

## Last System 271

### Chapter 271 Storm Rages

A single problem plagued my ability to launch a huge number of bolts. I simply couldn't control all those attacks at once, making a huge number of them nothing more but a waste of my mana.

In turn, my inability severely limited the amount of mana per second that I could turn into damage to my enemies. But it all ended today.

'Let's see what those aiming stones are good for!' I thought, raising all the stuff I prepared within my Mage's Tower.

Anyway, so I started blasting.

Tatatata...

Even though the bolt launchers shouldn't produce any sound, seeing how each of the launchers started to heat up and produce its first attacks, my mind added the background music to the moment all on its own.

And before long, the slow, rhythmic beating speed up.

Titititi

The sounds quickly merged as my launchers reached their optimal speed of firing. And then, all the sounds merged into a single, continuous tone, turning the spray of my bolts into a single ray of oppressive energy.

And then, my first bolts struck the monster. It was the courtesy of the distance splitting the enemy and me apart, allowing my formations and launchers to reach their optimal efficiency before the first shot would reach its target.

'It's great that I don't need to control it at all,' I thought, raising my eyes at my launchers freely roaming through the space of the mage's tower to make themselves a harder target.

I then moved my eyes back on the monster, only to take a deep breath and hold it in.

The initial attack succeeded. It even managed to somehow shave off a considerable part of the monster's body... But that was the end of it.

By the time the real onslaught of my attacks started, this damned thing had found a way to defend itself against it.

It would stretch its pufferfish-like tendrils way beyond any reasonable distance. Some of those tendrils would end up destroyed by my bolts. But once one of them reached out far enough, the monster would channel itself through it, swapping places with the tip of said tendril nearly instantaneously.

'Fuck,' I thought, moving the focus of my attacks at the new position of the monster. Yet, by the time the first bolts arrived at the destination, the monster was already long gone to a new position, preparing itself to swap places yet again.

'Just showering it with magic won't work,' I thought. I then shook my head.

Thinking right now wasn't the greatest thing that I could do. It was a blessing that my current battle was relatively slow-paced, allowing me to think my next moves through.

But there was one question rocking around in my mind that made me unable to plan ahead at all.

'How come a part of it just vanished?'

This kind of reaction to my bolts was something that I could never expect.

Normally, when a monster's flesh would be struck with a bolt, the flesh would remain as it was... just in a different form. That's what being subjected to totally random physical rules would result in.

Yet, when my initial salvo reached the monster... It didn't corrupt its flesh. Rather than that, it shaved away at its body, as if the energy of the bolt and whatever this monster was made off canceled each other off.

'No, I don't have the time to think about it,' I told myself, slapping my own face with my left hand.

I moved my focus back on the monster.

For now, it was still pinned by my attacks, forced to keep relocating to avoid the barrage that followed each of his moves. But from the looks of things, the monster was getting better and better at reading the path of my bolts, giving itself more time to avoid them.

'Crafty fucker,' I thought, changing the directive of my attack. Yet, even with the speed of my bolts, it would take roughly two seconds for them to cover the distance splitting my adversary and me.

Only now, right when I changed how my bolts were firing, I noticed two things.

First off, surrounded by several bolt launchers, I felt like sitting in the middle of a bunker nest with several machineguns going off. Yet, that was the end of the fun parts, as I also noticed just how draining this kind of fighting was on my mana reserve.

Sure, I could keep going for several more hours at the current usage before I would tap my mana pool, but that proved something insanely important.

Even being an ascender, I still had my limits.

Limits that had to be sufficient right now for me to defeat this monster. Yet, while just how much energy I could infuse into a single attack remained an open question, I now had a ticking time limit to how long I could take to defeat this monster.

'Let's see how my new tactic will work,' I thought, keenly observing the changes of the battlefield.

The monster used the same tactic as before, steadily building up more and more time with each of its shifts. What started as a desperate attempt to avoid the damage now was a dance where the second I would start barraging one place, the monster would already be moving to another.

And then, the change to my attack pattern reached the battle.

"WRYYYYYYY"

The monster cried out when tens out of hundreds of the tendrils it was extending suddenly vanished, separated from its main body by my bolts.

That's right. Rather than targeting the monster itself, I targeted all its escape routes that I could calculate!

For the next few moments, my new move appeared to work. Yet, just like before, the monster wasn't just a stupid NPC prepared for me to fight off.

It was a real, living being. And as such, it was going to adapt to the situation just like I did.

'Huh?' I quickly noticed that my attack had now lost its effectiveness.

Sure, it was still shaving away at the monster's tendrils... But my enemy made it so that it didn't matter anymore. It would explode its entire body into tiny tendrils, each of them a sacrifice for my bolts. And amongst this sea of tentacles, a few of them would turn out way bigger and capable of resisting several strikes of my bolts.

And the monster then used those thicker tentacles it produced to keep moving around, refusing to stop playing this cat and mouse-like game.

'The strength of the bolts isn't sufficient,' I thought, observing how the situation on the battlefield changed.

Just like the monster could adapt to the changes of the battle, I could do the same.

'Let's try with some shatter stones then,' I thought, using a few more of my formation stones to create this new type of warding stone. But instead of using them as a completely new axis of attack, I simply mixed them into the salvo of the bolts while making sure to keep track of their movement.

'Shatter!' I thought when the attack reached one of the monster's main tentacles.

The stone cracked apart and then released all the energy stored inside.

Contrary to how the bolts would use their energy to turn the laws of the world into chaos, the shattered stone would release pure and unadulterated mana infused with nothing but my intent.

And from how this single attack nearly instantly cut off one of the seven main tentacles of the monster, it was a pretty good fit against my current enemy!

Yet, before a few moments passed, the number of the thick tentacles decreased to just three. And what was the bad part was how those tentacles were now too thick even for my shatterstone to cut through!

'God damnit!' I cursed. I could feel the strain on my brain caused by how rapidly I was supposed to change my tactics. But while that alone was still fine... for how long I could keep up coming up with new ways of fighting?

'I wonder if I'm even suited to be a mage with a mindset like this,' I grimly commented my own lack of ability before putting my focus back where it should be.

At least for a moment, the monster has yet to get used to my attacks. In other words, for at least a few moments longer, it was pinned to a place, unable to escape from the onslaught of my barrage.

'Should I draw it into the Mage's Tower area?' I asked myself, desperately looking for new ways to defeat this strange opponent of mine.

'Or rather, why is its body disappearing when in contact with my mana?' I asked myself the question that lingered in the back of my head for a while now.

Even though I didn't want to waste time analyzing this issue, I now realized that I would never be able to defeat this monster without knowing anything about it.

'Well, does it even matter?' I thought, shaking my head to the back and taking a deep breath. 'If it shaves away its own powers, then that's all I need to care about,' I decided, lowering my head and throwing a look at the monster.

So far, the fight didn't appear to have any plausible conclusion. I simply lacked any heavy-hitting spells that could make use of how I pinned this monster.

Sure, a barrage of small attacks was great on its own, but I needed to develop an attack worthy of my current cultivation stage!

'Well, before drawing it close, let's try one more thing,' I thought, once again changing the paradigm of my aiming stones, making all the launchers adjust to the new principle.

'Since you are so eager to dodge my attacks, let's see what happens when I target the places you want to escape to instead!'