Insert[/ins] more bad puns!
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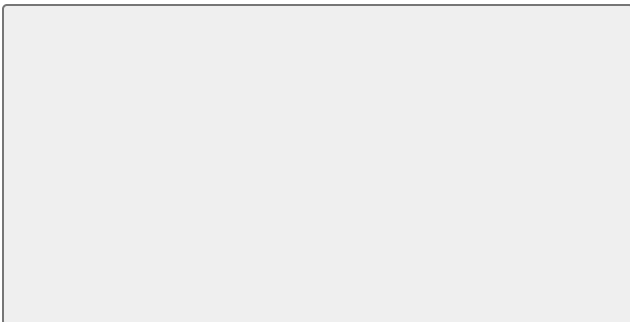
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Chapter 401 - 500

BCJ Chapter 405

Short Stories

by *BlossomTLBlack Corporation*: Joseon

Seeing the traction engine and road passenger car before him, King Sejong's eyes sparkled as he examined various parts of the traction engine.

“Binding the wheels with a large band made of iron, how truly unique?”

“It's called a caterpillar track, Your Majesty.”

“Caterpillar track?”

“If I explain the principle...”

As Hyang tried to explain the principle, King Sejong raised his hand to stop him.

“Enough, let me see it move once. I'll try to figure it out myself. It looks quite interesting somehow.”

“Yes, Your Majesty.”

‘I forgot! Father was also a man with little left but curiosity!’

At King Sejong's order, Hyang immediately stepped back and relayed the command to the traction engine operator.

Hiss!

As the operator who received the order drove the traction engine, it slowly moved forward. After observing it move about 1 jang (about 3 meters), King Sejong nodded.

“I see, simply put, it’s moving on a path made of iron. This way, even if the ground is soft or muddy, it can ignore it to some extent and move, right?”

“Yes, that’s correct.”

‘As expected, he’s extraordinary!’

“Hmm...”

While examining the caterpillar track after hearing Hyang’s answer, King Sejong asked Hyang a question.

“Is the steering of this traction engine done by those two separate wheels in front?”

“That’s correct, Your Majesty.”

While answering, Hyang explained the idler wheel mechanism installed on the traction engine. As he explained to King Sejong, Hyang added inwardly.

‘It can be called a steam-powered half-track.’

King Sejong, who was examining the steering mechanism using an axle, gears, spiral shaft, and chain protruding from the left side of the vehicle body (Note 1), turned to Hyang.

“I roughly understand how it steers, but looking at it now, is the largest wheel attached at the back among those wheels on the caterpillar track the one that exerts power?”

“Yes, that’s right.”

“When I read the technology-related booklets produced by the research institute and Area 51 before, I remember reading that every time a cart turns, the number of rotations of the inner and outer wheels differs. For

ordinary carts, it doesn't matter because the wheels rotate separately, but for iron horses, it becomes a problem because power is transmitted. I heard that to solve this, you need to either differentiate the power transmitted to the two wheels or make the turning radius very large."

"That's correct."

Hyang nodded at King Sejong's point and continued.

"The iron horses currently moving in Hanseong solved this problem by transmitting power to only one wheel. And for larger iron horses that need to move with greater power and speed, we plan to follow the latter method."

"Then does this traction engine also follow the method of the iron horses moving in Hanseong?"

To King Sejong's question, Hyang immediately replied.

"No, it's a new method."

"A new method?"

Hyang led King Sejong to the back of the traction engine and pointed to the underside of the vehicle body.

"You can see it here."

"Oh?"

At the rear bottom of the traction engine, there was a large iron box attached, with the power shaft and wheel axle connected to that box.

"We've named it the Differential Power Transmission Device^[1]."

The device Hyang pointed out was a gearbox containing differential gears.

The point King Sejong made was also raised during the development of the traction engine.

“We already came up with a solution for this part during the iron horse development process, didn’t we? Couldn’t we just transmit power to only one wheel like that?”

When most of the development team submitted such opinions, Hyang shook his head.

“The iron horses in Hanseong move on well-maintained roads in Hanseong, along dedicated rails, and lastly, at slow speeds, so there’s no particular problem. But the issue is that traction engines need to go where there are no roads.”

“Ah...”

The development team members who were nodding at Hyang’s explanation realized what the problem was and showed expressions of despair.

The statement ‘need to go where there are no roads’ meant that power had to be transmitted to both wheels.

Seeing the despairing looks of the development team, Hyang inwardly muttered.

‘There was a famous advertising copy in the 20th century that went something like this, right? It goes on roads. It goes where there are no roads.’

To solve this problem, the first thing the development team came up with was to attach independent braking devices to both wheels.

“Simply put, it’s the same method as the tanks operated during World War I and World War II, but...”

Looking at the development team’s plan, Hyang shook his head.

“It’s too much for now... If we apply that as is, we’ll end up with a transmission device bigger than the steam engine.”

Following Hyang’s point, the development team pondered other options, but an answer didn’t come easily.

Eventually, as time passed and no answer emerged, and with the pressure from the Ministry of National Defense increasing – they had the sin of snatching the budget under the pretext of development – Hyang intervened.

What Hyang proposed to the development team was a half-track steering mechanism and differential gears.

“Oh! This method!”

“As expected of His Highness!”

Hearing the development team’s exclamations praising him, Hyang inwardly muttered.

‘Thank you! General Motors.’

Hyang came to know about this steering mechanism and differential gears thanks to a black and white video produced by General Motors in the 1930s. (Note 2)

In the 21st century, Hyang – then Jin-ho – had encountered the unknown algorithm of a famous video site, watched the video, and instantly searched and watched all related videos.

“Amazing. To think that such incredible technology and principles are melted into this seemingly simple box...”

King Sejong, listening to Hyang’s explanation, sincerely marveled.

Seeing King Sejong’s admiring expression, Jeong Cho, who had come along, also looked proud along with Hyang.

“It seems the essence of the philosophy our Joseon possesses has melted into it.”

Nodding at King Sejong’s assessment, Hyang added.

“It’s not just the principles that have gone into it. The best iron-making and smelting technologies Joseon possesses have melted into the power transmission shafts and gears. I dare say that even if other countries come to know this principle, it would take at least 10 years to achieve the same performance as that.”

‘Simply put, it’s the 15th-century version of semiconductor technology.’

At Hyang’s words, King Sejong’s face turned serious.

“While it’s something to be proud of, we must also put great effort into preventing technology leakage.”

“Yes. That’s why the ironworks must remain as state-owned enterprises.”

King Sejong nodded with a serious face at Hyang’s assertion.

“That’s right...”

After the inspection of the traction engine was over, King Sejong’s party dispersed and boarded the pre-prepared passenger cars.

Hiss! Hiss! Toot!

With the sound of steam escaping and the whistle blowing, the traction engine slowly started to move.

Looking at the cavalry moving along for escort through the window, King Sejong turned to Hyang.

“You said it was made for the artillery, right? Then, instead of just pulling the cannons, wouldn’t it be good to load all the cannons, shells, and

gunpowder and move them together?”

‘That’s a self-propelled artillery, you know? By the way, they say all people think alike...’

As soon as King Sejong spoke, Hyang, who thought of self-propelled artillery, answered with a bitter smile.

“It’s not possible.”

“Why?”

“Because of the characteristics of the steam engine. The fire hole must always be open.”

“Ah...”

At Hyang’s words, King Sejong immediately nodded.

If the gunpowder loaded were to catch fire, it would be a terrible disaster.

But King Sejong didn’t back down easily.

“Couldn’t that problem be solved by creating a separate isolation space?”

“Gunpowder is dangerous not just from fire but also from heat. Especially for the mercury fulminate used in detonators, heat is the most dangerous. Of course, we could create sufficient isolation space, but then we’d have to redesign everything from scratch. Starting with a more powerful engine...”

Hyang paused and glanced at Kim Jeom. King Sejong, following Hyang’s gaze, saw Kim Jeom’s face, which was on the verge of tears, and sighed.

“Whew~. Yes, it would take an enormous amount of time and budget.”

“We might be able to reduce the time a bit, but I can’t guarantee the budget.”

“I guess we have no choice but to postpone it for later, how disappointing.”

“Yes, the development team also came up with similar proposals but had to give up at that point.”

Hiding his disappointment about the ‘self-propelled artillery’, King Sejong asked about another aspect.

“Then, what’s the towing capacity of the traction engine? Surely we don’t need to attach one to each cannon, do we?”

At King Sejong’s question, Kim Jeom glared at Jo Mal-saeng with a ‘you can’t be serious’ expression.

Seeing Kim Jeom’s face, which even showed murderous intent, Jo Mal-saeng hurriedly reported on behalf of Hyang.

“At maximum capacity, it can tow 5 Byeongshik cannons and all the carts loaded with shells and gunpowder for those cannons. However, for safety reasons, it’s set to tow only the cannons. Gunpowder and shells are transported using horse-drawn carts as before. However, even moving just the cannons is expected to bring a significant increase in combat power.”

“Hmm... I see... That’s a good plan.”

As King Sejong nodded and approved, Kim Jeom and Jo Mal-saeng showed contrasting expressions of joy and sorrow.

However, King Sejong’s imagination knew no bounds.

“Crown Prince, even if we can’t load cannons and gunpowder due to the risk of explosion, what about carrying soldiers instead?”

“Soldiers, you say?”

“Yes, if it has the power to tow 5 Byeongshik cannons and the shells and gunpowder for them, couldn’t it carry soldiers?”

“For that, we’d need to redesign again...”

“No, not creating space in the traction engine, but armoring this passenger car and connecting it. What do you think?”

At King Sejong’s words, one image came to Hyang’s mind.

‘An armored train? No... Something more similar would be the BV206? It’s similar, but... That one needs power transmitted to the rear as well... Could we use a joint shaft for that part?’

After doing various calculations, Hyang answered King Sejong.

“I’ll consider it.”

“Alright, I look forward to good results.”

“But the budget...”

“Make it a long-term project.”

At King Sejong’s firm answer, Hyang replied in a gloomy voice.

“... Yes, Your Majesty.”

While such conversations continued inside the passenger car, the traction engine steadily moved towards Onsu County.

“The speed is quite good. From what I can see, it’s about the same speed as a horse’s trot. Is this the fastest speed?”

“The fastest speed is slightly slower than a horse’s full gallop, but we prohibit running at that speed. It’s because of the cargo issue.”

Nodding at Hyang’s answer, King Sejong looked around the interior of the passenger car he was riding in and asked Hyang.

“I see. By the way, this is a very well-made passenger car, isn’t it? There’s very little shaking.”

“Yes, we will improve this further and use it for the passenger cars of post horses and railways. Both will have the same structure, with only differences in size.”

At Hyang’s answer, King Sejong turned to Kim Jeom and said.

“We’ll be able to save a lot on the budget.”

“That’s right.”

“Kim Jeom will have fewer occasions to take health tonics.”

At King Sejong’s joke, Kim Jeom replied with a bitter smile.

“It’s all thanks to Your Majesty’s grace. Your grace is boundless.”

Thanks to traveling by traction engine, King Sejong’s party was able to arrive at Onsu County in just two days.

The officials and people who had rushed to the entrance of the county upon hearing the news of King Sejong’s visit waited for him with expectant faces.

Chug chug puff puff! Chug chug puff puff!

“What’s that sound?”

“I’m not sure...”

The people and officials who were tilting their heads at the sound they had never heard before widened their eyes and dropped their jaws when the traction engine appeared at the county entrance along with the cavalry.

“What is that?”

“A lump of iron is moving?”

Toot!

When a loud whistle sounded from the approaching traction engine, the gathered people scattered with screams.

“Oh my goodness!”

“Save us!”

“It’s a monster!”

Note 1) It would be good to refer to this.

<https://youtu.be/N3yFa32meQM>

Note 2) Again, it would be good to refer to this.

<https://youtu.be/We-oNHoGf5Q>

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-

BBCodes

Bold of you to assume I have a plan.

Deathbringer, emphasis on *death*.

I'm totally ~~crossed-out~~ by this.

- Listless I'm counting my bullets.



<http://topwebfiction.com>.

[link=https://www.n.ot](https://www.n.ot) [clickbait](#).

... me like my landlord!

Spanish Inquisition!

Insert more bad puns!

~~Delete~~ your browser history!

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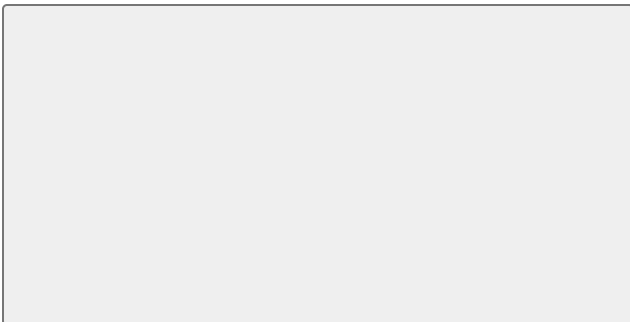
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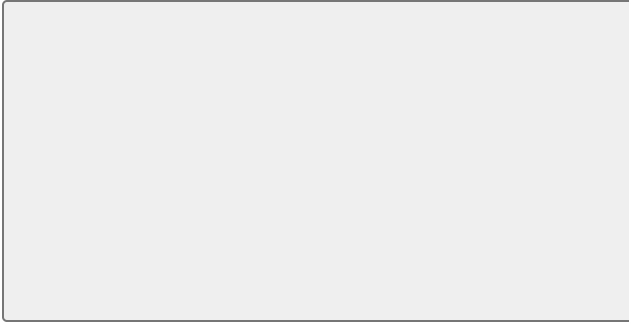
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Chapter 401 - 500

BCJ Chapter 406

Short Stories

by *BlossomTL*Black Corporation: Joseon

As the people scattered with screams, it was the officials of Onsu County who became busy.

“It’s not a monster, please come back!”

The officials of Onsu County raised their voices, but the people paid no heed.

“If that’s not a monster, what is?”

“That must be the Bulgasari we’ve only heard about!”

“Yeah! It’s definitely a Bulgasari!”

“Anyway, run!”

Shouting various nonsensical things, the people vanished in an instant, leaving the officials of Onsu County with bewildered expressions.

“Bul... Sigh~”

When even the ‘Bulgasari^[1]’, a folk tale that had been circulating since the end of Goryeo, was mentioned, the officials placed their hands on their foreheads and sighed.

“Just how far have they run?”

The officials who were looking around to find the scattered people sighed again when they saw the people who had already fled all the way to Namsan in the distance.

“Sigh~. They’re already that far...”

“Did they learn the art of teleportation... Sigh~”

Sighing, the officials got on their horses and headed towards Namsan where the people had taken refuge.

After being persuaded by the officials and cavalry to come down from the mountain again, the people gathered near the traction engine, sticking their buttocks out behind them and hesitating. Seeing this, the officials sighed once more.

“Sigh~.”

“Oh my... They’re ready to run away at any moment.”

As the people gathered again like this, King Sejong appeared from the passenger car.

“We greet His Majesty the King!”

“We greet His Majesty the King!”

As the officials led the chant and prostrated themselves on the ground, the people hurriedly followed suit and lay flat on the ground.

King Sejong, who had stepped out of the passenger car, smiled slightly at the sight and replied.

“I’m sorry for startling you. I’ll be imposing on you for a while, so I ask for your kind cooperation.”

“We dare not accept such words of request! Your Majesty is the master of this country, so we will naturally follow your commands!”

The magistrate of Onsu County raised his voice, and the other officials and people could only bow their heads.

However, King Sejong gently shook his head and responded.

“Listen, magistrate. Your loyalty is truly beautiful, but it’s not right. You must not forget that true loyalty is to speak up when an order is unjust.”

At King Sejong’s gentle rebuke, the magistrate raised his voice again with a reddened face.

“I will engrave it in my bones and heart!”

After this brief commotion, King Sejong set off for Onyang Temporary Palace, welcomed by the people.

“We will prepare the palanquin.”

At the Chief State Councillor’s words, King Sejong lightly waved his hand.

“That’s alright. It’s not far, so walking would be good. The weather is nice too.”

“But…”

As the Chief State Councillor showed reluctance, King Sejong smiled and started walking.

“I’ve been nagged so much about how walking is good for health, isn’t this a good opportunity? Hahaha!”

Having settled in the temporary palace this way, King Sejong comforted the people’s hearts.

On the third day after arrival.

King Sejong called the people of Onsu County for a feast and distributed a modest amount of money.

“I know it might be a bit inconvenient while I’m staying, but please bear with it.”

“Oh my! Don’t say such things! When would we commoners ever get to sit in a place like this? It’s something to boast about for the rest of our lives.”

At King Sejong’s words, the people bowed their heads deeply and expressed that it was fine.

However, there was a reason why King Sejong had called the people to comfort them like this.

Looking at the history before Hyang’s intervention, the kings of Joseon chronically suffered from skin diseases. To treat these skin diseases, the kings regularly visited hot springs.

This was the same for King Sejong.

To treat the persistent skin disease and eye problems that plagued him, King Sejong frequently visited hot springs in places like Baecheon, Pyeongsan, Icheon, and Onyang.

However, as these places were distant, King Sejong had issued an order to find out if there were hot springs closer by.

At that time, a rumor was heard that there was a hot spring in Bupyeong, and King Sejong ordered the magistrate of Bupyeong to investigate, but the answer that came back was absurd.

-The people had destroyed the hot spring.

There had been a hot spring in Onsgol (present-day Onsu-dong) belonging to Bupyeong Dohobu, but upon hearing the rumor, the people had blocked off the hot spring.

This was because the hot spring had become a nuisance to the people.

When the king arrived to enjoy the hot spring, not only did they have to perform various labor duties, but they also had to move around under the fierce gazes of the soldiers guarding the king's quarters.

This much they could somehow endure. Because it would end when the king left. But the problem came after that.

When rumors spread that 'there is a hot spring,' all sorts of people with skin diseases and lepers would flock to the area. As these people gathered, problems arose with public safety, and life became inconvenient. Moreover, if the hot spring water flowed into the rice paddies and fields, it would ruin the crops.

For these reasons, the people had cut off the hot spring's vein with rocks and soil.

In the end, the magistrate of Bupyeong was reprimanded by King Sejong, and Bupyeong Dohobu was demoted to Bupyeong County. (Note 1)

For these reasons, King Sejong had held a feast for the people of Onsu County and distributed money.

While staying in Onsu County like this, King Sejong spent time with the people.

He went around nearby villages and farmed together with the people, and distributed alcohol and meat to the people tired from farming.

"Your Majesty! A commoner from Asan County has come, saying they wish to offer rice cakes to Your Majesty."

At the Chief State Councillor's words, King Sejong brightened and ordered.

“Oh! Such deep loyalty! Let them in!”

Following King Sejong's order, a group of commoners entered, with an old woman leaning on a cane at the front, her back bent with age.

Supported by men and women who appeared to be her family, the old woman staggered in leaning on her cane. When she saw King Sejong, she tried to bow.

“This lowly one, to have the honor of seeing the King...”

As the old woman staggered while trying to bow, not only the nearby eunuchs but also Hyang and King Sejong rushed to get up.

“There's no need to bow, please sit down. Eunuch, bring a chair!”

King Sejong, who personally held the old woman's hand and seated her in a chair, looked at the men and women who came with her with a pleased expression.

“Is he your son?”

“Yes.”

“How old is your mother?”

“She is ninety-four this year.”

“Ninety-four!”

Everyone, including King Sejong, was greatly surprised at the old woman's age.

“Longevity is truly the greatest blessing given by Heaven, so congratulations. You have received a great blessing.”

At King Sejong's words, the old woman bowed her head and replied.

“This old one has seen many good things and many hardships in my life. Especially when the Japanese pirates were rampaging in the past, I wished for death, and I often cursed at the sky for my tough life persisting. But since Your Majesty became our king, such things have disappeared, and I don’t know how good that is. So I made rice cakes and came, though they’re made by this lowly one, please accept them.”

Her words were far from formal etiquette, but they were full of sincerity.

King Sejong nodded with slightly moist eyes.

“I will eat them well. Sangseon, bring the rice cakes.”

“Yes, Your Majesty.”

Sangseon brought a basket filled with rice cakes and presented it to King Sejong. King Sejong took a rice cake from the basket held by Sangseon, immediately put it in his mouth, and chewed.

“It’s truly delicious. Thank you.”

King Sejong patted the old woman’s hand and, as he returned to his seat with the basket of rice cakes, he ordered the Chief State Councillor.

“Award this old woman with 10 nyang of gold.”

“I receive your command!”

Seated, King Sejong took another rice cake from the basket and put it in his mouth. Although not as refined as the rice cakes eaten in the palace, the taste felt even more delicious.

“May I have one too, Father?”

At Hyang’s question, King Sejong smiled and held out the basket.

“It contains the heart of the people, so let’s share it together.”

“Your grace is boundless.”

(Note 2)

That evening, King Sejong and Hyang shared a moment together after a long time.

“Do you remember what the old woman we saw today said?”

“Yes.”

“I wish the happy times that old woman spoke of could last longer.”

“You will surely achieve it sufficiently, Father.”

“You must work hard too.”

“I will also work hard.”

“By the way, it’s truly convenient now that currency is widely used and Joseon’s capabilities have grown.”

At King Sejong’s observation, Hyang unconsciously nodded.

Before the reforms, when a large-scale event like this occurred, it would have caused quite a commotion. Preparing the vehicles and horses to carry the royal personnel was one thing, but preparing clothing, food, cloth and other items for rewards, and even medicines for emergencies was an even bigger task.

As a result, when they moved like this once, a follow-up group larger than the main group had to move.

However, as currency became commonplace and the scale of Joseon’s commerce grew, this burden was greatly reduced.

Of course, clothing and medicines still had to be prepared in advance, but the food portion, which boasted the largest bulk, was significantly reduced. What was prepared when departing from Hanseong was just the basic food

to eat until arriving at the temporary palace. The rest could be purchased immediately using currency at government stores or markets located in the villages they passed through.

It was the same after arriving at the temporary palace. What was distributed to comfort the people was not cloth or grain, but money, and the food consumed during the stay and the alcohol and meat given to the people were all supplied through nearby markets and government stores.

This was beneficial for both sides. The markets and government stores cheered at meeting unexpected big spenders, and the royal side was pleased to be able to purchase fresh ingredients immediately.

The biggest background that made this possible was, as mentioned earlier, the widespread use of currency and the growth of Joseon's commercial scale. Particularly noteworthy was the fact that they could supply food and goods without problems to an enormous group that included almost the entire royal family and about 1/3 of the court moving together.

Although he had come to the hot springs for treatment, King Sejong, having seen the results of the reforms with his own eyes, wore a more relaxed expression while also renewing his determination.

“Having seen with my own eyes that what we've done so far hasn't gone wrong, I must work even harder from now on.”

“Please take care of your health, Father. Your health is the top priority.”

“Thank y...”

As King Sejong was about to reply with a pleased expression to Hyang's advice, he suddenly stopped speaking and glared at Hyang.

“Speak straight. What do you mean by what you just said?”

“Of course, I'm wishing for your long life and good health, aren't I?”

“So, what's the reason for wishing for my long life and good health? Isn't it with the mindset of enduring as much as possible to receive regency or

abdication as late as possible? And during that time, you're thinking of just doing what you want to do?"

"Of course not!"

Although Hyang strongly denied it, inwardly he was breaking out in a cold sweat.

'Did he find out? No, that can't be, right? He's just guessing, right?'

Seeing Hyang's expression, King Sejong growled.

"If I had my way, I'd hand over everything, be it the research institute or Area 51, to the court and make you serve as regent..."

"Oh my, Father!"

"I'll be watching you."

'I'll be watching you.'

King Sejong put it into action the very next day.

"I will command the Crown Prince. In our Joseon, there are already places with hot springs, and there are many places where rumors of hot springs are circulating. According to medical books, hot springs are places that greatly benefit people's health, but the people are hesitant to develop them. Come up with a plan to address this. The deadline is two days before we return to the palace."

After giving the order to Hyang, King Sejong added.

"The reason I've given such a task to the Crown Prince is because the ministers who have accompanied us are still busy. Fortunately, as the Crown Prince is no longer handling the affairs of the research institute and Area 51, I thought he was suitable for this task as his hands are free. Therefore, I hope the Crown Prince will do his best."

At King Sejong's order, Hyang bowed his head and replied.

“I humbly accept your command.”

‘Ah, he's so petty!’

Note 1) The story of Guro in Oryugol.

[https://m.blog.naver.com/PostView.nhn?
blogId=localpr&logNo=110169916547](https://m.blog.naver.com/PostView.nhn?blogId=localpr&logNo=110169916547)

Note 2) This is a creative work by the author based on the Annals of King Sejong, which records that when King Sejong stopped at Onyang Hot Springs, a 94-year-old woman from Asan County presented rice cakes.

The Annals of King Sejong in One Volume. King Sejong 15th Year Edition.
Written by Park Young-gyu. Woongjin Knowledge House.

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
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BBCodes

[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.

Deathbringer, emphasis on [i]death[/i].

I'm totally [s]~~crossed-out~~[/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

[img]https://www.agine.this[/img]

[link]http://topwebfiction.com[/link].

[link=https://www.n.ot]clickbait[/link].

[quote]... me like my landlord![/quote]

[spoiler]Spanish Inquisition![/spoiler]

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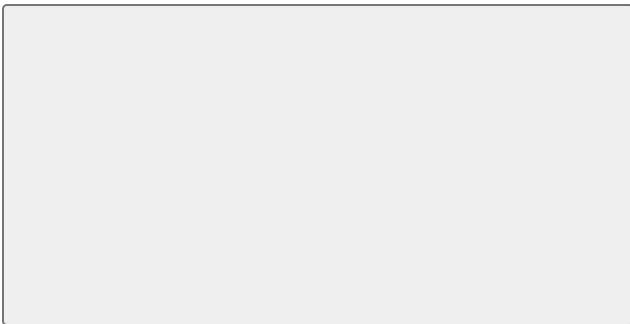
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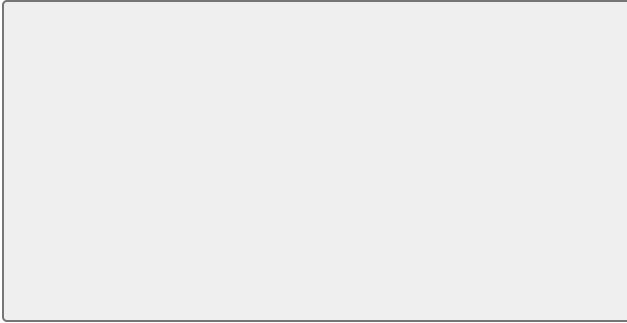
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Chapter 401 - 500

BCJ Chapter 407

Short Stories

by *BlossomTL*Black Corporation: Joseon

55Although he had taken on the task, Hyang's face wasn't particularly heavy.

“In the past, I would have had almost no cards to play, but now I have quite a few, don't I? So, first identify the problematic parts, then solve just those parts and add a little MSG, and the situation is over...”

Having devised his own story, Hyang soon called a eunuch and gave an order.

“Prepare a list of those who have come here among the officials, excluding ministers and vice ministers.”

“Yes, Your Highness.”

As the eunuch who received the order withdrew, Hyang, left alone in the room, muttered with a smile.

“I don't need to run around myself, do I?”

After about 2 gak (about 30 minutes), the eunuch returned with a thick book.

“You brought the results faster than I expected?”

When Hyang couldn't hide his surprise at the unexpected result, the eunuch answered with a grin.

“There was a register of officials accompanying this trip, Your Highness. If you turn just the first three pages, you'll find the list of officials you were looking for.”

“Oh? How did you come up with this idea?”

The place that received the evaluation of ‘the most conservative place within the palace’ was where the eunuchs and court ladies were.

However, they had reasons for being that way. All events of the king and royal family members had to follow strict etiquette, and the eunuchs and court ladies were well-versed in all these etiquettes. Moreover, being in the closest proximity to those at the very top of power, like the king and queen, demanded strict conduct from them.

As a result, eunuchs and court ladies received such evaluations, and Hyang couldn't hide his surprise. It was because it showed considerable flexibility, not typical of a eunuch's thinking.

To Hyang's surprised question, the eunuch answered once again with a grin.

“I learned it while serving you, Your Highness.”

“Ah...”

Hyang looked at the eunuch before him with fresh eyes. He was the eunuch who had always been around him since he started his palace life. The once rookie eunuch in his mid-teens, still awkward, was now displaying maturity.

After looking at the eunuch for a moment, Hyang smiled and said to him.

“I'll be counting on you in the future too.”

“I will do my best, Your Highness.”

Having received the register from the eunuch like this, Hyang began to examine the list.

However, Hyang didn't spend much time finding suitable individuals.

It was because he found suitable candidates right after passing the part where the names of ministers and vice ministers were written.

“Kim Jong-seo is here? Hwangbo In is here too?”

Having found the famous Kim Jong-seo and Hwangbo In, Hyang immediately closed the register and called the eunuch.

“Have you found them, Your Highness?”

“Go and call Kim Jong-seo and Hwangbo In.”

“Yes, Your Highness.”

About half a shi-jin (about 1 hour) later, Kim Jong-seo and Hwangbo In, who had received Hyang's summons, came to see him.

After paying their respects to Hyang, the two soon sat in chairs opposite him.

“You called for us, Your Highness?”

“Yes. I have some work for you two.”

“Is it about the hot spring issue, Your Highness?”

When Kim Jong-seo pretended to know, Hyang immediately nodded.

“That's right.”

“If it's that issue, couldn't we just create public bathhouses where even commoners can enter for a fee?”

At Kim Jong-seo's words, Hyang shook his head.

“That's something anyone could think of. If it were just that, would I need to call you gentlemen?”

As Hyang's tone changed, Kim Jong-seo and Hwangbo In tensed up.

‘When Sejong and Hyang's speech becomes short, it means the evaluation of the person in charge of that task is changing. And in a bad direction.’

This was an unshakeable truth in Joseon's bureaucratic society.

And now, despite being the Crown Prince, Hyang's polite speech had changed. This lit up a warning light in Kim Jong-seo and Hwangbo In's minds.

Seeing Kim Jong-seo and Hwangbo In become alert again, Hyang continued.

“Currency has already settled, and the livelihood of Joseon's people has become quite comfortable. Thanks to this, people are very eagerly looking for legally profitable ventures in the current Joseon. Yet, the development of hot springs is still sluggish, so there must be some other reason, right?”

As Hyang's words continued, the two men's necks stretched out more and more. Looking at the two, Hyang delivered his final blow.

“And you're talking about creating bathhouses without properly knowing what that reason is? Does that make sense?”

At Hyang's rebuke, Kim Jong-seo and Hwangbo In immediately bowed their heads and had to beg.

“We have made a mistake, Your Highness!”

“Please give us another chance!”

At the two men's plea, Hyang gave an order.

“Very well, you two move immediately now to confirm and report the reasons why people are avoiding hot spring development. I’ll give you a fortnight.”

“Yes, Your Highness.”

“Move immediately now!”

“Yes, Your Highness!”

The two men hurriedly paid their respects and quickly left Hyang’s room.

As soon as they left the building where the Crown Prince was staying, Hwangbo In glared at Kim Jong-seo and got angry.

“Ah! That damn mouth of yours! Calling such a fellow a friend! Ah!”

“S-sorry!”

“Forget it, just get ready to go up! Ah, I’m so frustrated!”

Having parted with Hwangbo In like this and returned to his quarters, Kim Jong-seo began to pack his luggage.

“You’ve done well~”

Kim Jong-seo, who was packing with a gloomy face, turned around at Hwang Hui’s sarcastic voice from behind and grumbled.

“Lord! Come on!”

“What are you so proud of? You’ve blown all the points you’ve accumulated in one go.”

“It was just one mistake, Your Excellency!”

“Just one, indeed. The problem is before whom you made that mistake. Understand? You made that mistake in front of the Crown Prince who will succeed to the throne next.”

“Tsk...”

“It would have been better if it was in front of His Majesty. Didn’t you think that when you hear the words ‘minister, vice minister’, it will be the Crown Prince sitting on the throne?”

“...”

At Hwang Hui’s rebuke, Kim Jong-seo closed his mouth. Seeing Kim Jong-seo’s clearly repentant appearance, Hwang Hui rummaged through his sleeve and pulled out a horse token.

“Here. Ask for the best horse at the post station and go and come back as quickly as possible. How many days did His Highness give you as a deadline?”

“A fortnight.”

“Finish it within ten days. Only then can you earn back the points you’ve lost.”

“Yes. Thank you.”

“Thanks, my foot. And have me check it before you submit it. Don’t deliver it directly saying His Highness ordered it, but follow the proper chain of command.”

“Yes.”

Despite Kim Jong-seo’s answer, Hwang Hui continued to give warnings.

“I’ve told you many times, haven’t I? You and I go together till the end. But if you don’t do well this time, I’ll send you straight to Daeseol Island. No, maybe Jongjang Island would be better?”

“I’ll be back! Please give me the horse token!”

As Hwang Hui was about to hand over the horse token at Kim Jong-seo’s words, he suddenly pulled his hand back and gave another warning.

“Reflect thoroughly on this incident. You have a good grasp of work and do it well, but you’re too light on your feet. You need to become more serious.”

“...Yes.”

After listening to Hwang Hui’s nagging like this, Kim Jong-seo packed his horse token and luggage and went outside.

As a side note, Kim Jong-seo’s personality became much more serious after this. As seriousness was added to his violent personality that was called a ‘tiger’, his talents finally blossomed.

As promised to Hwang Hui, Kim Jong-seo and Hwangbo In completed a report and a plan containing their own solutions in ten days and submitted them to Hwang Hui.

After meticulously examining the report and plan, Hwang Hui marked them here and there with red and returned them.

“Reinvestigate the data for this part, revise the sentences here, and... the numbers are wrong in this part. Are you trying to get scolded after all your hard work? Recalculate immediately and rewrite it!”

“Yes, sir!”

After receiving Hwang Hui’s review like this, Kim Jong-seo and Hwangbo In finally submitted the report and plan to Hyang.

“Let’s see...”

Hyang, who opened the report, nodded.

“As expected...”

The content written in the report was an investigation into why hot spring development was sluggish.

The first thing pointed out was geographical issues. Most potential hot spring sites were mostly located away from villages. Because of this, there were problems with transportation and public safety. Not only that, but attacks by wild beasts were also a problem in such remote places.

The next thing pointed out was, as mentioned before, the problem of skin disease patients and lepers who flocked when rumors of hot springs were heard. There were rumors that diseases were transmitted from these flocking patients, and it also caused problems with public safety.

Especially regarding lepers, all sorts of gruesome rumors circulated, such as lepers kidnapping children and eating their livers. It wasn't just rumors; such incidents had actually occurred, so the influx of such people had to be prevented at all costs.

The last thing pointed out was the management issue of hot spring water. This, too, was mentioned before, but if hot spring water entered rice paddies or fields, it would ruin the crops.

“These parts are definitely problematic...”

After confirming the contents of the report, Hyang opened the plan next.

The plan contained strategies for overcoming these situations and developing hot spring bathhouses.

“Hmm...”

After examining the plan for a long time and nodding, Hyang looked at Kim Jong-seo and Hwangbo In.

“You've worked hard. It has been a great help. Thank you very much.”

At Hyang's praise, Kim Jong-seo and Hwangbo In bowed their heads and replied.

“Not at all. We've only done what we should do.”

“Then, I'll have to ponder a bit based on your plan.”

“Yes, Your Highness.”

The two paid their respects to Hyang and left the room.

“Phew~”

“Ahh~”

Once outside, the two let out sighs of relief.

“Do you think we've earned back the lost points?”

“Thank goodness, thank goodness.”

Three days later, Hyang reported the plan to King Sejong.

“You've completed the plan?”

“Yes, Director Kim Jong-seo and Deputy Director Hwangbo In's help was very significant.”

“Is that so?”

At Hyang's answer, the gazes of King Sejong and the ministers turned to Kim Jong-seo and Hwangbo In. Receiving the gazes of King Sejong and the ministers, Kim Jong-seo and Hwangbo In slightly bowed their heads.

Looking at the two, King Sejong opened his mouth.

“I’ve heard they are truly outstanding talents. Since their help was so significant, my expectations are high. Begin your explanation.”

“Yes, Your Majesty.”

At King Sejong’s order, Hyang cleared his throat and began to explain.

Hyang’s explanation was as follows:

-Select and develop hot spring bathhouses where the water quality is good and has medicinal effects.

-This development project will be carried out by the country. The reason for the country to carry it out is to prevent problems caused by indiscriminate hot spring development.

-When a suitable hot spring is found and developed, a royal hot spring bathhouse will be installed first.

-Installing a royal hot spring bathhouse first is not only for the health management of royal personnel including the king but also to increase the value of the developed hot spring bathhouse.

At Hyang’s explanation, King Sejong nodded.

“That’s right. A hot spring bathhouse that the king has visited naturally carries a different weight from one that’s just developed.”

“That’s correct, Your Majesty.”

Agreeing with King Sejong’s words, Hyang continued his explanation.

-After the royal visit to such a created hot spring bathhouse is realized, bathhouses for the people will be constructed, separated from the royal bath.

-Additionally, a comprehensive entertainment center will be built at this bathhouse for people to enjoy bathing and entertainment. However, the

games allowed in the entertainment center installed at this bathhouse will be limited to baduk (Go).

“Why?”

At King Sejong’s question, Hyang immediately answered.

“Enjoying hot springs while gambling is quite an expensive event. If not careful, people might abandon their livelihoods and gamble at the hot spring. This would lead to impoverished families and eventual ruin.”

At Hyang’s explanation, King Sejong nodded greatly.

“I see! So you’re saying to limit those who will enjoy leisurely activities to those with plenty of wealth!”

“That’s right. For ordinary people, it should be thought of as a short excursion.”

“That’s good.”

As King Sejong responded positively, another famous attraction that would become well-known not only in Joseon but also abroad was gradually taking shape.

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[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.

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- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

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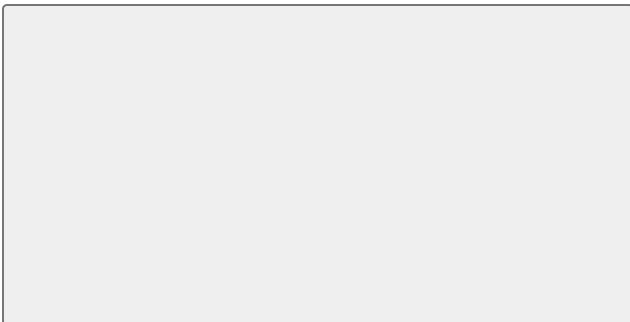
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Chapter 401 - 500

BCJ Chapter 408

Short Stories

by *BlossomTLBlack Corporation: Joseon*

Seeing King Sejong's positive reaction, Hyang began to mention some sensitive points.

“There are several advantages to creating such hot spring bathhouses, but before that, I'd like to explain why the development of hot springs has been sluggish until now.”

“That's right. I thought there was something strange about that too.”

As King Sejong showed interest, Hyang lightly cleared his throat and continued his explanation.

“There are several reasons why people have been hesitant to develop hot springs, but the biggest reasons are...”

Hyang explained to King Sejong the problems that Kim Jong-seo and Hwangbo In had investigated.

After hearing Hyang's explanation, King Sejong nodded with a serious face.

“I see. So that's why the development of hot springs has been sluggish. Well... Do you have any solutions?”

“Yes, Your Majesty.”

Hyang began to talk about solutions to the problems.

-The first thing to do is to assign physicians and female doctors to the developed hot spring bathhouses. Depending on the size of the hot spring bathhouse, assign 1 to 3 physicians and female doctors each from the Royal Clinic. However, these assigned individuals will be gradually replaced when formal physicians are produced from the Medical Academy.

-The duties of the physicians and female doctors assigned to the hot spring bathhouses are as follows: They categorize those who come to the hot springs as patients with joint diseases who come for treatment of arthritis or neuralgia, patients with skin diseases, and patients with leprosy.

-Patients with joint diseases can enter the same bathhouse as others.

-Patients with skin diseases can use private baths under the care of physicians and female doctors, but patients with leprosy are prohibited from entering.

Also, additional police or military personnel will be deployed to maintain public safety in villages with hot spring bathhouses.

“...And, to add, we should also properly identify the efficacy of the hot spring water from the developed bathhouses and announce it in the government gazette.”

“Oh? Why is that?”

“As far as I know, each hot spring water has different efficacy. So, if we properly identify and announce this, it will be more useful for people when using the hot spring bathhouses.”

“People will travel long distances to find hot springs useful for them. And their horizons will be broadened, won't they?”

Hyang nodded at King Sejong's observation.

“Yes. That's also part of the consideration. The roads will continue to be improved accordingly, and the railways we will install in the future will

quickly establish themselves.”

“I see. It’s a good measure...”

Although nodding, there was still some dissatisfaction on King Sejong’s face.

“Father. If there are any inadequate parts, please tell me. I will think about those parts as quickly as possible and give you an answer.”

Recognizing from King Sejong’s expression that there was a problem, Hyang quickly added, ‘After-service available!’

At Hyang’s words, King Sejong stroked his beard, remained silent for a moment, and then opened his mouth.

“Crown Prince, your opinion is truly a good plan. However, the response regarding leprosy patients seems a bit inadequate. Hasn’t the difficulty of leprosy patients been widely known since ancient times? I’m a bit uncomfortable with blocking those who are desperate enough to seek out hot springs despite such difficulties. Of course, I know that leprosy is an incurable disease, but it still bothers me a bit.”

‘You know about that!’

Forcibly suppressing the words that were about to automatically burst out at King Sejong’s words, Hyang let out a long sigh.

“Sigh~. As Father also mentioned, leprosy is an incurable disease. Allowing them to enter hot spring bathhouses would rather give them false hope and deeper despair.”

‘It wasn’t until the mid to late 20th century that a cure was found, and I don’t know about that part either! If I knew that, I would have quit being the Crown Prince and become a medicine peddler to make a fortune!’

Hyang was inwardly shouting at the top of his lungs.

At Hyang’s explanation, King Sejong also sighed.

“Sigh~. I know that part too. But when I see leprosy patients wandering outside, I can’t hide my sorrow. It’s sad enough that they have such a disease, but don’t they also face harsh persecution?”

Until this period, regardless of East or West, there was a prevalent perception that Hansen’s disease patients were ‘criminals punished by heaven’. Therefore, it was common for them to be expelled from their hometowns and wander. If they happened to enter another village, they would be blocked at the entrance and driven away, or even stoned.

The places that treated them slightly better were a few monasteries that emphasized compassion and Italian cities during the Renaissance period. Leprosy patients could enter the cities, but anything they touched had to be bought unconditionally. (Note 1)

‘Well, future historians will surely make a fuss about human rights and such, but for now, this is the only way.’

Inwardly smacking his lips, Hyang opened his mouth.

“I too was somewhat aware of Father’s concerns, so I’ve given it some thought. How about this plan?”

“Oh? What is it?”

At King Sejong’s question, Hyang immediately answered.

“We select one of the remote islands in the South Sea that is easily accessible for officials and physicians, relocate the residents to the mainland, and then gather and manage leprosy patients there. This way, we can prevent leprosy patients from receiving unjust persecution while allowing them to be self-sufficient, and make it easier for physicians and officials to manage them.”

At Hyang’s words, King Sejong showed a slightly perplexed expression.

“It’s a good plan, but will there be residents willing to comply, not to mention officials and physicians?”

“In the case of residents, since they’re not living together but being relocated to the mainland, there shouldn’t be a big problem. Fortunately, aren’t there quite a lot of vacant lands in Hamgil Province and the area east of it? Even if that’s not enough, we also have Daeseol Island, so it shouldn’t be a big problem.”

“That’s true.”

Not only King Sejong but also the ministers nodded at Hyang’s words. This was because they had been able to incorporate quite a lot of territory into Joseon through the inducement of Jurchen tribes to submit and exploratory voyages.

Having provided an answer to the issue of relocating residents, Hyang continued.

“And since leprosy is not an easily transmissible disease, if officials or physicians are careful themselves, there shouldn’t be a big problem.”

“Hmm...”

After pondering for a moment at Hyang’s words, King Sejong turned to the Chief Royal Secretary.

“Go and call the Royal Physician.”

“Yes, Your Majesty.”

A moment later, the Royal Physician arrived, heard the explanation from King Sejong and Hyang, searched his memory for a moment, and then answered.

“Yes, Your Majesty. While the treatment of leprosy is impossible, fortunately, its infectivity is not high. Also, the disease of parents is not passed down to their children.”

“I see.”

As King Sejong was nodding, Hwang Hui intervened.

“It seems we should prepare even a Commoner’s School.”

King Sejong immediately replied to Hwang Hui’s words.

“That probably should be done. Then, add this proposal and proceed with it.”

“We humbly accept your command!”

Thus, the policy regarding ‘hot spring development’ was officially decided and published in the government gazette.

The people who read the government gazette posted on the walls of government offices gathered in small groups and chatted.

“Hot spring development... Should we look for hot springs nearby?”

“Shall we? If we find one, it seems we could make some money... Jobs would be created too.”

According to the content written in the government gazette, when a hot spring bathhouse is created, people from nearby residents would be selected to work there.

Of course, they would have to be supervised by officials dispatched from the royal family to manage the royal bath used by the king and royal personnel. But still, it meant the creation of jobs with regular wages.

In addition, it was good news that physicians and female doctors would be assigned to the hot spring bathhouses. This was because there were still not a few villages without doctors.

“By the way... His Majesty the King and the Crown Prince are truly benevolent. To care even for lepers like this.”

“Indeed they are.”

Providing separate accommodation for leprosy patients to avoid persecution while also creating an environment where they could be self-sufficient was not something an ordinary king would think of.

This was not only good for the leprosy patients themselves but also for ordinary people.

The word that people were praising King Sejong and himself soon reached Hyang. Upon hearing this, Hyang gave a bitter smile.

“It is the best solution I could come up with. Future scholars will probably criticize it as a materialistic policy and a forced relocation policy that ignores human rights, but...”

Although Hyang gave such a bitter smile, he immediately changed his expression and muttered.

“What do I care? The present is what’s important to me!”

Hyang didn’t know, but in the history before his intervention, almost the same thing had happened.

December 3, 11th year of King Sejong’s reign (1429).

Park Seo-saeng submitted a petition to King Sejong.

-Looking at the customs of Japan, they like to bathe and keep their bodies clean regardless of age. Therefore, large houses each have bathrooms installed, and bathhouses are installed here and there in every neighborhood. Their system is well-established and very convenient. When the person boiling the bath blows a horn, people compete to pay money and

bathe, so it is right for our Joseon to install bathhouses in places where there are many people and allow them to use money.

At that time, King Sejong was attempting to circulate currency, so this was a petition for that purpose.

And in the 1st year of King Munjong's reign (1451), King Munjong gave the following order to the Baecheon County Official:

-Do not seal off the Royal Hot Spring Bathhouse and allow people to bathe.

Of course, it wasn't opening all bathrooms, but excluding the bathrooms that only the king and queen could use. However, there were several other bathhouses, so such an order was given. (Note 2)

As a side note, in the history after Hyang's intervention, Park Seo-saeng also proposed various measures to expand the national finances, and thanks to this, he immediately moved from the Ministry of Public Works to the Ministry of Finance, and was later being separated from the Ministry of Finance and Economy.

The same was true for Hansen's disease patients.

In the 1st year of King Munjong's reign, there was a record of collectively accommodating and treating about 100 Hansen's disease patients by royal order. (Note 3)

In other words, even in the history before Hyang's intervention, King Munjong was making various efforts to change Joseon.

However, the main reason why these facts are not well known is King Munjong's short life. The policies he attempted lost momentum and faded away as King Munjong died before they could bear fruit.

And the tragedy that unfolded between King Danjong and King Sejo, who immediately succeeded him, overshadowed the existence of King Munjong.

After returning from the hot springs like this, King Sejong's health improved a lot. However, as his eye condition still showed no significant improvement, the physicians of the Royal Clinic had to search through medical books.

Thanks to continuously examining King Sejong's condition and searching through medical books, the Royal Physician reported to King Sejong.

“According to the medical books and old records we've searched, there is a medicinal spring at Chojaeunso in Cheongju-mok, and its water is said to be good for skin diseases and eyes. It seems it would be good for you to stay there for a while for treatment.”

At the Royal Physician's suggestion, King Sejong immediately expressed his refusal.

“I have already been out of the palace for a month in Onsu County. Leaving the palace again would not set a good example for the people. Think of another way.”

Listening to King Sejong's words, Hyang's mind started spinning rapidly.

‘Chojaeunso in Cheongju? Cheongju? Medicinal water? And ‘cho’ means Sichuan pepper tree, so is it that? That's it! Chojeong mineral water!’

Realizing what the Royal Physician was talking about, Hyang immediately joined the conversation.

Note 1) Life Human World History. Renaissance Edition. Korea Time Life. 1978.

Note 2) Mr. History Interest's ‘Crow's Nest’ Igloo.

<http://luckcrow.egloos.com/2534809>

Note 3) Health Information from Seocho-gu Public Health Center. Hansen's Disease section.

<https://www.seocho.go.kr/site/sh/07/10702050900002015072310.jsp>

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BBCodes

[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.

Deathbringer, emphasis on [i]*death*[/i].

I'm totally [s]~~crossed out~~[/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

[img][/img]

[link]<http://topwebfiction.com>[/link].

[link=https://www.n.ot][clickbait](https://www.n.ot)[/link].

[quote]... me like my landlord! [/quote]

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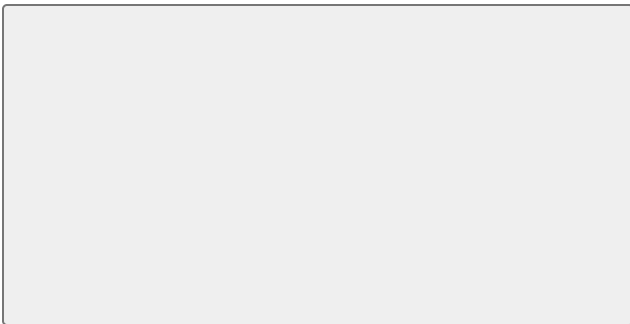
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Chapter 401 - 500

BCJ Chapter 409

Short Stories

by *BlossomTL*Black Corporation: Joseon

1 "If it's difficult for Father to leave the palace, couldn't we bring the mineral water here?"

"Considering the amount needed for daily bathing, face washing, and drinking, a considerable quantity would be required. The effort to transport that would be substantial..."

"We can use the traction engine."

At Hyang's words, the Royal Physician stopped speaking and immediately bowed his head. Seeing this, King Sejong made a decision.

"Have it brought using the traction engine."

"We humbly accept your command."

After the meeting ended, Hyang, who left Geunjeongjeon Hall, excitedly headed to Area 51.

"Yes! I can hear the sound of money coming in!"

Ten days later, the traction engine returned, pulling freight cars loaded with large wooden barrels full of mineral water.

Of course, it didn't take ten days for the round trip. The time for the round trip and filling the water took only four days in total. The remaining six days were spent making dedicated wooden barrels – similar to oak barrels – for containing the carbonated water.

“It feels refreshing to the eyes!”

King Sejong, who washed his eyes with the transported carbonated water, was very satisfied with the feeling. Then, a eunuch respectfully offered King Sejong a tray with a bowl full of carbonated mineral water.

“Ah! The water is truly spicy!”

King Sejong exclaimed, wiping the tears that involuntarily formed in his eyes from the intense stimulation of the carbonation in the water.

“It's spicy, but it feels like it's clearing out my insides! I've been feeling stuffy inside, but this is very good!”

After that, King Sejong took light baths and washed his face with the Chojeong mineral water and drank it as a beverage.

Whether it was the effect of the hot spring bath followed by the carbonated mineral water bath, King Sejong's skin condition subsided considerably. Of course, the bath wasn't everything. Accepting the strong recommendations of the Royal Physician and Hyang, he started getting up from his seat every shi-jin (about 2 hours) to walk around Gyeonghoeru Pavilion, and he also consistently resumed skipping rope, which he had often skipped doing until now.

“This alone is a bit lacking... I should make those things I've been saying I'd make but have been neglecting.”

Hyang made the exercise equipment he had only planned until now and installed it in the backyard of Gangnyeongjeon Hall.

Of course, although it was called exercise equipment, it wasn't like the grand equipment found in 21st-century gyms. It was an imitation of simple

equipment that guaranteed minimum performance, very similar to the simple exercise equipment installed at mineral springs or riversides.

Hyang was able to make this because when he lived in Yangsan, it was his job to maintain the exercise equipment placed in front of the village community center.

While installing the exercise equipment in the backyard of Gangnyeongjeon Hall, Hyang grumbled with a face full of regret.

“I wanted to make things like those used in gyms... But for that, we’d need to unify weights and measures first, and that’s impossible...”

Hyang stopped speaking and sighed.

“Sigh~. Even with such strict supervision, the fact that weights and measures aren’t unified yet, damn it!”

The units of weights and measures used in Joseon during this period were literally ‘chaotic confusion.’

Even the chi (尺), the most commonly used unit of length, was used in several types, such as the construction chi (營造尺) and the Zhou chi (周尺).

Of course, each of these chi had different uses, but it was certainly less efficient than having a unified standard.

Therefore, when the reforms began, efforts were made to unify the length units based on the construction chi, but the situation was not yet perfectly unified.

As a side note, the reason for choosing the construction chi as the standard was because of its characteristics – it was mainly used as a carpentry chi – which gave it a strong character as a standard chi, and also because Hyang was familiar with it.

“Even in the 21st century, 1 ja was about 30cm... It’s good to use what’s familiar, right?”

The exercise equipment made in this way showed considerable effect on King Sejong. King Sejong was very pleased because using the equipment for about 1 shi-jin invigorated his body, but Hyang unexpectedly became depressed.

“Does this mean Father’s physical age was at the level of old men at mineral springs?”

Watching King Sejong repeatedly saying “This is very good!” while using the exercise equipment, Hyang became depressed and kept grumbling.

“What’s the use of building up the body during the Crown Prince period? It all goes to waste when you become king...”

What the Crown Prince learned was not just Confucian classics. With the goal of ‘excelling in both literary and martial arts’, he had to learn archery, horsemanship, and wrestling to quite a high level, using military officers from the Inner Palace Guard as instructors. Because of this, a Crown Prince who received proper education would develop a considerably strong physique.

However, Hyang came to have a different perspective.

“It seems like they’re building up the body in advance to have many children. Is this some kind of Joseon seed spreader...”

While grumbling like this, looking at King Sejong’s robust physique, there was something that even Hyang had forgotten.

King Sejong was not someone who had been educated as the Crown Prince from a young age. He had lived as a grand prince, and soon after being invested as Crown Prince, he was abdicated to.

Anyway, when the exercise equipment thus made showed its effect, orders came down from the Queen's quarters as well. Thanks to this, Hyang had to make exercise equipment for Queen Soheon, the royal concubines, and his own women.

And seeing its effect, requests also came in from the Inner Palace Guard and the military.

“It seems more effective than just making them run and lift stones.”

Hearing the words of Jo Mal-saeng and the commander of the Inner Palace Guard, Hyang let out a long sigh.

“Sigh~. Talk to the Ministry of Finance, no, the budget executor, and bring the budget first.”

And the rumors of these exercise equipment crossed the West Sea.

“Are these the rumored exercise equipment?”

“That's right. Has this rumor spread even to the Ming Empire?”

At King Sejong's question, the Ming envoy nodded heavily.

“Yes, rumors are rampant that it's very helpful for health cultivation. Very rampant indeed.”

Grasping the hidden meaning in the envoy's words, King Sejong immediately responded.

“Then we'll make and send them right away for His Majesty the Emperor. Crown Prince.”

Hyang, who was listening to King Sejong's words from the side, immediately answered.

“Yes. I will gather the best craftsmen and make them with the highest quality and utmost effort.”

At the words of King Sejong and Hyang, the Ming envoy beamed with a broad smile.

“Thank you so much! His Majesty will truly be pleased!”

“Isn’t it our duty to do our best for the friendship between the great country and our Joseon?”

King Sejong spoke with a smile, but Hyang felt there was some hidden meaning.

And there were no ministers who opposed this proposal.

King Sejong, Hyang, and the ministers all had the same thought.

‘The current Emperor is the best counterpart! We must avoid at all costs having some strange fellow ascend to the throne by dying early!’

The ‘spy incident’ that only the ministers and a very small number of working-level officials knew about and had buried never occurred again.

“Why?”

There was an intense exchange of opinions about why it didn’t recur, and the conclusion reached by King Sejong and the ministers was as follows:

-It’s certain that it wasn’t an incident that occurred under the Emperor’s orders, but one carried out independently by those below him. And it’s certain that the Emperor, upon learning of this, stopped it.

Of course, it was a conclusion with a fairly high probability of not being true. But even if that wasn’t the case, the Xuande Emperor was a very good counterpart for Joseon. There was clearly something coming in return for what was sent, and there was no forceful demand.

The Xuande Emperor was someone who strived to maintain good relations with Joseon to the extent that rumors circulated saying ‘The current Emperor of Ming is not the Emperor of Ming but the Emperor of Joseon’, ‘The current Son of Heaven is the Son of Heaven of Goryeo’.

Therefore, Joseon was earnestly praying for the Xuande Emperor to remain in his position for a long time.

And whether the prayer worked, or due to the butterfly effect, the Xuande Emperor was gradually changing.

‘The Crown Prince of Joseon is doing his utmost to prevent his father, the King, from getting fat!’

Hearing this rumor, the Xuande Emperor called the Imperial Physician and asked a question.

“Is getting fat bad for health?”

Looking at the Xuande Emperor, who had a considerably obese physique, though not as much as his father the Hongxi Emperor, the Imperial Physician carefully chose his words and answered.

“In all things, maintaining moderation is the best, Your Majesty.”

At the Imperial Physician’s answer, the Xuande Emperor smacked his lips.

“You’re telling me to lose weight.”

Thanks to this, when the rumored exercise equipment arrived from Joseon, the Xuande Emperor was very pleased.

“Only the King of Joseon truly cares for me!”

While Hyang was doing his best for King Sejong’s health like this, on the other hand, he was also making something not so good.

“I missed cola! And the best money-making business is selling water!”

What Hyang was trying to make was carbonated drinks.

As a large amount of Chojeong mineral water was steadily supplied using the traction engine, Hyang rushed to King Sejong.

“What is it?”

“I would like to have one barrel of the supplied mineral water for a while, if possible.”

“Mineral water? Why?”

“I have something I want to make, Father.”

At Hyang’s answer, King Sejong narrowed his eyes and asked.

“What is there to make with mineral water? Are you trying to make something strange again?”

“No, not at all!”

Although King Sejong’s expression was still full of disbelief, he soon made a decision.

“Alright, I permit it. But! Don’t make anything dangerous!”

“Yes, Father!”

Having received King Sejong’s permission and obtained the barrel of mineral water, Hyang moved it to Area 51 and immediately gave orders.

“Go to the ice storage right away and bring some of the fruit preserves we’ve been keeping.”

“Yes, Your Highness!”

“And tell Pietro and Raphael to bring those glass bottles I mentioned before!”

“Yes, Your Highness!”

“And tell Director Jang Yeong-sil to bring that machine I talked about before!”

“Yes, Your Highness!”

“And transfer some of that water from the barrel outside into smaller containers and bring them in!”

“Yes, Your Highness!”

“Ah! Also, tell Lord Jeong Cho and Elder Jeong In-ji to come!”

“Yes, Your Highness!”

At Hyang’s orders pouring down like a sudden shower, the eunuchs and staff moved busily here and there.

A moment later, Pietro, Raphael, and Jang Yeong-sil entered carrying glass bottles and a machine with a lever attached.

Following them, eunuchs entered carrying various types of fruit preserves.

Finally, small containers filled with transferred carbonated water were brought in, and Jeong Cho and Jeong In-ji arrived.

When the preparations were complete, Hyang opened his mouth, looking at the people.

“Then, let’s begin.”

Through the tasting process that followed, the appropriate ratio of fruit preserves, and the mixing ratio of carbonated mineral water and plain water

were determined.

“I didn’t know the carbonated water of this period would be this strong.”

Hyang muttered, looking at the undiluted Chojeong mineral water. As if the rumor heard in the 21st century – that the carbonation of Chojeong mineral water had weakened – was true, the 15th-century Chojeong mineral water was so strong it made one’s eyes water.

Thanks to this, Hyang and the people had to drink the beverage to the point of satiation to find the dilution ratio that would give just a pleasant refreshing feeling.

After finding the mixing ratio of fruit preserves, carbonated water, and plain water like this, Hyang filled it into pre-made glass bottles and sealed them with bottle caps.

Of course, the ring-shaped sealing rubber that goes inside the metal bottle cap to prevent carbonation from leaking was not available in this situation. So thick paper was used as a substitute.

When properly sealed beverage bottles were produced after several experiments, Hyang took them and went to see King Sejong.

“Is that the rumored sweet water?”

“Yes, Father.”

“Well, let me taste it.”

“Yes, Father.”

Hyang, who answered confidently, pulled out a bottle opener from his sleeve. King Sejong’s eyes sparkled at the sight of the bottle opener.

“What is that? It looks like a rice paddle with a hole in it.”

“This is for opening the cap that seals the bottle’s mouth.”

Pop!

Along with his answer, Hyang opened the bottle cap. As the bottle cap came off with a cheerful noise, Hyang handed the bottle to the Chief Royal Secretary.

King Sejong, who received the bottle through the Chief Royal Secretary, immediately brought it to his mouth.

“Ah!”

King Sejong, who involuntarily let out an exclamation, turned to Hyang.

“This is truly a delicious drink!”

“I will mass-produce this. Please provide some royal finances.”

“Huh?”

King Sejong, who paused for a moment at Hyang’s words, soon nodded.

“I see, to use the country’s finances more soundly, the royal family should also be as self-reliant as possible.”

And so, the ‘Royal Joseon Beverage Company’, called ‘the never-drying spring of the Joseon royal family’, was born. It was the birth of a massive beverage company that was held onto until the end even as numerous royal businesses were privatized.

The carbonated drink, which was released under the name ‘Balpo-gamisu (發泡甘味水, bubbly sweet water)’, soon received enthusiastic love from the people of Joseon.

“Hey! Have a cup of Ppong-su!”

“Sure, sounds good!”

The people called it by the nickname ‘Ppong-su’ instead of that long name.

It was because of the cheerful noise made when opening the cap.

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[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.
Deathbringer, emphasis on [i]*death*[/i].
I'm totally [s]~~crossed out~~[/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

[img]https://www.agine.this[/img]
[link]http://topwebfiction.com[/link].
[link=https://www.n.ot]clickbait[/link].

[quote]... me like my landlord! [/quote]

[spoiler]Spanish Inquisition! [/spoiler]
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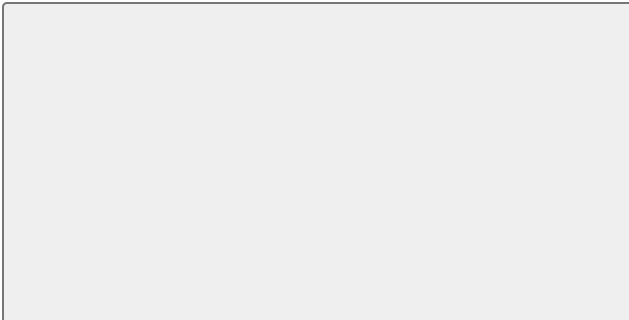
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Chapter 401 - 500

BCJ Chapter 410

Lord of War - Chinese Merchants

by *BlossomTL*Black Corporation: Joseon

The changes in Joseon through the reforms were not just changes for Joseon alone.

Ming and Japan also began to move in quite different directions compared to the history before Hyang's intervention.

First, looking at the case of Ming, compared to the history before Hyang's intervention, the development of commerce was more prosperous.

The one at the forefront of this development was the Xuande Emperor.

Unlike the history before the intervention, the Xuande Emperor responded not by strengthening the maritime ban, but by making it a bit more flexible.

First, he expanded the scale of tally trade with Japan slightly. As a result, the volume of trade between Japan's Muromachi shogunate and Ming increased.

In addition, he opened several trading posts in coastal areas of Ming such as Fujian^[1], Jiangsu^[2], and Guangdong^[3], allowing merchants who received permission from the Ming court to trade with neighboring countries.

Of course, this permission could only be obtained by paying a substantial amount.

Merchant groups that paid money to the Ming court and received permission could open shops in the trading posts established by Ming and sail ships for trade for three years.

Therefore, not only medium and large merchant groups in the relevant regions but also inland merchant groups rushed to pay money and purchase trading permits to sail ships.

There was another hidden move by the Xuande Emperor and the Ming court here.

Even in the early stages of implementation, it was just at the point when the Joseon navy's control of the sea was beginning to grow.

Therefore, pirates and Japanese pirates were swarming in the seas between Ming, Joseon, and Japan.

To this, the Xuande Emperor built a naval fleet and assigned them to escort merchant fleets. In addition, he allowed the merchant ships themselves to be armed. However, the ships that could be armed were limited to those that had purchased trading rights by paying money to the Ming court.

And to manage this, before departure, Ming officials and soldiers searched the ships thoroughly like catching mice.

Because of these carrots and sticks, merchant groups paid money to purchase trading rights, which was no small help to Ming's finances.

Of course, this policy was borrowed from the policy that the Joseon court applied to Joseon's merchant groups and the merchant groups of Ming and Mansur.

And as time passed and Joseon secured control of the West Sea and South Sea, the activities of pirates and Japanese pirates decreased.

Upon receiving reports, the Xuande Emperor moved a considerable number of naval forces to the southwest and began to pressure the pirates.

“It seems dangerous to empty the East Sea (Joseon’s West Sea). What if Joseon harbors different intentions?”

When the ministers voiced opposition to the relocation of naval forces, the Xuande Emperor scoffed.

“Hah! Is our Ming connected to Joseon only by sea? And aren’t we leaving an appropriate scale of naval forces?”

“But...”

“What you’re doing now is precisely what’s called needless worry. Close your mouths!”

At the Xuande Emperor’s rebuke, the ministers and eunuchs all closed their mouths like clams.

To grow Ming’s commercial sector while simultaneously making finances sound, the Xuande Emperor implemented many policies.

One of these was strengthening the protection of intellectual property rights, just like Joseon.

Even during this period, the imitation and counterfeiting by Chinese people were quite notorious. Most of the items said to have come from ancient tombs of the Qin, Han, or Three Kingdoms periods were fake, and counterfeit products were circulating even among medicines on which people’s lives depended.

It wasn’t just imitations and counterfeits that were problematic. When rumors spread that an item made by a certain merchant group or craftsman was popular, products that exactly copied it were soon released by other merchant groups.

It was a culture of disregarding intellectual property rights that future historians would call ‘Shanzhai^[4] culture’.

Naturally, the Xuande Emperor and the ministers were well aware that this culture hindered the nurturing of healthy commerce. Therefore, they made many efforts to eliminate this culture, but it did not easily disappear.

However, this culture began to disappear when Hyang directly negotiated with the Xuande Emperor and launched a joint venture merchant group.

The products distributed by the merchant group jointly invested in by the Ming Emperor and imperial family, and the Joseon King and royal family, were incredibly popular items.

Naturally, it was a natural progression for unauthorized copies of these products to circulate.

And when he received reports related to this, the Xuande Emperor became furiously angry.

“This is making light of the promise I made. Making light of my promise means making light of me, so this is truly a crime of high treason!”

The enraged Xuande Emperor immediately began a crackdown. And it wasn't just a simple crackdown, but a large-scale forceful suppression mobilizing the military.

This crackdown brought about a tremendous bloodbath. The disappearance of just one family or one merchant group was considered minor. It even led to the disappearance of an entire village. This was because it was not applied as a simple crime, but as high treason.

Merchant groups caught unauthorized copying were immediately reduced to ruins by the military. Places where the signs of these merchant groups were hung were destroyed without leaving even a single foundation stone, and hidden treasures were dug up even from underground. And in the holes thus created, the bodies of the dead were buried.

And based on the ledgers obtained from such merchant groups and the interrogation of related persons, those who received bribes were also tied up like dried pollack and purged.

In this process, the Xuande Emperor did not forget to create competition between the Eastern Depot and the Embroidered Uniform Guard.

“I will give 30% of the confiscated wealth as a reward! This is a reward given out of gratitude for your loyalty to me!”

At the Xuande Emperor’s declaration, the Eastern Depot and the Embroidered Uniform Guard shouted cheers loudly.

“Long live the Emperor! Long live! Ten thousand years!”

Thus, as the Central Plains were dyed red with blood once, the indiscriminate unauthorized copying that had been rampant gradually disappeared. Of course, unauthorized copying still occurred in deep places, but the open, blatant unauthorized copying that had been going on before disappeared.

And the ‘Imperial Intellectual Property Registration Office’, modeled after Joseon’s example, emerged.

While the Central Plains suffered as such a bloody wind swept through, there was also a counterbalance.

That counterbalance was the further enhancement of the emperor’s power, symbolized by the Xuande Emperor. Of course, even before that, the emperor was called the ‘Son of Heaven (天子)’ and was a symbol of power.

However, the emperor did not hold all the power. The ‘Prince of the Blood (親王)’ who had settled in various parts of the continent shared a considerable portion of the emperor’s power.

And a considerable portion of the power that these Princes of the Blood had taken was returned to the Xuande Emperor by the bloody wind caused by

him.

After such a bloody wind had swept through, the powerful and the wealthy prayed earnestly.

“May this bloody wind end with just this once...”

However, the bloody wind they so desperately wanted to avoid blew once again.

The name of this blood wind that blew this time was ‘currency’.

As everyone knows, seeing that Joseon used currency efficiently and especially that Joseon’s silver banknotes exerted influence as far as Malacca, the Ming court also decided to create and circulate currency – more precisely, not physical currency but banknotes.

And as the circulation of currency began, two problems that arose grabbed the ankles of the Xuande Emperor.

The two problems that grabbed the ankles of the Xuande Emperor were counterfeit currency^[5] and private currency^[6].

The problem of counterfeit currency was an issue from the time of preparation for issuance. To prevent this counterfeit currency problem, a precise currency plate that was impossible to counterfeit was needed. However, it was impossible to develop this with Ming’s technology, so in the end, Joseon had to make and present the currency plate and printing machine.

On the day when the currency plate and printing machine made in Joseon arrived, the Xuande Emperor praised the Joseon envoy and vented his anger at his own subjects.

“Why can’t we make what even Joseon can make!”

Thus, before the currency printed with this was circulated, the Ming court sent samples to government offices throughout the Central Plains for display. This was to prevent the mistaken use of counterfeit currency.

However, less than half a year after the circulation of the currency began, a petition came up saying that counterfeit currency had been discovered.

Looking at the counterfeit currency that came up with the petition, the Xuande Emperor looked at the ministers with an expression of disbelief.

“They confused this with real currency? Are all the empire’s people blind?”

The counterfeit currency in the Xuande Emperor’s hand was so crude that anyone could tell it was fake.

While the Xuande Emperor was pondering about the quality of the people he ruled, the Grand Secretary of the Cabinet stepped forward and answered.

“The area where the petition came from is a remote area of natural barriers. It is a place where there are people who don’t properly know the ways of the world, so I believe that’s why.”

“Huh...”

The Xuande Emperor, who sighed and shook his head, gave an order.

“Make samples again and send them without fail even to the most remote areas.”

“We humbly accept your command!”

However, less than three months after that, another petition came up saying that other counterfeit currencies had been discovered. This time the problem was more serious, as it was discovered in Sichuan, which, although far from Beijing, has a large population. And although it was still said to be crude, it showed more advanced skill than the last time.

The Xuande Emperor, who received the counterfeit currency along with the petition, glared at the Grand Secretary of the Cabinet.

“Do you have nothing to say to me?”

“Please forgive my crime! Please spare my life!”

“Drag this person out!”

“Yes, Your Majesty!”

At the Xuande Emperor’s order, soldiers of the Embroidered Uniform Guard came in and dragged out the Grand Secretary of the Cabinet. To the Grand Secretary’s cries for mercy, the Xuande Emperor coldly responded.

“Is there a need for me to show mercy twice?”

Glaring at the ministers and eunuchs who were literally frozen, the Xuande Emperor immediately gave an order.

“Mobilize all available personnel of the Embroidered Uniform Guard and the Eastern Depot right now to root out the counterfeiters! These are traitors harming the empire, so absolutely no mercy should be shown! Anyone showing even a slightly lax attitude will be charged with the same crime of high treason!”

At the Xuande Emperor’s order, the executives of the Eastern Depot and the Embroidered Uniform Guard answered at the top of their voices while sweating cold sweat.

“We humbly accept the imperial order!”

Following the Xuande Emperor’s order, a bloody wind blew in Sichuan province. As it was a matter of their own necks, the personnel of the Embroidered Uniform Guard and the Eastern Depot persistently tracked down the counterfeiting organizations. In the process of this tracking, not only real members of the organization but also quite a few who were caught up in false accusations were caught. However, the Eastern Depot and the Embroidered Uniform Guard did not distinguish between these people, but first arrested them and then proceeded with torture.

In this way, about 20,000 people in Sichuan province alone disappeared as dew on the execution ground, and counterfeit currency disappeared.

Having solved the problem of counterfeit currency, the Xuande Emperor carefully examined the problems related to currency and revised and supplemented the deficiencies.

“Although the use of currency has increased, the speed of increase is not fast compared to the size of our empire. What is the reason?”

To the Xuande Emperor’s question, the new Grand Secretary of the Cabinet stepped forward and answered.

“There are still quite a few merchant groups using their own private currency, that is, promissory notes.”

“Why?”

To the Xuande Emperor’s question, the Grand Secretary of the Cabinet explained the reasons why they use their own promissory notes.

-First and foremost, merchant groups lack faith in the currency issued by the country. The reason is that they remember the failure of the Jiaochao^[7] issued by the Yuan Dynasty and the Da Ming Baochao^[8] issued in the early days of the empire.

-Next, it’s to hide their wealth. To use currency, they have to bring physical gold and silver for exchange, but they don’t want their wealth to be revealed in the process.

“Why do they want to hide their wealth?”

“It’s because of taxes, Your Majesty.”

At the new Grand Secretary of the Cabinet’s answer, the Xuande Emperor gritted his teeth and struck the armrest with his fist.

“These damned bastards!”

At the Xuande Emperor’s shout, everyone, including the Grand Secretary of the Cabinet, prostrated themselves flat on the ground.

“If they are subjects of the empire, it’s only natural that they should pay the set taxes! They’re using private currency to avoid paying those taxes? I will issue an imperial edict right now!”

It was a cry that would bring another bloody wind.

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5. 偽幣[↔]
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 - Cover images (chapters and stories)
 - Taxonomies
 - Text shadows
 - Minimalist mode
-

BBCodes

[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.

Deathbringer, emphasis on [i]death[/i].

I'm totally [s]crossed-out[/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

[img]https://www.agine.this[/img]

[link]http://topwebfiction.com[/link].

[link=https://www.n.ot]clickbait[/link].

[quote]... me like my landlord! [/quote]

[spoiler]Spanish Inquisition! [/spoiler]

[ins]Insert[/ins] more bad puns!

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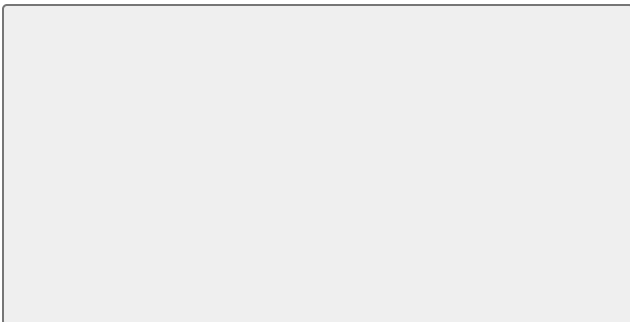
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Chapter 401 - 500

BCJ Chapter 411

Lord of War - Chinese Merchants

by *BlossomTL*Black Corporation: Joseon

Before issuing the imperial edict, Emperor Xuande moved swiftly.

“Send an envoy to Joseon immediately! Right now!”

“Yes, Your Majesty!”

What Emperor Xuande wanted from Joseon was the original plate for the state-authorized promissory notes used by Joseon’s merchant groups.

While currency and goods were the primary means of trade for merchants, when dealing with large quantities at once, there were risks and issues with storage and transportation. Thus, promissory notes were mainly used.

Concerned about tax evasion and other problems in this area, the Joseon court decided to issue promissory note paper directly from the government.

Like currency, they forced the use of promissory note paper with serial numbers in transactions, in an attempt to prevent tax evasion as much as possible.

Behind all these policies was Hyang. It was based on the knowledge he had learned in the 21st century and the experience he had gained during his short civil service career.

Of course, in the process of planning this policy, Hyang wasn't optimistic about the results.

“There's a saying that ten policemen can't stop one thief. The history of tax evasion is as long as human history itself.... But we should do everything we can and try to plug as many holes as possible.”

What emerged from this process was the investment capital market.

“Milk everything you can milk!”

As soon as the original plate, created at Emperor Xuande's request, arrived, he ordered printing to begin.

Once a sufficient quantity had been accumulated according to Emperor Xuande's orders, he immediately issued an imperial edict throughout the Ming Empire.

-From now on, Ming merchant groups are prohibited from using private money, including promissory notes. All merchant groups must receive and use promissory notes issued by the state from government offices. This is an imperial edict, and those who disobey will be considered to be insulting the Emperor and will be severely punished.

When the imperial edict was promulgated, Ming merchant groups visited government offices to receive promissory note booklets.

The officials in charge of distribution meticulously recorded which merchant group received how many promissory note booklets, and these records were immediately sent to the Ministry of Revenue in Beijing.

Of course, during this process, there were those who resisted, knowingly or unknowingly. Surrounding merchants and merchant groups who discovered such individuals were startled and distanced themselves.

“Have they already forgotten the bloodshed from last time?”

“No matter how good money is...”

As these merchants and merchant groups feared, the Ming Imperial Guard once again descended upon those who ignored Emperor Xuande’s edict, reducing everything to ruins.

In this process, there were unfortunate victims as well, with a considerable number of merchant groups and merchants being destroyed due to false accusations from surrounding merchants and merchant groups.

It wasn’t just merchant groups and merchants who suffered. They had employed martial artists to protect their goods and merchants from bandits and pirates during the transportation of large quantities of merchandise. And these martial artists foolishly engaged in combat during the Imperial Guard’s suppression.

“Such insolent creatures! Chase them down and eliminate them completely!”

Following the orders of the enraged Emperor Xuande, who had received the report, the Imperial Guard persistently pursued and eliminated the martial artists.

In this process, the martial artist society, commonly known as Jianghu or Wulin, suffered tremendous damage, marking the beginning of its downfall.

Even the most skilled martial artists were powerless against the firearms wielded by the Imperial Guard.

In this way, Emperor Xuande managed to concentrate maximum power in himself.

The existing bureaucratic organization, the Grand Secretariat, and both the eunuchs and the Imperial Guard were all in a situation where they only watched Emperor Xuande’s mood and absolutely obeyed him.

The foundation of Emperor Xuande's power was the gunners – known as the Gun Corps – and the artillerymen – known as the Artillery Guard – who were considered the elite of the elite within the Imperial Guard.

Based on the copper guns imported from Joseon, new firearms were created, and Emperor Xuande organized units within the Imperial Guard to operate these new firearms.

During the process of organizing units in the Imperial Guard, some improvements were made to the copper guns as well. The Ming craftsmen finally managed to add a sighting device.

Although it was a very primitive method of aligning small protrusions at the front and back of the barrel in a straight line, it showed a much more advanced accuracy compared to the firearms imported from Joseon and those used previously.

Upon seeing an actual demonstration, Emperor Xuande ordered mass production.

Emperor Xuande's primary goal was to first make gunners and artillerymen the main force of the Imperial Guard, and ultimately to make them the main force of an army of 500,000.

However, this was nearly impossible.

There were several reasons why it could be declared impossible, the first of which was that the quality of the soldiers, which was the most basic requirement, was far too poor.

‘Good iron is not used to make nails, and good talent is not made into soldiers.’

There was a saying like this, indicating how poor the perception of soldiers was. As a result, most of those who entered the military, especially as common soldiers, were illiterate.

Secondly, firearms and artillery were budget-consuming monsters.

In particular, gunpowder was expensive to produce, difficult to maintain, and once used, it was gone. And to train properly, a considerable amount had to be consumed consistently. This was the problem.

Despite the numerous problems, Emperor Xuande couldn't give up on organizing gunners and artillerymen. Not long after ascending to the throne, he had personally led soldiers in battle against the Jurchen tribes and emerged victorious. He couldn't forget the usefulness of gunpowder weapons he had experienced then.

Therefore, Emperor Xuande began organizing units from the Imperial Guard, which had gathered the best talent available.

First, he selected 12,000 soldiers and began cultivating 10,000 gunners and 2,000 artillerymen.

The gunners and artillerymen, trained by consuming large amounts of wealth that had come in through the joint-stock merchant groups, grew into the elite of the elite.

Satisfied with the soldiers who boasted formidable strength at a glance, Emperor Xuande bestowed the title of Gun Corps on the gunners and Artillery Guard on the artillerymen.

Having achieved his first goal, Emperor Xuande set the next one.

Emperor Xuande's second goal was to increase the size of this Gun Corps and Artillery Guard fivefold.

50,000 gunners and 10,000 artillerymen.

This was the second stepping stone towards Emperor Xuande's final goal.

The Gun Corps and Artillery Guard, raised as elite forces, belonged to the Imperial Guard. Although the Imperial Guard was the last bastion protecting himself and the imperial family, Emperor Xuande had no intention of simply displaying them as decorations in the Forbidden City.

After organizing the empire's interior centered around the trained gunners and artillerymen of the Imperial Guard, Emperor Xuande turned his gaze outward.

Emperor Xuande's gaze was directed towards the horse markets.

Since Emperor Yongle had allowed tribute trade, horse markets were regularly held in the north, and trade took place with Mongolian tribes of the north.

The Mongolian tribes sold horses and furs, while Ming sold silk, clothing, and food.

The horse markets, which were held regularly but not permanently, grew larger over time. In addition, merchants from nearby Uyghur began to appear.

“I smell money!”

When reports came in that Ming merchants were engaging in smuggling after catching the scent of money, Emperor Xuande issued an imperial edict without delay.

First, he selected an area with abundant water and easy supply in the border region between Ming and Oirat, and built an adequately sized earthen fortress.

Then, after preparing accommodation facilities and horse fields around the fortress, he informed the Oirat tribal leaders and Ming merchants.

“We have set up a permanent market at the location we've just established. Those with permits can trade in the market at any time!”

However, there were preconditions. The Oirat side had to write a document pledging loyalty to the Ming Emperor, and Ming and Uyghur merchants had to purchase trading permits.

In addition, merchants who wanted to trade in the market had to pay an entry fee of 10 taels of silver every time they entered the market, in addition to the permit. By paying this entry fee, merchants could stay in the market for five days. After that, merchants who wanted to extend their stay had to pay an additional 10 taels of silver every five days. This was also paid in advance.

However, Oirat tribes were exempt from this condition.

“This is a favor that I show to you. Do not cause any disturbances.”

Although they had to pay 10 taels of silver in paper money each time they entered the market, the merchants endured it. The profits that could be gained from the trade in this market were well worth the expense.

In particular, safety was also included in these benefits. The fortress built near the market was garrisoned with 3,000 gunners, 500 Artillery Guard soldiers, and 1,000 cavalry.

Even the most violent warriors of the Oirat tribes couldn't act recklessly in front of these forces.

In fact, small tribes belonging to the Oirat tried to attack the market several times, but each time they had to retreat after suffering tremendous damage.

And the tribes that retreated after suffering such damage were devoured by other tribes, just like the Jurchen tribes that were crushed after attacking Joseon.

The Horse Market Fort created in this way turned out to be unexpectedly useful militarily as well.

The market created near the Horse Market Fort was overflowing with wealth, so not only Oirat but also other Mongol tribes focused their

attention on this place.

As a result, the military pressure on the border areas adjacent to Mongolia was significantly reduced.

Another advantage was that the proficiency and combat power of the Gun Corps and Artillery Guard soldiers continued to strengthen as they gained real combat experience at this Horse Market Fort.

One-third of the soldiers were rotated every six months, and the soldiers who were consistently rotated in this way honed their skills through combat.

Next, based on the profits coming in through the horse market, they gained the leeway to gradually expand the size of the Gun Corps and Artillery Guard.

Lastly, the military commanders who had traditionally emphasized cold weapons clearly recognized the usefulness of gunpowder weapons.

It would have been truly great if it had ended there, but things in the world are not so easy.

The attempt to expand gunners and artillerymen to the entire Ming army was still stagnant.

The reason, as mentioned before, was the quality of the soldiers.

Whenever they received such reports, Ming generals and military officials clicked their tongues and lamented.

“I heard that the Japanese become fierce like beasts and turn into warriors worth a hundred men just by picking up a sword...”

“Artillery is the best against those who go wild with swords, but all these soldiers are completely illiterate...”

“By the way, have you heard the news from Joseon? They say they teach basic tactics and military strategy even to the lowest-ranking soldiers.”

“Well, Joseon people are so smart...”

In the end, the Ming generals chose the most certain yet worst method to train their soldiers.

What they chose was violence.

Harsh beatings followed those who showed even slightly inadequate performance during training.

On the other hand, if someone knew how to read and write and showed even a little excellence, they were immediately promoted to junior officers.

And these junior officers were entrusted with the management of gunpowder weapons and gunpowder. It wasn't all good for those who suddenly became officers like this. They were subtly ostracized among the soldiers below them, and constantly demanded bribes from their superiors.

On the surface, a large-scale army armed with gunpowder weapons was being created just like in Joseon, but internally, a stench was starting to rise.

And in this situation, a memorial was presented to Emperor Xuande.

“Build a currency issuing bureau in Nanjing as well? Are they in their right mind?”

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[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.

Deathbringer, emphasis on [i]*death*[/i].

I'm totally [s]~~crossed out~~[/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

[img][/img]

[link]<http://topwebfiction.com>[/link].

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[quote]... me like my landlord! [/quote]

[spoiler>**Spanish Inquisition!**[/spoiler]

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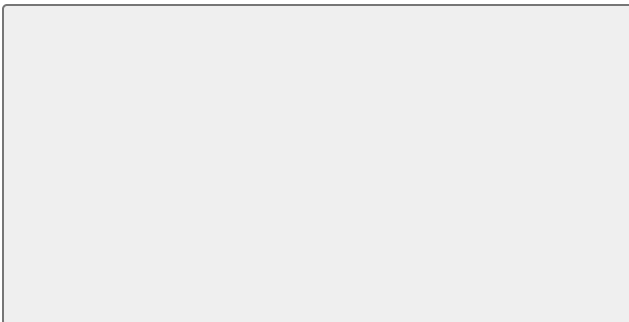
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Chapter 401 - 500

BCJ Chapter 412

Lord of War - Chinese Merchants

by *BlossomTL*Black Corporation: Joseon

Emperor Xuande glared at the Minister of Revenue who had submitted the memorial.

However, the Minister of Revenue had something to say as well.

“Your Majesty! This Central Plains is vast and its people are numerous! Since Your Majesty ascended to the throne, our empire has grown stronger day by day, relying on Your Majesty’s wisdom!”

The Minister of Revenue, who opened with praise for Emperor Xuande, soon got to the main point.

“However, this has also caused many inconveniences. And among those inconveniences, the greatest is currency. More and more currency is needed throughout the empire, but with only the issuing bureau in Beijing producing currency, we are in a situation where we cannot keep up with the demand! Because of this, many places are still trading with silver and gold. And this leads to tax evasion! Therefore, we must establish an additional issuing bureau in Nanjing to respond more quickly!”

Most of the officials, including the newly appointed Grand Secretary, nodded at the Minister of Revenue’s words.

However, Emperor Xuande did not yield his stance of refusal.

“No physical currency, so they use goods? Then why have they been using promissory notes all this time? And why did I issue state-authorized promissory notes? Wasn’t it to replace that part? Without considering that, you’re blaming everything on the amount and speed of currency issuance, which means you are incompetent! If you truly had the intention to act, you would have worked harder to educate the people and made more efforts to prevent tax evasion! But without even thinking or acting on that, you want to set up another issuing bureau? Do you really think at all in your lives!”

To Emperor Xuande’s rebuke, the Minister of Revenue bowed his head and replied.

“Our loyalty is as hard as a diamond! We just wanted to increase efficiency and the empire’s finances...”

“It’s not about increasing efficiency, but about increasing opportunities to embezzle! And it’s not about increasing the empire’s finances, but about increasing your own, isn’t it your honest feeling!”

“Your Majesty! That is utterly absurd! My loyalty is...”

Emperor Xuande interrupted the Minister of Revenue once again.

“We’ll see about that loyalty when we investigate! Guards! Take this man away and imprison him immediately!”

At Emperor Xuande’s order, Imperial Guard soldiers who had been waiting outside came in and seized the Minister of Revenue.

“Your Majesty! This is unjust!”

The Minister of Revenue cried out his innocence as he was dragged away, but Emperor Xuande added to his order.

“Investigate all ten branches of the Minister of Revenue’s family, and if even one irregularity is found, imprison them all!”

“We receive your command!”

During this period of Emperor Xuande's rule, those involved in Ming politics – not just formal officials, but also eunuchs and the Imperial Guard – had to act as cautiously as if walking on thin ice.

Emperor Xuande skillfully exploited the friction that existed between the core power organizations – the bureaucracy, the eunuch organization, and the Imperial Guard – making them keep each other in check. And he induced a competition of loyalty by giving ample rewards to those who were loyal to him. Informing and loyalty, these were the methods Emperor Xuande used to maintain his power. And what made this possible was the enormous profits coming in from the joint-stock merchant groups.

While he was a figure of terror to the core figures of power and the rich, to the common people, Emperor Xuande was a sage ruler of the age.

He purged corrupt officials by inspecting those in charge of tax affairs, reducing unfair taxes, and responded quickly to disasters by mobilizing the Imperial Guard.

Thanks to this, later historians called Emperor Xuande's era an unprecedented golden age in Chinese history and named it "The Governance of Xuande."

Information about Emperor Xuande's politics and related situations in Ming came in immediately through the trade office in Shandong and the Jurchen tribes in Liaodong.

Interestingly, the Jurchen tribes in Liaodong were notable entities here.

Joseon, which had entered the empty space created by wiping out the Yiman-ju and Muntumu tribes, quietly reached out to the Jurchen tribes beyond the Liao River in Liaodong.

It wasn't an official contact, but rather one using merchants of Jurchen origin who had submitted to Joseon, creating an information line that could cross-verify information obtained from Shandong.

This too was Hyang's work. Knowing the importance of information through his 21st-century experience, Hyang had insisted on creating multiple information acquisition lines. And King Sejong, immediately understanding its importance, had directed his ministers to establish these information lines.

Interestingly, Joseon had been well aware of the importance of such information lines since its early days of founding. Especially, quickly and accurately obtaining information about the Jurchen tribes directly across the Tumen and Yalu rivers was a matter related to national survival.

Thanks to this, the amount of information related to the Jurchen tribes was considerable. And this was used to establish the information lines.

And this created a similar situation with Japan.

Joseon, suffering from Japanese pirates, maintained friendly relations with Japanese lords by showering them with gifts to minimize damage. By the time of King Taejong's reign, a considerable number of Japanese territories had established such relationships.

Of course, as Ming strictly prohibited communication with Japan, this was done secretly.

However, the results of this policy were quite disappointing. Just as the results of this policy were beginning to show, Ouchi Yoshihiro, the ruler of the Ouchi clan who was a powerful figure in Kyushu, and So Sadamori, the lord of Tsushima, both died. With the death of the rulers of the most important regions, Japanese pirate raids on Joseon increased, and relations between Joseon and Japan deteriorated. (Note 1)

Because of this precedent, King Sejong accepted Hyang's proposal, and the information lines were quickly established.

And once again, later historians cried out in dismay.

“The Crown Prince again!”

Having received this cross-verified information, King Sejong let out a long sigh.

“Huu~. For our Joseon, we must pray that the current emperor lives a long life. Do you know why?”

At King Sejong's question, Hyang, who was present, nodded.

“Because all power is concentrated in the emperor, and all policies begin and end with one person, the emperor.”

“You've seen it correctly.”

King Sejong looked at Hyang with a proud face, then turned to his ministers.

“As the Crown Prince said, all affairs of the Great State are being conducted by the emperor alone. This is a big problem.”

At King Sejong's words, all the ministers nodded. It was unpleasant to even think about what would happen if Emperor Xuande were to die tomorrow and be succeeded by an incompetent emperor.

“How old is the current Empire's Crown Prince?”

At King Sejong's question, Lee Maeng-gyun, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, who had been briefly recollecting, immediately answered.

“He was born in the year of Byeongo, so he is 5 years old this year.”

“Too young...”

King Sejong, clicking his tongue, gave orders to his ministers.

“Contact Shandong and tell them not to miss even a single rumor about the emperor’s health issues.”

“Yes, Your Majesty.”

After the meeting ended, the ministers gathered in the conference room of the Prime Minister’s Office.

“To think we’ve come to a situation where we have to worry even about the emperor’s health...”

To Kim Jeom’s grumbling, Hwang Hui picked up the conversation.

“Isn’t it because the emperor is the only one among the current power holders in Ming who could benefit our Joseon? I wonder why there’s such a lack of talent in a country so vast with so many people...”

“I agree.”

As the ministers nodded to Hwang Hui’s words, Jo Gye-saeng opened his mouth.

“Isn’t it the same for our Joseon? Doesn’t our King control everything as well?”

“Don’t we have a grown Crown Prince?”

At those words, Jo Gye-saeng’s expression became a bit awkward as he muttered.

“I know the Crown Prince is excellent, but isn’t being good at making strange devices different from being good at politics? Of course, among the policies he’s proposed so far, there have been quite a few excellent ones, but most of them are only related to statecraft...”

At Jo Gye-saeng's words, all the ministers present silently looked at him.

Seeing his colleagues just staring silently, Jo Gye-saeng immediately asked.

“Why are you looking at me like that?”

To Jo Gye-saeng's question, Hwang Hui stepped forward to answer.

“There's something that happened when you were still in the countryside. Go to the archives and look for the records about the policy presentation right after the Crown Prince's investiture.”

“Huh?”

The next day, Jo Gye-saeng visited the archives and read all the relevant records. After reading all those records, Jo Gye-saeng muttered with a pale face.

“This crazy...”

Time continued to flow like water after that. Fortunately, Joseon, which had not experienced any wars or disturbances, was progressing smoothly.

As time passed, it became the 17th year of King Sejong's reign (1435, the year of Eulhyo).

As the weather warmed up and people's movements became more lively, King Sejong and his ministers visited Area 51.

The reason King Sejong and his ministers visited Area 51 was because a new iron horse had been completed.

Whistle! Choo-choo!

With a loud whistle sound, a large iron horse came out of the production plant along the test railway.

“Ooh!”

The ministers let out exclamations as they saw the new iron horse reveal itself. King Sejong’s eyes shone as he looked at the newly revealed locomotive.

“It’s truly big!”

“The researchers and craftsmen did their best.”

At Hyang’s answer, King Sejong looked at the researchers and craftsmen standing behind with a pleased face and praised them.

“You have truly worked hard! The future of this Joseon is bright because of you!”

“Your grace is boundless! Long live the King! Ten thousand years! Ten thousand years! Ten thousand ten thousand years!”

The researchers and craftsmen responded to King Sejong’s praise with a cheer of ten thousand years.

A ceremony was held under King Sejong’s supervision. After the ceremony, King Sejong asked Hyang various questions.

“It’s quite large, but how fast can it go?”

“On average, it can go 150 ri (about 60 km) in half a *sigan* (about 1 hour).”

“Hm? How fast did you say the Hanseong iron horse could go?”

“90 ri (about 36 km) in half a *sigan*. However, that’s the maximum speed, and what I just explained is the average speed. If we run at maximum speed, it can go 250 ri (about 100 km) in half a *sigan*.”

“Then why does it run so slowly?”

“If we run at maximum speed, its lifespan shortens. To have a longer lifespan at a faster speed, we need continuous research. And even the

current average speed is similar to a horse running at full speed.”

“I see. Then compared to the Hanseong iron horse, how many more people and cargo can it carry?”

“On average, four times more. Of course, if we load it to the maximum, it can go up to six times more. However, there are many mountains to cross on the railway path, and many people are not used to the iron horse, so we deliberately slowed down the speed and reduced the transport volume.”

“I see.”

At Hyang’s explanation, King Sejong forcibly hid his disappointment and examined the iron horse.

As he was examining the iron horse, something caught King Sejong’s eye – an object similar to a wedge attached to the very front of the locomotive.

“What is that?”

“For now, we’ve named it a ‘*baejang-gi*’ (obstacle remover). It’s designed to push away wild animals or obstacles on the railway.”

“I see...”

King Sejong, immediately understanding its purpose from Hyang’s explanation, nodded and then turned to look at Hyang.

“Crown Prince, about the troop transport trailer you mentioned before...”

“We are currently researching whether it can be attached and used, and how helpful it would be.”

At Hyang’s answer, King Sejong finally nodded with a satisfied face.

“As expected of the Crown Prince...”

As King Sejong circled around the iron horse, examining it meticulously, he turned to Hyang.

“By the way, I don’t see Jinpyeong. With Jinpyeong’s personality, he’s not one to miss an occasion like this?”

At King Sejong’s question, Hyang pointed towards the engine room of the iron horse.

“He’s preparing for the test run.”

“As expected of Jinpyeong...”

And the ministers following behind them and listening to the conversation all muttered inwardly.

‘Indeed, blood doesn’t lie, what a father and son duo...’

Note 1) Joseon Dynasty Military Strategy. Tsushima Island Conquest Edition. Ministry of National Defense Military History Compilation Research Institute.

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[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.

Deathbringer, emphasis on [i]death[/i].

I'm totally [s]~~crossed-out~~[/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

[img]https://www.agine.this[/img]

[link]http://topwebfiction.com[/link].

[link=https://www.n.ot]clickbait[/link].

[quote]... me like my landlord![/quote]

[spoiler]Spanish Inquisition![/spoiler]

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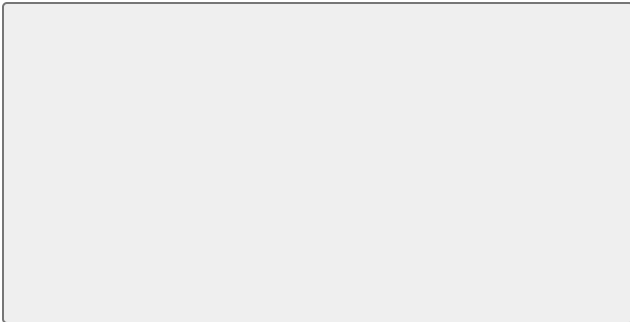
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BCJ Chapter 413

Lord of War - Chinese Merchants

by *BlossomTL*Black Corporation: Joseon

The new iron horse satisfied King Sejong during the subsequent test run.

After the completion of the launch ceremony and test run, King Sejong returned to the palace and ordered Kim Jeom:

“Prepare a budget for mass production of the new iron horse and its accompanying passenger and freight cars.”

At King Sejong’s command, Kim Jeom immediately bowed his head and replied:

“I have already allocated the necessary budget. And preparations have been made for annual execution over the next five years.”

“Huh?”

“Eh?”

“What?”

When Kim Jeom responded immediately, not only King Sejong but also Hyang, the ministers, and even the court historians and eunuchs all stared at Kim Jeom with wide eyes.

As all eyes in Geunjeongjeon Hall focused on him, Kim Jeom looked at King Sejong with a flustered expression.

“Have I done something wrong, Your Majesty?”

“Ah, no, it’s just that you answered so promptly for the first time.”

At King Sejong’s words, Kim Jeom replied:

“The iron horse is certainly a device that will not only grow the nation’s economy but also greatly help the people’s lives. And since railways are already being laid and bridges are being built nationwide, isn’t it natural to prepare and wait in advance?”

“That’s true... Indeed it is...”

Although King Sejong kept nodding at Kim Jeom’s answer, the situation was still too unfamiliar.

In any case, as the Ministry of Finance and Economy executed the budget, Area 51 and railway construction sites across the country were bustling with activity.

In the production plant of Area 51, new iron horses were being mass-produced, and passenger cars much larger than those attached to the Hanseong iron horse and the post coaches attached to tractors were being steadily manufactured.

And at the nationwide railway construction sites, which were gradually entering the final stages, final inspections were ongoing.

In this final inspection process, the line supervisors were paying the most attention to the railway connecting Hanseong to Wonsan and the north-south railway along the east coast.

Coal from the north and Gangwon-do was transported to the ironworks located in Yeonil in the south. Also, iron products produced in Musan and

Yeonil were either transported to Hanseong via the Gyeongwon Line or distributed nationwide using the completed land routes. The same was true for coal.

Following this east coast axis, the west coast and south coast axes were also entering the near-completion stage.

The railways planned and implemented by Joseon had their own characteristics. The primary lines were first created along the coastline, and branch lines connected from these main lines into the inland.

This approach was taken due to the mountain ranges that occupy 70% of the Korean Peninsula. Even Hyang, who was skilled in all sorts of specialties, had a weak point in architecture and civil engineering. Moreover, although locomotives with increasingly powerful outputs were being developed and researched, climbing mountains was still a challenging task.

Therefore, the main lines were laid along the coastline where flat areas continued, and branch lines extended inland.

At the center of this grand railway network was Hanseong.

On the day when the Hansu Railway Bridge, which was still under fierce construction, would be completed, the entire Joseon would be connected by railways.

And for that day, Jinpyeong was still riding around all over Joseon, offering all sorts of advice.

“The completion of the nationwide railway network in Joseon is the beginning of my dream! Starting from this Joseon, I will lay railways to Liaodong, the Central Plains, and beyond! I will travel by train to India and Alexandria!”

Jinpyeong was boldly shouting words that would make Kim Jeom grab the back of his neck if he heard them, as he roamed through the construction sites.

And hearing this, Hyang muttered with a truly serious face:

“What if that Gapyu Railway Incident dream turns out to be not just a silly dream but a prophetic one?”

While Joseon was moving peacefully on the surface and fiercely beneath, a variable was thrown in.

The 18th year of King Sejong’s reign (1436, the year of Byeongjin). April.

An envoy from Ouchi urgently visited Joseon. As this was a sudden visit, not during the regular annual period, King Sejong and his ministers became serious.

“Given that Ouchi Morimi, the head of the Ouchi clan, is quite old, has something happened?”

To King Sejong’s question, Lee Maeng-gyun answered:

“Although Morimi is quite old, he hasn’t yet reached his 60th birthday, and as he usually enjoys hunting and pays attention to his diet, I think the probability of such an issue is low.”

“Is that so?”

Answering briefly, King Sejong glanced at Hyang. Most of the things that Morimi was said to observe were what Hyang had insisted King Sejong must follow.

King Sejong cleared his throat and issued an order:

“Ahem! In any case, the sudden arrival of an envoy must be due to some complication. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, find out the details of this complication.”

“We receive your command!”

The officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs who received the envoy drastically changed their expressions upon hearing the news delivered by the Ouchi envoy. They immediately submitted a report to Lee Maeng-gyun, who rushed to King Sejong.

“So, what is the reason for the sudden visit of the Ouchi clan’s envoy?”

“They are requesting to purchase the muskets used by our Joseon army.”

At Lee Maeng-gyun’s words, Jo Mal-saeng, who was present, blurted out a harsh remark:

“They want muskets? These bastards, we’ve been nice to them all this time, and now they spout such nonsense...”

“Minister!”

“Ahem! Hrm!”

At Lee Maeng-gyun’s urgent cry, Jo Mal-saeng regained his senses and bowed his head to King Sejong.

“Your Majesty! Please forgive me for momentarily losing my reason and showing such unseemly behavior!”

“It’s alright. That’s what I wanted to say. So... What is the reason they suddenly came asking to sell muskets? Surely they must know how we in Joseon manage our cannons and muskets? Has some calamity befallen Japan?”

To King Sejong’s question, Lee Maeng-gyun immediately answered:

“It has been confirmed that the Japanese who are at odds with the Ouchi clan have acquired firearms.”

“What!”

King Sejong shouted, springing up from his seat.

Upon receiving the report that ‘the Japanese have acquired firearms,’ King Sejong immediately ordered Jo Mal-saeng:

“Dispatch inspectors to all of Joseon’s land and naval forces immediately to assess the management status of cannons, muskets, and horse-mounted guns!”

“I receive your command!”

After giving orders to Jo Mal-saeng, King Sejong turned to Lee Maeng-gyun.

“So that’s why the Ouchi clan’s envoys have come to us?”

“That is correct. Especially, considering that the one who came as the head of the envoys is Ouchi Mochiyo, we can see the urgency of the Ouchi clan.”

At Lee Maeng-gyun’s answer, King Sejong, after pondering for a moment, opened his mouth:

“I will meet the envoys directly. Make preparations.”

The next day, the Ouchi clan’s envoys, led by Ouchi Mochiyo, were able to meet King Sejong in Geunjeongjeon Hall.

As Mochiyo and his party entered Geunjeongjeon, they immediately prostrated themselves and bowed deeply upon seeing King Sejong seated on the throne.

“Ouchi Mochiyo of the Ouchi clan greets the sovereign of Great Joseon!”

“You must have had a difficult journey. Eunuchs, bring chairs for the envoys.”

“Yes, Your Majesty.”

As the envoys sat on the chairs brought by the eunuchs, a barrage of questions from King Sejong and his ministers followed.

“I heard that those at odds with the Ouchi clan have acquired firearms. Is this truly certain?”

To King Sejong’s question, Mochiyo answered in broken Korean:

“It is certain.”

“Which clans are they?”

“As far as we have confirmed, it’s the Otomo, Shoni, and Shimazu.”

“Otomo? Shoni? Shimazu?”

At King Sejong’s question, Lee Maeng-gyun, who was present, immediately explained:

“They are the Otomo, Shoni, and Shimazu clans, Your Majesty.”

As King Sejong nodded at Lee Maeng-gyun’s answer, something caught his attention.

“Wait... Isn’t the Shoni clan the one that the So clan, the lords of Tsushima, follows?”

“That is correct, Your Majesty.”

“I’ve been informed that the Shoni clan is currently staying in Tsushima, dreaming of a comeback. Is this accurate?”

“It is, Your Majesty.”

At Lee Maeng-gyun’s answer, King Sejong’s face became even more serious.

“For such people to have acquired firearms... This is a big problem...”

Realizing that the situation was more serious than expected, King Sejong continued to question Mochiyo:

“Among the firearms they are said to possess, has the Ouchi clan acquired any?”

“We have, Your Majesty.”

Mochiyo, who answered immediately, ordered his subordinate behind him. At Mochiyo’s command, the subordinate came forward with a wooden box he had been carefully holding. As Mochiyo’s subordinate came forward with the box, the nearby Imperial Guard soldiers all tensed up at once. Under the watchful eyes of the tense soldiers, Mochiyo’s subordinate put down the box and carefully retreated.

“Open the box.”

At King Sejong’s order, a eunuch opened the lid of the box and showed its contents to King Sejong.

Inside the box was a firearm with joints like bamboo.

After confirming the firearm in question, King Sejong turned to Jo Mal-saeng.

“It looks a bit different from the firearms our Joseon army used to use, doesn’t it?”

“It does, Your Majesty. No, it’s certainly different.”

“Hmm...”

At Jo Mal-saeng’s confirmation, King Sejong stroked his beard, organizing his thoughts, and then ordered the Chief Royal Secretary:

“Summon General Choi Hae-san and General Lee Chun immediately.”

“Yes, Your Majesty.”

At King Sejong’s summons, Choi Hae-san and Lee Chun, who were working in Area 51, hurriedly entered Gyeongbok Palace.

Choi Hae-san, who had stabilized the northern region, volunteered to work in the Weapons Bureau established in Area 51 as soon as he returned.

For him, who was strongly influenced by his father Choe Mu-seon, the Weapons Bureau in Area 51 was his true calling.

Thus, Choi Hae-san and Lee Chun were in charge of overseeing the development and improvement of gunpowder weapons in Area 51 and the research institute.

And seeing such Choi Hae-san, Hyang had commented like this:

“When it comes to gunpowder, he’s an even more hardcore enthusiast than me. I’m second, and General Lee Chun is No. 3.”

These hardcore enthusiasts, Choi Hae-san and Lee Chun, examined the firearm in question and came to the same conclusion.

“It’s a Dolhwachang (突火槍).”

“Indeed it is.”

Having reached an agreement, the two immediately reported to King Sejong.

“It’s a Dolhwachang used by the Ming army, Your Majesty.”

“A firearm of the Ming army, you say?”

“That’s correct, Your Majesty.”

“I see. You may be seated.”

Having learned that the firearm in question was a Dolhwachang used by the Ming army, King Sejong asked Mochiyo:

“Do those three clans threatening the Ouchi clan have many of these firearms?”

“We know they have at least several hundred, and the number is still increasing.”

“Hmm...”

At Mochiyo’s explanation, King Sejong once again fell into thought. After pondering for a long while, King Sejong seemed to have made a decision and spoke:

“Listen, Ouchi Mochiyo. The fact that those at odds with the Ouchi clan are using such firearms is a very serious matter. The Ouchi clan and our Joseon have maintained neighborly relations until now, how could we just let this pass? We will soon find a good answer and let you know, so return to the guest house and wait.”

At King Sejong’s order, Mochiyo immediately prostrated himself and replied:

“We earnestly hope that you will look upon our unworthy clan with compassion and provide us with assistance!”

“We will find a good answer for you.”

After sending the envoys away, King Sejong turned to his ministers.

“It seems we should help them. The Ouchi clan and we are in a relationship of mutually beneficial interdependence. If something happens to the Ouchi clan, we will be in trouble too.”

At King Sejong's words, Jo Mal-saeng immediately stepped forward.

“That's correct, Your Majesty. In particular, the biggest problem is the Shoni clan. Now that they have established themselves on Tsushima Island, there's a high possibility that the Japanese pirates might become rampant again if we're not careful.”

At Jo Mal-saeng's words, all the ministers nodded. Seeing the ministers' reactions, Jo Mal-saeng went a step further.

“While it's important to help the Ouchi clan, it's also important to deal with potentially problematic issues in advance.”

At Jo Mal-saeng's statement, Hwang Hui interjected.

“Preemptive action? Are you suggesting we attack Tsushima Island?”

“The Shoni clan's problem is not only the Ouchi clan's problem but also our problem. Isn't it common knowledge even to a three-year-old child that the Shoni clan is plotting a comeback after their defeat to the Ouchi clan in the last battle? Where do you think they'll get the funds for this comeback? What else but piracy? They may seem docile now, but we never know when they might stab us in the back, so we shouldn't miss this opportunity!”

“Do you think war is easy? Have you forgotten how we struggled to prepare the army and secure war funds during the Tsushima Island conquest in the past year of Hae?”

“The Joseon of then and now are worlds apart! The current Joseon wouldn't have to struggle as much as back then!”

As the topic suddenly shifted to a ‘Second Tsushima Island Conquest,’ the hall became noisy.

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-

BBCodes

[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.
Deathbringer, emphasis on [i]*death*[/i].
I'm totally [s]~~crossed out~~[/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

[img]https://www.agine.this[/img]
[link]http://topwebfiction.com[/link].
[link=https://www.n.ot]clickbait[/link].

[quote]... me like my landlord! [/quote]

[spoiler]Spanish Inquisition! [/spoiler]
[ins]Insert[/ins] more bad puns!
[del]~~Delete~~[/del] your browser history!

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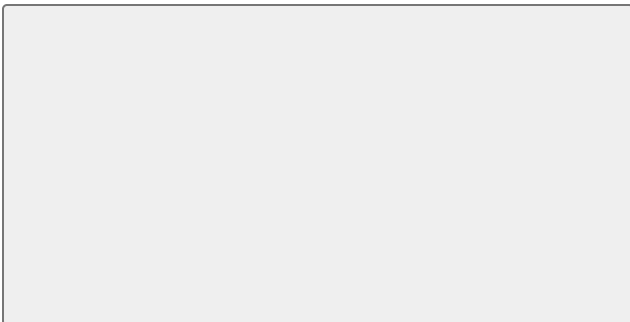
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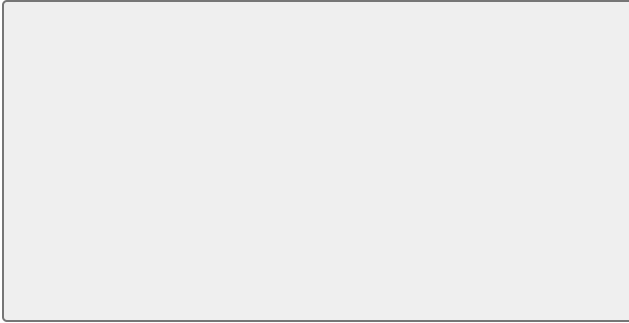
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Chapter 401 - 500

BCJ Chapter 414

Lord of War - Chinese Merchants

by *BlossomTL*Black Corporation: Joseon

“Enough!”

The hall, which had been noisy with all sorts of loud voices like a monopoly store during a sale period, instantly fell silent at King Sejong’s shout.

As the ministers quieted down, King Sejong summarized the situation.

“The Minister of National Defense’s opinion is correct, but there’s a problem. It’s the issue of justification. Firearms are too weak as a justification for using force against Tsushima Island.”

At King Sejong’s words, the opposing ministers, including Hwang Hui, all nodded.

However, the supporting ministers, including Jo Mal-saeng, continued to insist on the necessity of the conquest.

“Justification is important, but this is the best opportunity to eliminate the threat while minimizing damage to our Joseon!”

“We can secure justification by using the Military Commander of Kyushu!”

As a preliminary procedure for the conquest of Tsushima Island, Joseon began building justification against Japan.

It wasn't just Joseon and Ming that had suffered damage from Japanese pirates. Due to the turbulent times of the Northern and Southern Courts conflict, Japanese lords were also suffering damage from pirates.

Thanks to this, Joseon persuaded the lords who were friendly to Joseon.

-Tsushima Island is a place that has submitted to our Joseon, but it has turned into a den of pirates, so we intend to subjugate it.

As a result, the Military Commander of Kyushu demanded this from Joseon:

“As the pirates are also enemies of our Japan, we request that you subjugate them.”

Using this official “request” from the Military Commander of Kyushu as justification, Joseon had conquered Tsushima Island. (Note 1)

When the supporting ministers mentioned using the Military Commander of Kyushu, Hwang Hui stepped forward to oppose.

“The reason the Military Commander of Kyushu could provide justification in the year of Gihae was because our Joseon had actually suffered harm! But how is it now? Our Joseon has suffered no harm, and all the other Japanese lords know that we are filling the coffers of the Military Commander of Kyushu! And you want to use the Military Commander of Kyushu to gain justification and attack Tsushima Island? Do you intend to turn all of Japan, except for the Ouchi clan and the Military Commander of Kyushu, into our enemies? No, if the situation becomes like that, even the Ouchi clan and the Military Commander of Kyushu would turn into our enemies! Justification is not just important, it's the most important thing! Justification!”

At Hwang Hui's words, the supporting ministers frantically racked their brains to find a counterargument.

"Your Majesty, the Crown Prince has come to attend."

At that moment, the Chief Royal Secretary announced Hyang's visit.

"Let him enter."

With King Sejong's permission, Hyang entered Geunjeongjeon Hall and paid his respects. King Sejong, after receiving the greeting, offered Hyang a seat and spoke.

"What brings you here when you should be in Area 51?"

"Yes. I heard that Father had summoned General Choi Hae-san and General Lee Chun, so I came out of curiosity."

"Is that so? Well, you've come at a good time. Chief Royal Secretary, show the Crown Prince that firearm."

"Yes, Your Majesty."

Following King Sejong's order, the Chief Royal Secretary opened the box and showed Hyang the firearm in question.

After examining the firearm meticulously, Hyang asked King Sejong.

"If I'm not mistaken, this seems to be a Dolhwachang used by the Ming army. What problem has this caused?"

"It's said that the lords hostile to the Ouchi clan are adopting this firearm. And among those lords is the Shoni clan on Tsushima Island."

"Ah..."

At King Sejong's explanation, Hyang's face became serious.

"Is it a leak? Or is it self-production?"

“Huh?”

Seeing that King Sejong didn't seem to know, Hyang stood up again and examined the firearm in question. After a long while of examination, Hyang turned to King Sejong.

“May I receive the help of General Choi Hae-san and General Lee Chun?”

“The two generals shall assist the Crown Prince.”

“Yes, Your Majesty.”

After exchanging opinions for a long time with the firearm in the center, the three came to a conclusion.

“This item is certainly made in Ming. The quality is one thing, but most importantly...”

Hyang pointed to the inscription on the body of the firearm. The inscription indicated when and where the firearm was made.

After finishing the confirmation, Hyang checked for more information he needed.

After gathering enough information, Hyang reported to King Sejong.

“Given the technological level of Japanese craftsmen, replicas of this will be mass-distributed soon.”

“That is indeed a problem.”

“An even bigger problem is whether the formula for gunpowder has also been leaked.”

“Oh no!”

At Hyang's point, King Sejong and the ministers realized what the real serious problem of this matter was.

“We were thinking about this issue incorrectly. To make such a mistake...”

Blaming himself for the mistake, King Sejong ordered Lee Maeng-gyun.

“Minister of Foreign Affairs, form an envoy group right now and dispatch them urgently to Beijing. You know the importance of this matter, so you must hurry.”

“I will do my best, Your Majesty!”

After concluding to send envoys to Ming to confirm the facts, the topic returned to the ‘Conquest of Tsushima Island.’

“I will ask the Crown Prince.”

“Please inquire, Father.”

King Sejong explained about the ‘Conquest of Tsushima Island’ that had sparked heated debate among the ministers.

“...So, Crown Prince, I’m curious about your view. Speak frankly without reservation.”

At King Sejong’s words, Hyang closed his mouth and began to organize his thoughts. And the ministers waited for Hyang to open his mouth with expressions half expectant and half worried.

After organizing his thoughts for nearly a quarter of an hour, Hyang finally opened his mouth.

“First, I think it’s unreasonable to conquer Tsushima Island right now. As Father said, the justification is weak. If we forcibly conquer Tsushima Island with a weak justification, there’s too great a possibility of losing the political and economic foundations we’re building on the Japanese mainland.”

At Hyang's answer, the opposing ministers wore expressions that said, 'That's right!'

As Hyang said, through the Joseon trade offices established on the Japanese mainland, Joseon was gradually expanding its influence over the whole of Japan. Hearing that the Ouchi clan and the Shibukawa clan, the Military Commander of Kyushu, were gradually accumulating wealth through trade with Joseon, Japanese lords were slowly approaching Joseon.

Hyang continued speaking while explaining this situation in Japan.

"...Therefore, Ashikaga Yoshinori, the current head of the shogunate, is wary of our Joseon. If we conquer Tsushima Island with a weak justification, Ashikaga Yoshinori will certainly seize this as an opportunity."

As Hyang's words grew longer, the opposition grew increasingly emboldened.

"And finally, with the current armament of our Joseon army, conquering Tsushima Island is not easy."

"Huh?"

"What?"

At Hyang's words, all the ministers, regardless of whether they were for or against, expressed doubt, and so did King Sejong.

"Crown Prince, I don't understand. Looking at our military lessons so far, our land and naval forces have been winning consecutive victories against the Jurchen tribes who caused disturbances, and our navy has been continuing its winning streak against pirates and Japanese pirates at sea. The background of these victories is our Joseon's powerful weapons, but even with such weapons, you say conquering Tsushima Island is not easy? Even though it's just an island as small as a palm?"

At King Sejong's point, all the ministers nodded. However, Choi Hae-san and Lee Chun seemed to understand something.

Hyang immediately responded to King Sejong's point.

“It's because it's an island as small as a palm that it's not easy.”

Hyang explained what the problem was.

-The common point between Liaodong and the sea is that they are wide spaces without obstacles. In such spaces, long-range cannons and muskets can exert their full power.

-These spaces without obstacles allow for maximum utilization of the firepower of fire bombs, especially the Bigyeokjincheolloe. In such spaces, the best defense an enemy hit by a Bigyeokjincheolloe can use is only the bodies of their comrades.

-Also, on the plains of Liaodong, cavalry, and at sea, the maneuverability of warships can be maximized to inflict irrecoverable wounds on the enemy.

-However, the environment of Tsushima Island is the opposite of the environment in the Liaodong region and the sea. Those who have been to Tsushima Island would know, but Tsushima Island is mostly mountainous.

-In such mountainous terrain, it's difficult to move cannons, which are the most important combat power.

-Of course, naval warships can approach the coast and provide support with cannons, but if the pirates go deeper into the mountains, they become useless.

-Muskets are also a problem. The dense trees in the mountains become the best cover for the pirates. If the person leading the pirates has even a little thought, they will command their forces to hide behind trees and gradually approach using the reloading time.

-Also, in such forests, the power of the Bigyeokjincheolloe is greatly reduced. This is because the fragments of the Bigyeokjincheolloe are blocked by trees.

-Eventually, if this situation progresses, hand-to-hand combat centered on spear and sword troops will occur. If it comes to this situation, defense is possible, but pursuit is impossible. Heavily armored spear and sword troops are physically incapable of chasing pirates while climbing mountains. Even if they manage to pursue to some extent, the large swords or long spears equipped by the spear and sword troops are difficult to use in dense forests.

“...Because of this situation, all the mountain fortresses protecting the naval bases established on Tsushima Island were built on high ground, and a barren zone of at least 10 jang (about 30m) was set outside the fortress walls. Military texts state that abandoning such barriers and going on the offensive is like voluntarily entering dangerous or deadly ground, so it must never be done.”

Hyang, who had been explaining the reasons why it was impossible, concluded his explanation by adding:

“Please review once again the Battle of Iro-gun experienced during the conquest in the year of Gihae.”

In the conquest of Tsushima Island that took place in the first year of King Sejong's reign, the start was an overwhelming victory for Joseon.

However, when the Japanese resisted with guerrilla warfare despite Joseon's pressure, Yi Jong-mu decided to strike where the pirates had gathered.

The plan was to deliver a decisive blow to force the pirates to surrender.

As if on cue, upon receiving intelligence that the pirates had gathered in Iro-gun, Yi Jong-mu ordered Park Sil to land at Iro-gun and annihilate the enemy. The problem was that this unit selection was not decided through proper military council but by drawing lots.

Park Sil, who received the order, decided to preempt the high ground of Iro-gun to conduct an attack using the height advantage. For this, he urged the

soldiers to disembark and move to the high ground.

However, the pirates had already secured key positions and were preparing for battle.

The Joseon army, which had not properly formed battle lines while only focusing on preempting the high ground, fell straight into a chaotic battle. Amidst the chaos, as Joseon army officers such as Park Hong-sin, Park Mu-yang, Kim Hae, and Kim Hui fell in battle, a flustered Park Sil ordered a retreat. In the sudden retreat and pursuit by the pirates, about 100 soldiers fell from cliffs and drowned.

Seeing the urgent situation, Assistant Commander Yi Sun-mong and Military Commander Kim Hyo-seong quickly moved to support and blocked the pirates, but the damage to the Joseon army was severe.

It was a battle where about 180 casualties occurred, including the drowned soldiers.

Moreover, the central army under Yi Jong-mu did not even intervene in the battle, and all these factors later became grounds for impeaching Yi Jong-mu. (Note 1)

When the ‘Battle of Iro-gun’, which could be seen as a painful memory for the Joseon army, was brought up, the complexions of Jo Mal-saeng and the officials from the Ministry of National Defense worsened.

However, when even Hyang, who could be seen as the most steadfast supporter of the Joseon army, expressed opposition, the ‘Second Conquest of Tsushima Island’ lost its momentum.

“Hmm, then does the Crown Prince consider the conquest of Tsushima Island impossible?”

“No, that’s not the case. The location of Tsushima Island is like a dagger aimed at the chin of our Joseon, so it must be taken by our Joseon.

However, an impulsive plan like this one is absolutely unacceptable. We must thoroughly investigate the terrain and environment of Tsushima Island, as well as the habits of those residing there, create tactics suitable for these conditions, and only then should we move. The current tactics of the Joseon army are, if we look at the offensive, suitable for the Liaodong region, and the rest are all defensive in nature. Therefore, we must devise suitable tactics.”

Hearing Hyang’s answer, King Sejong nodded and turned to Jo Mal-saeng.

“Minister of National Defense, do you know what needs to be done?”

“I will immediately organize personnel and begin research.”

Hearing Jo Mal-saeng’s answer, King Sejong again summarized the situation.

“The Ministry of Foreign Affairs shall immediately form an envoy group and send them to Beijing, and the Ministry of National Defense shall devise customized tactics suitable for the geography around Joseon, starting with Tsushima Island. And the Crown Prince...”

After pondering for a moment, King Sejong continued.

“Now that gunpowder weapons have spread even to the Japanese, we need firearms with better performance than those currently in use. Research this.”

“Yes, Father.”

“But with minimal budget.”

“... Yes.”

Note 1) Joseon Dynasty Military Strategy. Tsushima Island Conquest Edition. Ministry of National Defense Military History Compilation Research Institute.

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BBCodes

[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.
Deathbringer, emphasis on [i]*death*[/i].
I'm totally [s]~~crossed out~~[/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

[img]https://www.agine.this[/img]
[link]http://topwebfiction.com[/link].
[link=https://www.n.ot]clickbait[/link].

[quote]... me like my landlord! [/quote]

[spoiler]Spanish Inquisition! [/spoiler]
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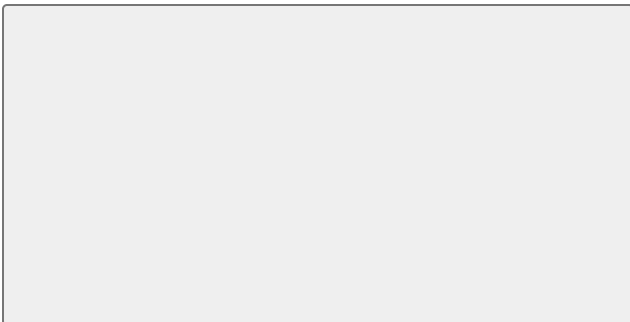
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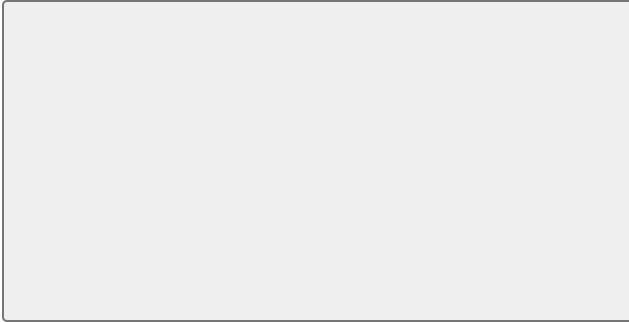
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Chapter 401 - 500

BCJ Chapter 415

Lord of War - Chinese Merchants

by *BlossomTL*Black Corporation: Joseon

Just as things seemed to be settling down, King Sejong suddenly called Hyang.

“Ah! I almost forgot. Crown Prince, the Ouchi clan has requested support with muskets to counter the firearms. What do you think we should do?”

To King Sejong’s question, Hyang immediately replied.

“Sh– I mean, shouldn’t we just hand over the copper guns? We can give them the manufacturing method, but we should provide the bullets and gunpowder ourselves.”

At Hyang’s answer, King Sejong thought for a moment and then nodded.

“Yes, that would be best. We must prevent the gunpowder manufacturing technology from falling into their hands as much as possible. Good job.”

“Yes. Then, I’ll return and start working on it right away.”

“Alright, good work.”

Hyang politely paid his respects to King Sejong and left Geunjeongjeon Hall.

Watching Hyang’s retreating figure, King Sejong instead became uneasy.

“Huh? Why is that boy being so docile?”

King Sejong had already seen through what kind of child Hyang was.

Knowing well that Hyang’s favorite thing was weapons development, King Sejong couldn’t understand Hyang’s docile reaction just now.

“I understand his reaction when I mentioned the budget, but the problem is that his reaction before that doesn’t seem normal...”

Noticing Hyang’s reaction different from usual, King Sejong turned to his ministers.

“Do you know why the Crown Prince is acting like that?”

“We’re not sure, Your Majesty.”

“But it’s definitely not something trivial!”

The ministers couldn’t hide their uneasiness at Hyang’s unusual reaction. Eventually, the ministers looked at Kim Jeom.

“How about releasing some of the reserve funds?”

“Don’t ask ‘How about’! Release them!”

Under pressure from the ministers, Kim Jeom looked at King Sejong. Seeing King Sejong’s face, Kim Jeom finally gave in.

“I will execute it immediately when the request comes in.”

“Thank you.”

Meanwhile, Hyang, who had returned to his office in Area 51, exploded in frustration.

“What kind of money-crazy bastard did this crazy thing! This ruins the pacing!”

Hyang had such an expression because his planned schedule had been disrupted due to an unexpected variable.

From the time he first made the Gapsik Jangchongtong – Gapsik Jangchong – Hyang had been making his own plans.

-The current musket uses a percussion cap system.

-If we follow the manufacturing method for fulminate well, we can hold out with percussion caps for 10 years at the shortest, up to 30 years at the longest.

-By then, either someone will take bribes and leak it, or craftsmen from other countries will accidentally discover something similar, and that's when we'll move one step ahead with breech-loading guns.

-If we develop gradually like this, we can indulge in our hobby leisurely without worrying about running out of capital.

-Perfect!

This was Hyang's plan, but it had been disrupted.

After cursing about ‘some crazy bastard’ like that, Hyang returned to reality.

“No matter how I think about it, the military doesn't seem to have any intention of giving up on conquering Tsushima Island... If that's the case, I guess we should go with breech-loading rather than muzzle-loading after all.”

In Hyang's opinion, to show the maximum effect with muzzle-loading muskets, volley fire from soldiers in formation was the answer.

However, it was difficult to form ranks in the forest. In the end, it meant that soldiers would have to be split into small units to engage in combat with the enemy.

For these small units to maintain fire superiority, breech-loading muskets with fast reloading were the optimal answer.

Having reached a conclusion, Hyang soon spread out a blank paper and began to ponder.

“Which method would be best...”

And before long, Hyang was humming a tune while drawing a concept diagram.

While Hyang was having his “joyful hobby time” to create a new musket, an envoy group led by Lee Maeng-gyun as the chief envoy visited Beijing.

“Chief Envoy, you look even healthier than when you came last time? Do you have some secret to rejuvenation?”

To Emperor Xuande's joke based on his appearance from his previous visit, Lee Maeng-gyun bowed his head and replied.

“My lord has provided me with good medicine.”

“The King of Joseon truly cares for his subjects.”

At Emperor Xuande's words, Lee Maeng-gyun inwardly muttered.

‘You don't know how terrifying the cost of that medicine is.’

In this atmosphere softened by light jokes, Emperor Xuande broached the main topic.

“So, what is the reason for your sudden visit when it’s not the usual time for envoys? From what I hear, Joseon seems to be peaceful?”

To Emperor Xuande’s question, Lee Maeng-gyun spoke up with a strong voice to state his business.

“Actually, a serious matter concerning the safety of the Great State and our Joseon has arisen, which is why I have come as an envoy.”

At Lee Maeng-gyun’s words, Emperor Xuande straightened his posture and asked again.

“A problem with safety? What do you mean by that?”

To Emperor Xuande’s question, Lee Maeng-gyun gestured to the vice envoy. Receiving a box from the vice envoy, Lee Maeng-gyun politely stepped forward and handed the box to a eunuch.

“Open it.”

“Yes, Your Majesty.”

Seeing the contents of the box, Emperor Xuande turned to Lee Maeng-gyun.

“Isn’t this a Dolhwachang? Both we and Joseon use better firearms than this, so what’s the problem?”

“If you look closely, Your Majesty, you’ll see that this is a Dolhwachang used by the Great State’s army. The problem is that these Dolhwachang are circulating in large numbers among the Japanese pirates.”

“What!”

At Lee Maeng-gyun’s explanation, Emperor Xuande sprang up from his seat.

Coming down from his throne, Emperor Xuande took the Dolhwachang from the box and examined it meticulously.

After examining it from various angles and confirming the inscription on the body of the Dolhwachang, Emperor Xuande sighed.

“Huu~. It’s real. So you’re saying these Dolhwachang are circulating among the Japanese pirates?”

“That’s correct, Your Majesty. A lord who communicates with our Joseon sent an urgent report, saying that hundreds are already circulating and the number is still increasing.”

“Oh my…”

“The biggest worry now is that even the formula for gunpowder might have been leaked.”

At the words that not only had the Dolhwachang been leaked, but an even bigger problem might have occurred, Emperor Xuande exploded.

“I see! These traitors!”

Emperor Xuande, grinding his teeth, turned to the Grand Secretary.

“Form an inspection team immediately and investigate the truth! Go around all the armies throughout the empire, take inventory of the Dolhwachang, and uncover any irregularities! If anyone is found to be involved in this, regardless of their position, arrest them all! Not just the culprits, but arrest their ten branches of relatives! No, conduct a full investigation of not just the Dolhwachang, but all cannons and gunpowder! This is my imperial edict, and those who neglect it will also be charged with treason!”

“W-We receive your command!”

The terrified Grand Secretary answered immediately, stuttering.

Once again, a storm of blood began to blow across the empire.

Following Emperor Xuande's strict orders, the largest investigation team in history was formed.

The investigation team, mobilizing not only the Censorate but also the Imperial Guard and the Eastern Depot, thoroughly shook down not just the imperial army but also the merchants connected to them.

Screams from the investigation team's interrogation rooms crossed over walls, and dozens of people returned home as corpses every day.

The full picture of the incident revealed through this was as follows:

To maintain their merchant groups and gain more profits in the increasingly fierce competition, some merchant groups noticed the Dolhwachang being retired from the military.

According to the established law, these retired Dolhwachang were supposed to be moved to workshops in Beijing and various other places for recycling.

However, as copper was an expensive mineral, a considerable number of merchant groups approached officials, handed over bribes, and diverted the Dolhwachang.

While melting down these diverted Dolhwachang to make utensils, some merchant groups connected with pirates had another thought.

“We could probably sell these to pirates at a high price?”

For merchant groups that had already diverted and sold even Ming army cannons, this was an opportunity they couldn't miss.

The pirates who contacted the merchant groups and heard their proposal welcomed it with open arms. Soon, Dolhwachang began to be handed over to the pirates.

The rumor that pirates had acquired Dolhwachang quickly spread to the Japanese pirates as well, and they also secretly made contact and demanded Dolhwachang.

That's how Dolhwachang entered Japan.

However, to properly use the Dolhwachang, gunpowder was needed, and Chinese merchants began to supply gunpowder as well.

As Chinese people enjoyed fireworks for celebrations like New Year's or weddings, gunpowder was easily obtainable. But merchants who were reluctant to spend money on gunpowder production contacted the military again.

The merchants contacted the military's gunpowder managers and received gunpowder scheduled for disposal at low prices.

This was because gunpowder technicians working for the merchant groups could recycle it.

However, as the demand for gunpowder increased, merchants began to divert and sell even perfectly good gunpowder from the military.

In this process, it was natural that a chain of bribes was created. At first, it was just the on-site managers, but as the scale grew larger, the line reached up to the Provincial Military Commander who oversaw the army stationed in an entire province.

"I'm speechless..."

Emperor Xuande, after confirming the investigation report, looked as if he had aged several years in an instant.

"So, 30% of the total Dolhwachang were diverted like this, and although two-thirds of those diverted were melted down to make utensils, the remaining 10% is the problem. Even this alone is in the tens of thousands..."

Emperor Xuande, rechecking the contents of the report, completely closed his eyes when he saw the gunpowder section.

“It’s to the point where I’m afraid to look at it again. Why do I have to see such a report! Speak!”

At Emperor Xuande’s shout, everyone, including the Grand Secretary, prostrated themselves on the floor.

“Please bestow your mercy upon us!”

“Please forgive our negligence!”

“Huu~.”

Emperor Xuande, letting out a long sigh and suppressing his anger, looked at the list of involved parties written in the report and began to tremble.

“Four Provincial Military Commanders were involved? I trusted those men and slept peacefully? I will issue an order! The four Provincial Military Commanders shall be subjected to boiling punishment, and all ten branches of their relatives, including both paternal and maternal sides, shall be found and exterminated! And all those who embezzled weapons and gunpowder meant for the empire’s defense to enrich themselves, and all those associated with them, shall be executed by beheading and have all their property confiscated! And their three branches of relatives shall also be exterminated!”

At Emperor Xuande’s cruel order, everyone in the hall trembled in fear and answered.

“We receive Your Majesty’s command!”

With this, the entire territory of Ming was once again plunged into blood. The heads of countless people rolled on the ground. However, the ones who met the most miserable end were the four Provincial Military Commanders.

They were boiled alive in cauldrons.

This tragedy that turned the entire empire upside down brought great changes to the empire.

First, looking at the merchant world, an enormous number of merchant groups, from large ones boasting history and tradition to emerging ones, were swept away, and fierce competition began among the survivors to occupy the vacant positions.

Next, the government, eunuchs, and military underwent another purge. The ones who suffered the most damage from this purge were the eunuchs and the military.

A considerable number of high-ranking eunuchs who were gradually gaining political power due to Emperor Xuande's policies lost their heads, and the same was true for the military.

The situation in the military was particularly serious, as almost all military units were involved in corruption, and as a result, an enormous number of generals and officers were purged and lost their lives.

Although new officers were recruited through military examinations and existing staff were promoted to fill positions, too many people with practical experience and leadership skills had disappeared.

To what extent? It was to the point where Hyang, upon hearing the story, evaluated it as follows:

“Well, this... This is similar in size to the Great Purge carried out by the Steel Marshal? The future of the Ming army should be interesting to watch.”

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[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.

Deathbringer, emphasis on [i]death[/i].

I'm totally [s]~~crossed out~~[/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

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[quote]... me like my landlord! [/quote]

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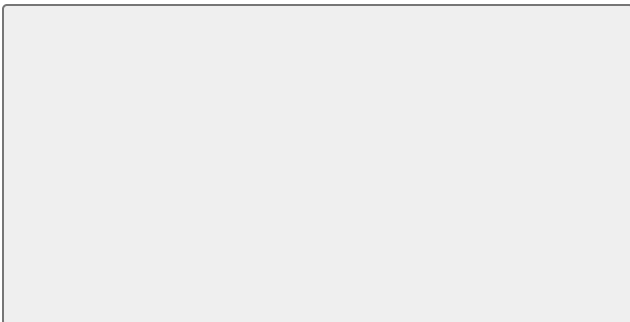
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Chapter 401 - 500

BCJ Chapter 416

Lord of War - Chinese Merchants

by *BlossomTL*Black Corporation: Joseon

Similar conversations were taking place inside Geunjeongjeon Hall.

“I’ve heard that the purge carried out by the emperor was truly enormous.”

“That’s correct, Your Majesty.”

“According to the rumors and information we’ve received so far, starting with the purge of four Provincial Military Commanders and their ten branches of relatives, the three branches of all those involved in this corruption have been put to death.”

At the ministers’ report, King Sejong asked about the number of victims.

“Then how many have died in total?”

To King Sejong’s question, Lee Maeng-gyun cautiously answered.

“At least 200,000...”

“200,000! Are you certain?”

“As it’s only heard through rumors, there might be exaggerations, but the analysis is that it’s very close to that number.”

“200,000... This is worrisome. If Ming’s national defense and governance are shaken, our Joseon cannot avoid negative effects...”

At King Sejong’s concern, many ministers nodded with similar expressions.

In any case, Ming was the largest military power in Northeast Asia. Although its color had faded somewhat as Emperor Xuande focused on trade-centered diplomacy rather than military projection, if Ming were to attack in earnest, the target countries would turn pale with fear.

Of course, entities like Northern Yuan or the Jurchens had troubled Ming. However, the Jurchens in the Liaodong region had already submitted to Ming, and Northern Yuan was gradually becoming economically dependent on Ming through the trade offices created by Emperor Xuande.

However, with the disappearance of many military commanders, the situation was likely to change again, and this was what King Sejong and his ministers were worried about.

“Unexpectedly, the possibility of military instability might not be that high, Your Majesty.”

Amidst this, Jo Mal-saeng offered an unexpected opinion.

“Why is that?”

To King Sejong’s question, Jo Mal-saeng answered simply.

“Because the Imperial Guard remains intact, Your Majesty.”

At Jo Mal-saeng’s answer, King Sejong nodded.

“Ah! I had forgotten about them. They are indeed still intact.”

Following Jo Mal-saeng and King Sejong's words, Hwang Hui also joined the conversation with a relieved expression.

“That's somewhat fortunate. Since the Imperial Guard is intact.”

As Jo Mal-saeng, King Sejong, and Hwang Hui nodded with expressions of mutual understanding, Lee Maeng-gyun interjected.

“Minister Jo, could you explain in a bit more detail? I'm a layman when it comes to military affairs.”

At Lee Maeng-gyun's words, Jo Mal-saeng explained in more detail.

-Looking at how the current Ming emperor uses troops, the Imperial Guard, especially the Gun Corps and Artillery Guard, are the main force.

-The duties of the troops stationed in the provinces are as follows: First is to deal with foreign invasions, and next is to serve as auxiliary forces and handle supplies for the main force.

-Fortresses have already been built at major military strongpoints. Even commanders with little experience should be able to properly conduct defensive battles relying on these fortresses.

“...Of course, there are occasionally incompetent individuals who fail even at this, but that's beside the point.”

As Lee Maeng-gyun nodded at Jo Mal-saeng's explanation, he raised an objection.

“But with the vacancies suddenly filled due to this great purge, has proper verification been done? If entities like Northern Yuan target this and cause unrest, won't it become a big problem?”

“Again, as long as the Imperial Guard holds, it will be difficult for major incidents to occur. And...”

After catching his breath for a moment, Jo Mal-saeng continued.

“If there’s a leader in Northern Yuan with a functioning brain, they won’t touch Ming for at least 10 years.”

“Why?”

To Lee Maeng-gyun’s question, Kim Jeom, who had been listening to the conversation, interjected.

“As Minister Jo said, most of those filling the vacancies now have little experience. And as Minister Yi pointed out, they haven’t been properly verified. So, wouldn’t it be the greatest act of aiding the enemy to unnecessarily provoke them and give them opportunities to gain experience and verify their abilities?”

“Ah...”

Nodding at Kim Jeom’s answer, Lee Maeng-gyun muttered with a face full of regret.

“The problem is that there’s no such leader in Northern Yuan right now. There is the Oirat, but...”

At Lee Maeng-gyun’s words, everyone present nodded.

After being driven back north by Ming, the Khan no longer held the power of his ancestors. And while the Oirat was gradually encroaching on this power vacuum, complete domination was still a distant future. Therefore, there was a high possibility that many of the Northern Yuan tribes would act shortsightedly, seeing only small immediate benefits.

This ongoing conversation was eventually summarized by King Sejong.

“We should take this incident in Ming as a lesson and be vigilant ourselves. Ming has many people and can quickly fill even large holes, but we cannot do the same. One such incident is enough.”

At King Sejong’s words, the ministers unanimously bowed their heads and answered.

“We will engrave it in our hearts and act accordingly!”

Beads of cold sweat were already forming on the foreheads of the ministers as they answered in unison.

The “such incident” King Sejong referred to was the Gapyu Rebellion.

The number of those who participated in the rebellion at the time and died either on the battlefield or later at the execution grounds easily exceeded tens of thousands.

When counting those who were taken as government slaves due to being young or female, and those who died opposing the rebellion, the number increased even further.

It was no exaggeration to call the Gapyu Rebellion “a tragedy that dried up the seeds of the nobility in the three southern provinces.”

And its aftermath was by no means light. While King Sejong’s power was absolutely strengthened, there was a shortage of talented individuals to supply the growing bureaucratic group. Although the doors were opened even to illegitimate children, those from the northwest, and women who had previously been restricted from official positions, the manpower shortage was not easily resolved.

Whenever these issues arose, the working-level officials sighed and grumbled.

“Huu~. If we wanted to take the easy way, we could have. But our King isn’t that kind of person, is he?”

As the working-level officials said, King Sejong had opened the doors, but he hadn’t lowered the threshold. As a result, many still had to taste the bitter cup of failure, and government agencies across the country, including Hanseong, couldn’t escape from the hell of overtime work. Except for one place, the soldiers on the frontlines.

The only units that were ‘fully staffed with everything from personnel to provisions’ were those patrolling the border areas and seas.

Contrary to the expectations of the people of Joseon, including King Sejong, this great purge was also a significant bloodletting for Ming.

Blood flowed from all directions, not just the military but also administrative officials and eunuch organizations. Anyone even slightly involved in corrupt activities was executed without exception.

Especially in Beijing’s Forbidden City, Emperor Xuande personally oversaw interrogations and conducted investigations.

“Who else but I can properly inspect the eunuchs, Imperial Guard, Cabinet, and court!”

Emperor Xuande, who thundered thus, thoroughly searched the interior of the Forbidden City to uncover corruption.

Because Emperor Xuande took the lead in this way, dozens or hundreds of heads were cut off and hung on spears daily in Beijing.

As a result of this massive purge, administrative vacancies occurred throughout the empire, and to fill these, the largest civil service examination in history was held. However, unlike Joseon, instead of expanding the pool of candidates, they greatly lowered the threshold.

Through this examination, tens of thousands of talents were again injected into Ming’s administrative organization.

“It will take quite some time for them to become worth their salt...”

Those who survived the purge lamented the bleak future, but there was nothing they could do.

However, the biggest victim was Emperor Xuande, who had initiated this.

Although the holes were filled, the situation where experienced personnel who could control the work had greatly decreased presented Emperor Xuande with murderous overwork.

Emperor Xuande, who had to personally handle most of the affairs coming up from all regions of the vast empire, soon had to share power.

However, before sharing power, Emperor Xuande had to take preventive measures.

First, he started with the eunuch organization.

He strengthened the Neishufang (Inner Court). The size was increased from the initial 300 to 1,000, and those produced here would take on the core of the eunuch organization.

The problem was not just increasing the size. Children between 8 and 10 years old were admitted, and for the first three years, they were made to engrave absolute loyalty to the emperor in their minds.

This was possible because those in charge of education were eunuchs with absolute loyalty to the emperor who had survived the purge.

Following the Eastern Depot, he created the Western Depot, making them monitor each other as well as inspect the officials.

The task of inspection was not only given to the Eastern and Western Depots. The traditional inspection agency, the Censorate, also had its size and capabilities strengthened. In addition, an inspection organization called the Inspection Guard was created within the Imperial Guard.

As a result, these four organizations monitored each other while inspecting the entire administrative organization of Ming. And the one holding the leash of these fierce hunting dogs was Emperor Xuande.

As long as Emperor Xuande held the leash and food, these four inspection organizations would show absolute loyalty to Emperor Xuande and bare

their teeth at others.

Only after securing these hunting dogs did Emperor Xuande finally share power.

No, rather than sharing power, he shared workload.

He largely transferred to the Cabinet most of the approval rights for various tasks that had been flooding to him.

Of course, he confirmed that he would continue to handle tasks related to the budget, including taxation, diplomacy, and national defense until the end.

And even for the tasks handed over to the Cabinet, it wasn't just receiving reports.

The Grand Secretary and the scholars of the Cabinet, as well as the officials of the Six Ministries, could only get approval through meetings conducted in the presence of Emperor Xuande.

Although he shared power, he didn't give everything away until the end.

The military was unanimously acknowledged as the biggest victim in this great purge and subsequent handling.

Emperor Xuande summoned those entering the vacant positions to the Forbidden City and declared firmly:

“What I want from you is simple! Loyalty to me and integrity! That's all! Speaking of military matters, I will never initiate conquests first, so you should focus only on defense! Don't seek unnecessary military achievements! The best defense will be the greatest merit!”

At Emperor Xuande's resolute order, the newly appointed commanding officers shouted loudly:

“We follow the imperial edict! Ten thousand years, ten thousand years, ten thousand ten thousand years!”

Although he declared this “emphasis on defense” and stressed loyalty and integrity, Emperor Xuande didn't truly trust the military.

Still unable to erase his distrust of the military, Emperor Xuande created a new position to keep them in check.

This was the position called ‘Loyalty Inspector.’

These individuals moved with the commanders of each unit and monitored their every move.

Their assigned duties were as follows:

-Is the commander's loyalty unwavering?

-Is he doing his best in commanding the unit?

-Does he always check the supplies to ensure there are no difficulties in unit operation and maintaining soldier morale?

-Does he unnecessarily seek military achievements and try to engage in useless battles?

-Conversely, does he avoid battles unconditionally, causing damage to the empire's territory and people?

The Loyalty Inspectors examined such items and reported to their superiors, and based on their reports, the commanders' personnel evaluations were determined.

Separately from this, the military was largely divided into two organizations.

One was the general Ming army symbolized by the Five Chief Military Commissions, and the other was the Imperial Guard.

Although the Imperial Guard started as a guard unit defending the Forbidden City, Emperor Xuande was giving them offensive duties, starting with the active protection of the trade offices established in the border areas with Northern Yuan.

And as a result of the purge, the core of the military shifted from the Five Chief Military Commissions to the Imperial Guard.

In other words, the political voice shifted from the Five Chief Military Commissions to the Imperial Guard.

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BBCodes

[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.

Deathbringer, emphasis on [i]death[/i].

I'm totally [s]~~crossed-out~~[/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

[img]https://www.agine.this[/img]

[link]http://topwebfiction.com[/link].

[link=https://www.n.ot]clickbait[/link].

[quote]... me like my landlord![/quote]

[spoiler]Spanish Inquisition![/spoiler]

[ins]Insert[/ins] more bad puns!

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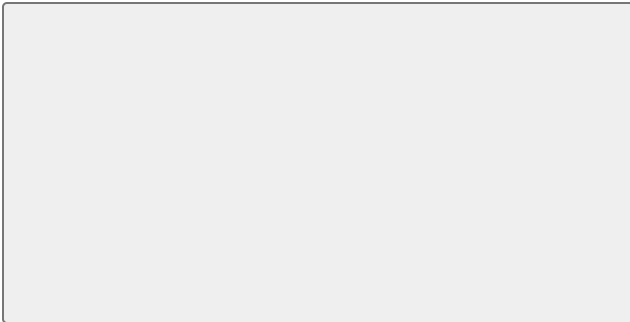
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Chapter 401 - 500

BCJ Chapter 417

Lord of War - Chinese Merchants

by *BlossomTL*Black Corporation: Joseon

While Ming was suffering from this turmoil, Hyang was busy moving.

Hyang was busy because of the order he received from King Sejong.

-Create a musket with better performance than the one currently in use.

-But with minimal budget.

“There are various answers to the budget problem. There were quite a few countries that struggled with similar issues.”

Despite the constraints set by King Sejong, Hyang didn't worry much. As Hyang said, no country was free from budget constraints, and thanks to that, there were various alternatives.

As a result, Hyang could proceed with his plan smoothly while satisfying his enthusiasm.

However, before long, officials from the Ministry of National Defense began to frequent Area 51 so often that the threshold was wearing out.

What made the Ministry of National Defense officials come and go as if Area 51 was their own office building was a certain 'support artillery' being developed along with the musket.

“Your Highness. Minister Jo Mal-saeng has arrived.”

“Show him in.”

“Yes, Your Highness.”

A moment later, Jo Mal-saeng entered, guided by a eunuch.

“I greet Your Highness, the Crown Prince.”

“Haha! We’ve been meeting often these days. Please, have a seat.”

After offering Jo Mal-saeng a seat, Hyang sat opposite him and opened his mouth.

“Well, what brings you here at this hour? You haven’t forgotten that Father is waiting in Geunjeongjeon Hall, have you?”

“Ah, I already reported to His Majesty yesterday and received approval.”

How many years had it been since the ministers were divided between King Sejong and Hyang? The ministers were no longer pushovers.

“Tsk!”

Hyang clicked his tongue softly while turning his head, then straightened his expression and looked at Jo Mal-saeng.

“So, what brings you here today?”

“It’s about the support weapon Your Highness has developed.”

“There are quite a few support weapons currently under development, though?”

“To be precise, I’m talking about the support machine gun.”

At Jo Mal-saeng's words, Hyang nodded.

“Ah! That one? Well, it's still under development for now.”

“I've heard its power is unparalleled.”

“It's quite excellent in its own way, but it's not unparalleled. Objectively speaking, aren't cannons more powerful?”

“Isn't their use different? That's what Your Highness always used to say.”

At Jo Mal-saeng's point, Hyang's expression hardened.

“Do you really not understand why I'm saying this?”

It wasn't just a dry question, but one mixed with considerable anger. Jo Mal-saeng hastily waved his hands.

“Ah, no! It's just that, while the military certainly sees it as a good weapon, there's pressure from the Ministry of Finance and Economy...”

“If it's truly a good weapon and necessary, then persuade the Ministry of Finance and Economy! Do you think finding this kind of bypass will set a good precedent?”

At Hyang's rebuke, Jo Mal-saeng immediately bowed his head.

“Ah, no! It's just that it's such a good weapon...”

“I'll say it again! If it's such a good weapon and necessary, then persuade Minister Kim Jeom of the Ministry of Finance and Economy and the head of the Budget Review Department! That's the right way, and I have no intention of tolerating any deviation!”

At Hyang's rebuke, Jo Mal-saeng's head bowed lower and lower.

“My thoughts were short-sighted!”

After giving such a harsh rebuke and sending Jo Mal-saeng away, Hyang continued to grumble.

“Where do they think they’re trying to find a shortcut?”

Hyang was grinding his teeth, remembering how he had struggled with external pressures from various places when he worked as a civil servant in the 21st century.

There was another reason why Hyang was angry.

“That’s one thing, but why do I have to deal with the Ministry of Finance and Economy!”

Dealing with the Ministry of Finance and Economy, which was in some ways an even more awkward opponent than King Sejong, was not an easy task for Hyang either.

“How, in just those few years, have the noblemen become even worse monsters of capitalism than me.”

It had become Hyang’s daily routine to be exhausted after wrestling with officials from the Ministry of Finance and Economy. In the end, Hyang was lamenting to the sky.

“I’ve raised monsters!”

The stubborn noblemen had undergone a new evolution as they realized the terror and power of budgets.

That’s why Hyang was trying to avoid conflicts with the Ministry of Finance and Economy as much as possible, except for the budget needed for the research institute and Area 51.

Three months after receiving orders from King Sejong, Hyang held an event introducing newly developed firearms at the shooting range set up in Gyeongbok Palace.

“To produce results in just three months, that’s impressive.”

At King Sejong’s words, Hyang bowed his head slightly and answered.

“I had some ideas prepared in advance.”

“Is that so? Being prepared... You’re always reliable.”

King Sejong patted Hyang’s shoulder with a pleased face and looked at the guns placed on a platform covered with a white cloth.

“They look quite familiar?”

There was a hint of disappointment mixed in King Sejong’s impression. It was due to the experience that Hyang’s results were always new things.

At King Sejong’s reaction, Hyang answered with a slightly sulky face.

“I tried to produce the best possible results with minimal budget as per Father’s orders.”

“Is that so? Well then, explain it to me.”

“Yes.”

Moving to the front of the platform, Hyang began explaining while pointing at the muskets with a pointer.

“From the leftmost, these are Prototype Guns A, B, C, and D.”

The models A, B, C, and D that Hyang introduced had shapes similar to the early and late models of the Sharps Rifle, the Springfield M1865 Trapdoor Rifle, and the Remington Rolling Block Rifle, respectively.

“Hmm... A and B look the same, what’s the difference?”

At King Sejong’s question, Hyang pulled out a bullet from his sleeve.

“The difference is in the bullets. A uses the same bullets and percussion caps that our Joseon army has been using, while B through D use newly made bullets. This is the new bullet.”

“Let me see...”

King Sejong’s eyes lit up as he received the new bullet from Hyang and examined it from various angles.

“Have you combined the percussion cap and the bullet into one?”

“That’s correct.”

What Hyang had made was similar to the integrated bullet created by Jean Samuel Pauly of Switzerland and François Prélat of France in 1808.

It was a method where a primer was embedded in a copper base plate, and gunpowder and a bullet were contained in a paper cartridge attached to the base plate.

“I tried to think of the best way to maximize firing performance while reducing copper consumption.”

As he listened to explanations about the operation of the prototype guns including the bullets, King Sejong asked Hyang.

“You’ve prepared a demonstration, I assume?”

“Of course, Father. Prepare for the demonstration!”

“Yes! Prepare for the demonstration!”

At the military officer’s shout, a group of soldiers rushed out to the shooting range.

After paying their respects to King Sejong, the soldiers soon divided into five groups of five (the minimum unit in the Joseon army) and stood at the

firing positions.

“Fire!”

Ta-ta-tang!

The soldiers who pulled their triggers simultaneously at the officer’s command soon began reloading.

And at that moment, the strengths of the new muskets began to shine.

During the time it took for the Gapsik Jangchong, which the Joseon army had been using until now, to reload and fire the next shot, the prototype guns fired at least 4 shots, up to 6 shots at the fastest.

“Cease fire! Cease fire!”

As the officer shouted and a red flag waved, the soldiers stopped firing. With the echoes of the loud firing sounds still lingering, King Sejong turned to Hyang.

“Indeed, the firing speed is truly fast. However...”

King Sejong paused for a moment, picked up one of the muskets on the platform, aimed it, and asked Hyang.

“That’s not all, is it?”

“That’s right!”

Grinning as he answered, Hyang gestured to the officer commanding the soldiers.

Seeing Hyang’s gesture, the officer instructed the soldiers to fire from kneeling and prone positions. And in this process, the true strengths of the prototype guns were revealed. Unlike existing muskets that required standing up to reload after firing, the prototype guns could be reloaded in place without standing up.

As the demonstration ended, King Sejong turned to the ministers who had accompanied him.

“What do you think?”

To King Sejong’s question, Hwang Hui stepped forward to answer.

“If anyone underestimates us and attacks because our army is small in number, they will surely regret it deeply.”

At Hwang Hui’s words, all the ministers nodded. King Sejong also nodded at the ministers’ evaluation.

“I think so too. And...”

King Sejong paused for a moment, examining the integrated ammunition again, and said to Hyang.

“Crown Prince, I see why you made the new bullet. Although it’s faster than the existing Gapsik musket, type A is slightly inferior compared to the others.”

As King Sejong said, type A, which used existing powder packets and percussion caps, was a bit more complicated.

“That’s correct.”

At King Sejong’s point, Hyang nodded and muttered inwardly.

‘As expected of someone outside the norm...’

“Hmm...”

King Sejong, who had been nodding continuously while examining the muskets, asked Hyang again.

“You told me you used minimal budget. That means you made slight modifications to the existing musket, right? And from what I see, type C is the closest to that. Am I correct?”

Hyang immediately nodded at King Sejong's question.

“That's right.”

As King Sejong pointed out, types A, B, and D required cutting off a significant portion of the gun body and installing a new action. However, the type C trapdoor-style rifle concentrated modifications on the barrel part.

“Hmm...”

King Sejong, who had been examining the muskets from various angles, asked Hyang.

“Crown Prince, I think the development of firearms will continue. Do you think so too?”

“I think so too. But I'm confident that our Joseon's firearms are currently the most advanced.”

“Your contribution to that is significant. Hmm... However, as the budget is limited...”

King Sejong paused and examined the prototype guns once more meticulously.

After picking up and putting down the muskets several times to examine them, King Sejong reached a conclusion.

“Given the budget issues, I'll select prototype gun C as the next musket. However, Crown Prince, continue to research even better muskets.”

“Yes, Father.”

At King Sejong's decision, Hyang bowed his head with a calm face.

‘In a way, this is probably the best answer. The others would require a major overhaul of the production line.’

However, seeing Kim Jeom nodding with a bright face, Hyang felt a bit mischievous.

“Father. Besides these muskets, there’s a newly researched support weapon, I’d like you to see this as well.”

At Hyang’s words, King Sejong’s face noticeably brightened.

“Really? Then we must see it! Prepare it quickly!”

King Sejong was delighted at the expectation of seeing the support weapon he had heard rumors about through various channels.

A moment later, two new support weapons mounted on gun carriages entered the shooting range.

King Sejong, after examining the appearance of the new weapon, asked Hyang.

“Is it six muskets bundled into one?”

“That’s right. I’ve named it the Eulsik Hwacha.”

“Eulsik Hwacha...”

At Hyang’s words, King Sejong briefly searched his memory and turned to Hyang.

“The Hwacha I know is a weapon that fires 100 arrows at once. Does this mean this is similar?”

“That’s correct.”

“Let’s see its performance then.”

“Yes!”

As King Sejong’s order fell, Hyang and the soldiers moved excitedly.

Ta-ta-tang~.

As the sound of the last fired bullets faded away and the demonstration of the Hwachas ended, King Sejong and the ministers couldn't close their gaping mouths.

The scarecrows and targets set up at the opposite end of the shooting range were riddled with holes. This was the devastation created by just two Eulsik Hwachas.

With the Hwacha behind him, Hyang explained to King Sejong and the ministers.

“If installed at key defensive positions and on ships sailing the seas, it will demonstrate its full power.”

At Hyang's explanation, King Sejong and the ministers imagined the scene. As they imagined the approaching Jurchens and Japanese pirates being swept away, King Sejong and the ministers shuddered.

“I don't even want to think about it. However...”

King Sejong turned to Kim Jeom.

“Minister of Finance. No matter how much you object, I need this!”

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[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.

Deathbringer, emphasis on [i]death[/i].

I'm totally [s]~~crossed out~~[/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

[img]https://www.agine.this[/img]

[link]http://topwebfiction.com[/link].

[link=https://www.n.ot]clickbait[/link].

[quote]... me like my landlord! [/quote]

[spoiler]Spanish Inquisition! [/spoiler]

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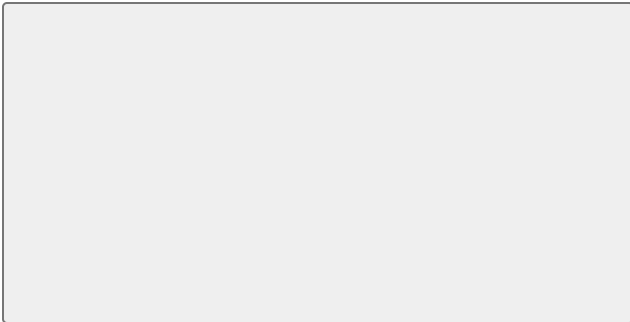
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Chapter 401 - 500

BCJ Chapter 418

Cargo Culture

by *BlossomTL*Black Corporation: Joseon

The Eulsik Hwacha was a hit with the military, who valued firepower, and King Sejong, but it became a mortal enemy of the Ministry of Finance and Economy.

“Of course, I admit it will certainly be a great help for national defense, but...”

“The problem is that damn production cost.”

“No, the Hwacha itself is fine. The problem is the ammunition.”

“Ah... That ammunition... Haa~.”

Officials at the Ministry of Finance and Economy sighed whenever the ‘Eulsik Hwacha’ came up in conversation.

The reason these officials were sighing wasn’t just because of the Eulsik Hwacha itself.

‘Military weapons will become increasingly precise in the future. As a result, they’ll become more expensive, which means they’ll give us headaches.’

The faces of the Ministry of Finance and Economy officials were full of worry as they realized what the Eulsik Hwacha and its ammunition meant.

The ammunition that made the Ministry of Finance and Economy officials sigh was a further modification of the bullets used in the next-generation rifle that King Sejong named the Eulsik Jangchong.

The ammunition for the Eulsik rifle was an integrated bullet made by attaching a paper cartridge to a copper base plate with a primer embedded in it.

As this performed better than expected – although Hyang had anticipated it to some extent – Hyang also converted the ammunition for the horse-mounted gun to an integrated type and modified the cylinder. And as this new horse-mounted gun was distributed again, the Jurchens had to suffer even more.

The ammunition used in the Eulsik Hwacha was made with a single copper structure for the cartridge case, rather than the composite structure of copper and paper used in this new ammunition.

As a result, Kim Jeom and other officials from the Ministry of Finance and Economy fainted at the sight of the cartridge cases falling like a shower, as numerous as the bullets raining down.

“Copper cartridge cases! That expensive copper!”

“Even though copper mines have been discovered!”

During this period, copper was as important as, if not more important than, iron in Joseon’s industry.

Copper was used almost everywhere, from simple utensils like spoons and bowls and jewelry to gaskets for steam engines, piston rings, and sealing packing for treadle-type water pumps.

As a result, Joseon made comprehensive efforts to obtain copper. In addition to finding stable import sources, they continued prospecting not

only on the Korean Peninsula but also in newly acquired Joseon territories.

After such desperate efforts, a copper mine was discovered on Daeseol Island, but it wasn't a mine with abundant veins.

Therefore, Joseon's prospecting efforts had to continue.

Given this situation, the appearance of cartridge cases made entirely of copper made the Ministry of Finance and Economy officials faint.

“Is this something that will be fired only once or twice?”

“It fired hundreds of shots even in the demonstration! And they say this will be installed not only in fortresses but also on ships? Impossible!”

“If a war breaks out... per gun...”

“Don't! Don't even calculate it or talk about it!”

As it was certain that an enormous amount would be consumed if it were used in actual combat, the Ministry of Finance and Economy officially requested the use of something other than copper cartridge cases.

“...The Ministry of Finance and Economy keeps bringing this up, so how about using the same ammunition as the Eulsik rifle?”

At King Sejong's words, Hyang sighed and answered.

“Haa~. It's not that I didn't think about that aspect. However...”

Hyang explained why it was impossible.

-The biggest reason is that paper cartridges are weaker compared to copper cartridges. The Eulsik rifle is hand-loaded and fires single shots, so paper cartridges can be managed.

However, the Eulsik Hwacha loads and ejects mechanically. This involves more force than human power, and if not done properly, the paper cartridge could tear during loading and ejection.

If this happens, the Eulsik Hwacha immediately becomes useless. Of course, the Eulsik Hwacha has various measures installed for emergency treatment. But using paper cartridges would make smooth operation almost impossible.

-Secondly, it's advantageous for long-term storage.

The paper powder packets currently in use and the paper cartridges of the integrated ammunition used in the Eulsik rifle are vulnerable to moisture. Of course, oiled paper is used so they can be used even in rainy weather, but long-term storage is problematic.

This is fatal for the navy. Naval ships spend most of their time at sea. Therefore, looking at the current situation of the navy, they use only the minimum amount of paper powder packets for possible situations and store the rest separately.

“...That's why we have to use copper cartridge cases.”

At Hyang's answer, King Sejong, who had been pondering various issues, opened his mouth.

“If we make it with iron... Ah, iron would break.”

“That's correct.”

Hyang nodded at King Sejong's self-questioning and muttered.

‘Was it Nazi Germany in World War II and the Soviet Union during the Cold War that used iron cartridge cases?’

In the end, unable to find a good answer no matter how much he thought about it, King Sejong had no choice but to demand an alternative.

“However, the opposition from the Ministry of Finance and Economy has a point. It’s not just 100 or 200 shots, but isn’t the Eulsik Hwacha something that will easily fire 1,000 to 2,000 shots in one firing?”

“So, I’ve thought of a solution of sorts.”

The solution Hyang presented was a ‘cartridge catcher’.

Attached to the bottom of the gun carriage on which the Eulsik Hwacha was mounted was a large object similar to a cauldron.

The ejected cartridge cases would fall down and be collected in this cartridge catcher.

In the end, the Ministry of Finance and Economy and the military had to be satisfied with this compromise.

As a side note, the ‘cartridge obsession’ of the Joseon military that began during this period continued for a long time.

Unless it was an unavoidable situation, the Joseon military desperately recovered cartridge cases.

Of course, it wasn’t to the extent of “those who would pick up cartridge cases even on the battlefield” as soldiers from other countries would say, but in training situations, recovering nearly 100% of the cartridge cases was the norm.

As a result, Korea was the first to develop and attempt to deploy combustible cartridge cases and caseless rifles in actual combat.

Another story about the Eulsik Hwacha was that the word ‘Hwacha’ became a symbol.

‘Support weapons that fire continuously by mechanical power’ came to be called ‘Hwacha’ regardless of their size.

Weapons that would have been called light machine guns in history before Hyang’s intervention were named ‘light Hwacha’, and large-caliber autocannons were named ‘heavy Hwacha’.

This wasn’t just applied to Northeast Asian countries.

In the West, names like ‘Hwacha’ and ‘Hoaza’ became familiar among people. Regardless of East or West, the image of ‘rapid-fire support weapon = Hwacha’ was imprinted.

Of course, officially they were labeled as ‘Machine Gun’, ‘Maschinengewehr’, etc., but for ordinary soldiers and people, the word ‘Hwacha’ became more familiar.

Of course, Hyang was the cause of this situation.

“‘Machine gun’ is familiar, but it feels a bit uncomfortable...”

Although it was a familiar term to 21st-century Koreans, Hyang, who knew well that most terms with Japanese origins were prevalent, had a suspicion bordering on certainty that the name ‘machine gun’ was also one of these. That’s why Hyang consciously pushed for the name ‘Hwacha’.

“If it’s really necessary, someone will step up and change it in the future...”

As always, Hyang maintained an attitude of “not my problem”.

Even after the storm over the Eulsik Hwacha issue had passed, things that gave the Ministry of Finance and Economy headaches didn’t cease.

On a busy but relatively peaceful afternoon.

As Kim Jeom was wrestling with approval documents, a subordinate handed him a report.

“It’s from the Ministry of Land Development.”

“Why from them?”

“They said they want us to review it before submitting it to the State Council meeting.”

“Hmm...”

Kim Jeom, tilting his head, opened the report and shouted after seeing its contents.

“Have you ever seen such thieves!”

The content written in the report can be summarized as follows:

‘The railway tracks we’ve painstakingly laid are being stolen.’

The issue that turned the Ministry of Land Development and the Ministry of Finance and Economy upside down was brought up at the State Council meeting the next day.

“When you say the railway tracks are being stolen, do you mean the tracks on which the iron horses and passenger cars run are being stolen?”

To King Sejong’s question, Kim Jeom stepped forward to answer.

“That’s correct, Your Majesty.”

“Why?”

“Because the iron used for the tracks is of very high quality.”

“Huh...”

At Kim Jeom’s answer, King Sejong sighed with an incredulous expression.

According to Kim Jeom's subsequent report, the reason this happened was because of the tracks laid on the railways.

The tracks produced from ironworks all over Joseon were made of wrought iron, but their quality was very good.

Of course, the production of steel was not small either, but it was primarily allocated to making steam engines including iron horses, other devices, and military weapons.

And although it was literally wrought iron, it was a very tough metal compared to other metals, so it was sufficient for use in railways.

And the one who insisted on making the tracks with wrought iron was Hyang.

“As I said before, even the famous Eiffel Tower was made of wrought iron!”

This was the situation with the wrought iron tracks that were laid. However, because of their superior quality, people began to covet them, and some put it into action.

“Huh...”

King Sejong, sighing deeply once again, turned to his ministers.

“How much has been stolen?”

“At least 20 percent...”

At the answer from the Minister of Land Development, King Sejong could not contain his anger and struck the armrest.

“20 percent has been stolen and only now the report comes up! Isn't this due to your negligence!”

At King Sejong's anger, the Minister of Land Development immediately replied.

“The situation was suspicious, so it took some time to conduct an internal inspection!”

The Minister of Land Development immediately explained the detailed reasons.

When reports came in that tracks had been stolen, the local officials immediately contacted nearby military units and the police office to begin investigating the incident.

And separately from this, new tracks were supplied to the sites where the incidents occurred. This was because construction delays could not be allowed.

However, in this process, some people came up with clever schemes. They diverted the tracks themselves and then reported upwards that they had been stolen.

“As a result of the investigation, here is a list of those who actually committed theft and those who were caught embezzling.”

King Sejong, examining the list submitted by the Minister of Land Development, ordered in a voice full of anger.

“The thieves who stole are stealing the nation’s property, so punish them severely according to the law! The same goes for those who embezzled! Apply all applicable laws and execute the highest punishment!”

“We receive your command!”

Just as it seemed one issue was being resolved, the problem did not end easily.

“We can deal with the theft committed by our Joseon people in that way, but the problem is the Jurchens.”

“The Jurchens?”

As the Jurchens suddenly came up out of nowhere, King Sejong was momentarily confused. Seeing this, the Minister of Land Development immediately provided additional explanation.

“Nearly 70 percent of the stolen tracks occurred in the north.”

At the explanation from the Minister of Land Development, King Sejong nodded.

“By the Jurchens in the north, do you mean the Jurchens who haven’t submitted yet?”

“That’s correct, Your Majesty.”

At the Minister of Land Development’s answer, King Sejong nodded.

“I see. If it’s the Jurchens, they would go crazy. Hmm...”

As King Sejong showed an expression of understanding, the Minister of Land Development opened his mouth again.

“As their crimes do not cease, I think it would be good to carry out a large-scale subjugation.”

“That’s not possible.”

King Sejong shook his head at the proposal for a large-scale subjugation.

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[b]**Bold**[/b] of you to assume I have a plan.
Deathbringer, emphasis on [i]death[/i].
I'm totally [s]~~crossed out~~[/s] by this.

- Listless I'm counting my [li]bullets[/li].

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[link]http://topwebfiction.com[/link].
[link=https://www.n.ot]clickbait[/link].

[quote]... me like my landlord! [/quote]

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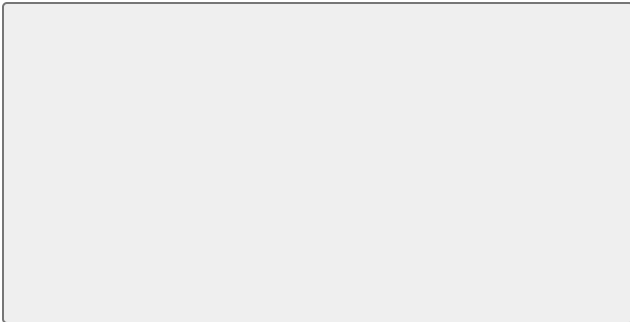
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Chapter 401 - 500

BCJ Chapter 419

Cargo Culture

by *BlossomTL*Black Corporation: Joseon

King Sejong explained why it was not possible.

“It’s not right to respond by unconditionally subjugating them without considering the consequences. Although they haven’t submitted yet, we ultimately need to bring them in as our Joseon people. Therefore, unconditional subjugation is not possible.”

As soon as King Sejong finished speaking, Jo Mal-saeng opened his mouth.

“The military also analyzes that subjugation is not a good option. The areas where railway theft mainly occurs are the land routes connecting to Dongbyeong Harbor. The forests in that area are dense, and there are climate issues, making a full-scale subjugation impossible.”

Jo Mal-saeng continued to explain why subjugation was difficult.

-Most of the tribes in this area connecting to Dongbyeong Harbor belong to the Udiha (Udege).

-The area where the Udiha tribes live is covered with primeval forests, unlike the Uriangkhai (Orankai, barbarian) areas we’re familiar with.

-In such primeval forest areas, cavalry is at an absolute disadvantage.

-To carry out proper subjugation, infantry must ultimately be deployed. However, we still haven't properly grasped the situation inside the maze-like primeval forests. Therefore, the size of the deployed forces needs to be larger than usual. According to military calculations, even mobilizing more than three times the usual force would make it difficult to achieve proper results.

-In particular, there are dangerous factors such as poisonous insects that our Joseon still doesn't know well, scattered throughout the primeval forests.

“...Therefore, if we need to deploy troops for subjugation, we must be prepared to invest more time than expected, deploy more troops than expected, and consume an enormous amount of war funds.”

When Jo Mal-saeng finished his explanation, all the ministers had the same thought.

‘If even the military, which only knows how to spend money, says such things, subjugation must be unreasonable.’

“However, if we continue to leave their theft unchecked, the construction period will keep extending, and costs will continue to increase...”

The Minister of Land Development trailed off, watching King Sejong's reaction. At the minister's statement, King Sejong nodded.

“Of course, a solution to that problem is needed. However, unconditional subjugation is not the only answer to this issue. Therefore, I want you to think about solutions to this.”

To this, Jo Mal-saeng spoke again.

“Lee Jing-ok, the Commander of Hamgil Province, has submitted a memorial regarding this. As a result of research by the military and the General Staff, it was deemed a very good idea, and we were about to report it to Your Majesty.”

At Jo Mal-saeng's report, King Sejong, after briefly searching his memory, looked at Jo Mal-saeng with eyes full of doubt.

“Is that so? Lee Jing-ok... He was a very capable general. But I know him to have been very harsh towards the Jurchens?”

‘The only good Jurchen is a dead Jurchen.’

This was what Lee Jing-ok had publicly said when he was deployed to the north during the early days of the reforms.

Lee Jing-ok, who spent his time fighting the Jurchens in the north as soon as he entered military service as a Gapsa (armored cavalry), and then again after passing the military examination, would grind his teeth at the mere mention of Jurchens.

Even King Sejong would mention Lee Jing-ok as the most extreme person.

Due to these memories and reputation, when King Sejong showed a dubious expression, Jo Mal-saeng answered with a smile.

“Haha! Your Majesty! Wonbong, that man has become much more lenient as time has passed and he's continued to interact with the Jurchens.”

“Is that so? Well then, let's hear what plan Lee Jing-ok has thought of.”

At King Sejong's words, Jo Mal-saeng explained the alternative proposed by Lee Jing-ok.

“The start is simple. They steal the railway tracks because they lack well-refined iron. What they make with the stolen tracks includes weapons, but also many daily necessities like axes, kitchen knives, and pots. We use this. That is...”

“A monopoly store?”

At King Sejong's interjection, Jo Mal-saeng paused for a moment before nodding.

“That’s correct, Your Majesty.”

“If they submit, they’ll be allowed to use the monopoly store, is that it?”

“We’ll let them use the monopoly store even if they don’t submit. However, there’s an additional condition. They patrol the area around the railway on our behalf and prevent theft of the tracks. Then we’ll grant them the qualification to trade at the monopoly store.”

“Trade... Not giving unconditionally, but granting the qualification to trade... That’s good.”

Nodding and giving a positive evaluation, King Sejong looked at Kim Jeom.

“What does the Minister of Finance and Economy think?”

“I think it’s a very good idea, Your Majesty!”

Nodding while hearing Kim Jeom’s very positive answer, King Sejong suddenly burst into laughter.

“Hah! Come to think of it... When it comes to dealing with outsiders, the monopoly store becomes the best solution. The monopoly store is truly a panacea. In my opinion, the Crown Prince’s greatest achievement is the monopoly store. What do you think?”

At King Sejong’s sudden bragging about his child, the ministers were momentarily dumbfounded but soon had no choice but to nod.

As King Sejong said, there were numerous problems solved using the monopoly store.

‘Suddenly bragging about his child... But with results like these...’

‘By the time the Crown Prince ascends to the throne, my own children should be in good positions... Sorry! You’ll have to work hard.’

And so, Lee Jing-ok's proposal was adopted. Upon hearing the story, Hyang soon showed a surprised expression.

“Lee Jing-ok, that extremist had such an idea?”

At Hyang's words, which were similar to King Sejong's evaluation, Choi Hae-san picked up the conversation.

“Wonbong, that man has experienced a lot and is very capable, so he must have changed.”

“Is that so?”

To Hyang's question, Choi Hae-san nodded.

“A truly excellent general never neglects to observe and understand the enemy. Wonbong, that friend has changed a lot while dealing with and carefully observing the Jurchens. Moreover, aren't there quite a few Jurchens under his command now?”

“Ah...”

At Choi Hae-san's words, Hyang nodded.

As Choi Hae-san said, Lee Jing-ok meticulously studied the customs and history of the Jurchens to deal with them as the powerful enemy right in front of him.

As he delved into the Jurchens in this way, Lee Jing-ok gradually began to change his exclusive thoughts.

In addition, as the number of submitted Jurchens increased and he saw more and more Jurchens working under his command, Lee Jing-ok began to study how to use carrots instead of sticks.

“Anyway, if we use this plan well, not only will we ensure the safety of the land route to Dongbyeong Harbor, but we'll also gain quite a bit of additional income. The Minister of Finance and Economy will be very pleased.”

At Hyang's last words, everyone present nodded simultaneously.

“In that sense, I should go and offer some advice for a moment.”

As Hyang said this and stood up, Choi Hae-san and the others also rose from their seats. As they saw Hyang off, they all had the same thought.

‘From today, some people will suffer, blaming their own heads.’

Whenever Hyang interfered, the relevant working-level staff had to struggle.

“What, are you trying to omit this part? Do you have any thoughts or not?”

Every time they received Hyang's criticism, the working-level staff had to work overtime, suffering from self-deprecation.

The plan, to which Hyang had added a bit of MSG, was soon implemented for the Jurchens in the relevant area.

-If you guard the railway being built to Dongbyeong Harbor on our behalf, we'll give you the right to use grain and the monopoly store.

-Being able to use the monopoly store means that the tribe can sell medicinal herbs, furs, etc. that they've gathered to the monopoly store and freely obtain necessary goods.

Joseon proposed this to tribes who, although not yet submitted, were friendly to Joseon and lived near the railway.

The tribal chiefs and elders who heard Joseon's proposal put their heads together.

“Should we accept Joseon's proposal?”

“Wouldn't it be good to accept? I hear there's nothing the Joseon-run monopoly store doesn't have.”

“Think about the Ming merchants and merchants from other tribes we trade with. When have they ever paid us fair prices?”

“But couldn’t we be backstabbed by Joseon if we’re not careful?”

“I hear that Joseon at least doesn’t break its word first.”

Although opinions varied among the tribes that received the proposal, the conclusion was to accept Joseon’s offer.

After all, Joseon was abundant in everything compared to their own tribes, which struggled to escape poverty no matter how hard they tried.

Thus, as the tribes near the railway came forward to protect it, construction began to pick up speed.

As the construction sites became active, nearby Jurchens unexpectedly gained opportunities to earn money. They began receiving wages by working as laborers at the sites.

With this earned money, the Jurchens became regulars at the monopoly stores.

“If we do this well...”

Seeing the performance charts steadily rising, the managers of the monopoly stores began to light up their eyes.

Although it was a monopoly store in a dangerous area that they had come to at the risk of their lives, performance was accumulating that could earn them bonuses and good work evaluations if they just pushed a little more.

The Jurchens who participated in the railway construction to Dongbyeong Harbor all came to have one question.

“But why are they laying this kind of road?”

It was a complicated and labor-intensive construction that meticulously prepared the foundation, laid gravel on top, and placed sleepers and rails.

Although they saw the sight of wagons pulled by horses nearly three times the size of their own horses coming on these rails and unloading materials, the Jurchens still tilted their heads in confusion.

“Of course, they’re enormously large wagons pulled by enormously large horses, but it doesn’t seem right to lay such a road just for those wagons to travel on?”

“Right?”

“Why on earth are they laying this kind of road?”

Unable to resolve their questions, the Jurchens made all sorts of speculations whenever they gathered in small groups.

And on the day the construction section was completed, the Jurchens found out what travels on those rails.

Wheeeeeeee!

The Jurchens standing around the railway scattered in terror at the sight of the huge iron mass approaching with a loud whistle.

“Kyaaaaah!”

“It’s a monster!”

“Run away!”

The terrified Jurchens screamed and scattered in all directions, and those whose legs gave out and couldn’t flee immediately prostrated themselves on the ground, clasping their hands above their heads.

“Oh, Buddha!”

Such commotions were repeated several times until the railway was connected to Dongbyeong Harbor and the iron horse began to run.

King Sejong, upon receiving reports of such commotions, chuckled at first but soon became serious and asked Hwang Hui:

“Do we have such incidents within our Joseon as well?”

“Although we hold ceremonies for safe operation, there have been no such commotions or shamanic rituals extorting wealth from the people.”

At Hwang Hui’s answer, King Sejong showed a relieved expression but didn’t forget to add a caution.

“Even seeing it directly, that iron horse and railway are hard to believe. We must pay attention to educate the people well so that no one comes out to deceive them. We must absolutely prevent a recurrence of the Dubaksin incident.”

At King Sejong’s caution, Hwang Hui bowed his head and answered.

“I will engrave it in my bones and mind!”

Last May, a truly bizarre incident occurred.

A man wrote the names of executed civil and military ministers on paper, tied them to poles, and called them ‘Dubaksin’.

‘Dubak’ means ‘to fall and die’, so Dubaksin literally meant resentful ghosts who fell and died.

Soon, wherever rumors spread, similar incidents occurred where people tied papers with names written on poles, held rituals, and offered sacrifices.

Seeing this scene of deception, the magistrate of Yongin, Jang-a, immediately confiscated and burned these poles and submitted a report.

Upon receiving the report, King Sejong immediately ordered a strict investigation, and soon Kang Yu-du, Park Du-eon, Choe U, and others were captured and punished. (Note 1)

Therefore, King Sejong, concerned that such incidents might occur again, ordered that they be strictly prevented.

Note 1) The Annals of King Sejong Read in One Volume. Written by Park Young-gyu. Woongjin Knowledge House

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