

The Tower 115

Chapter 115: The Betrayal

The combat formation was a completely different field from magic barriers. No matter how skilled Lee Shin was, breaking the combat formation in a situation where one could not use mana was an impossible task.

‘I’ll need a little time.’

Lee Shin tried to maintain a calm expression as he observed the flow of the combat formation surrounding the space.

‘When did he start preparing this?’

An inexplicable force was preventing Lee Shin’s mana from moving. Lee Shin thought that it was impossible to create such a level of combat formation on the spot. That meant Zhuge Yun had predicted and prepared for this situation several days ago.

‘Ha...’

Lee Shin could not predict what Zhuge Yun had planned. Besides, it was surprising that Lee Shin had never heard of this guy in his past life.

‘It’s weird... because with this kind of ability, Zhuge Yun would have definitely risen to power in China.’

Lee Shin looked at Zhuge Yun with a relaxed expression, not showing any signs of surprise.

"They are all safe," Zhuge Yun replied.

"Are you sure?" Lee Shin asked.

"Yes, so please don't worry about them," said Zhuge Yun.

Lee Shin could not be sure whether Zhuge Yun was lying or not, but since he could leave this place and confirm it himself, Lee Shin just nodded.

"You seem very relaxed," said Zhuge Yun.

"Do I? Well... maybe I am," said Lee Shin.

Zhuce Yun's mouth twitched slightly at Lee Shin's veiled provocation.

"Well, then I'll see whether it's all just hot air or not," said Zhuge Yun.

The next moment, Zhuge Yun folded the fan he was holding and swung it diagonally.

Swish—

A blade of wind, emerging along the ends of the fan, flew toward Lee Shin's shoulder.

Bam—!

However, the blade of wind was stopped by a challenger from China and exploded without hitting its target.

"What are you doing? I don't think the conversation is over yet," the man accused Zhuge Yun.

"...Crushing the opponent's morale is another way of conversing," Zhuge Yun replied.

"What if it gets destroyed? Is there any meaning in that?" The man shot a glance at Zhuge Yun and turned his head to look at Lee Shin.

"You can't do anything now that you can't use mana. Do you want to live? Then come over to China. Then, we'll save the Korean challengers who are currently captured by us. Plus, you will be saved," said the man.

Lee Shin pretended as if he was lost in thought at the challenger's proposal.

"Is that so? If I cross over, I can live...?" Lee Shin asked.

"Wait! What are you doing? Why is China taking Lee Shin?" a challenger from the US shouted.

"Hey! Stay out of this! If Lee Shin wants to come over, he'll come over. What does America have to do with this?" said the challenger from China.

"Oh yeah? Lee Shin, come to America. We'll give you a better deal than China. There are already many Korean challengers who have crossed over to Meldeuren," said the American challenger with the Black Pattern who had come to support them.

Lee Shin's expression almost stiffened at those words, but Lee Shin managed to keep his cool. The Korean challengers who had crossed over to Meldeuren must have been desperate, seeing Merteng fall under the enemy's attacks.

What they were doing was as good as forcing the Korean challengers into slavery. China and the United States seemed no different from each other, talking about their proposal as if it were something to be proud of.

"There are also many Korean challengers in China. We can help you settle down in China with them and give you the same rights as the Chinese," the Chinese challenger offered.

China was being ridiculous. Their offer to a Korean challenger was to give them the same treatment as the Chinese? The Chinese had turned the Koreans into slaves and they were now telling Lee Shin to show some appreciation for making Lee Shin only a peasant.

After hearing this, for the first time, Lee Shin failed to control his expression. However, the man continued to raise his voice, seemingly unconcerned about Lee Shin's feelings.

"Don't talk nonsense. Do you know what happened to the Korean challengers who crossed over to China?" said the challenger from the United States.

"Shut up!" the challenger from China shouted.

After saying that, the Chinese challenger attacked suddenly. The American challenger was startled, but managed to block the attack.

"Do you think Meldeuren will ally with Bilone forever? Once Lee Shin joins us, there will be a war again between Meldeuren and Bilone." The change in the Chinese challenger's attitude shocked the American and he frowned.

It was a bold attitude as if China had already seized control of the situation. China thought that there was no one who could stop them from acting as they pleased.

"Hold on. This is not the time to fight with the United States. Maybe Lee Shin intended for this." Zhuge Yun tried to stop the fight.

"Killing the American here won't change the situation," said the challenger from China.

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"We never know, though. Why don't we first capture Lee Shin and—" Zhuge Yun could not finish his sentence.

"I'll make a contract," said Lee Shin.

With a nonchalant tone, Lee Shin interrupted Zhuge Yun, fully intending to make the situation worse.

"Did you just say, you'll make a contract...?"

"Yeah, if we make a contract, can you trust me?" Lee Shin asked.

Zhuge Yun's expression stiffened, knowing that they had no choice but to trust if Lee Shin put it like that.

"So, who are you going to make a contract with?" asked the Chinese challenger, who stopped in his tracks.

Lee Shin's gaze shifted to the American challenger.

"I wanted to make a contract with the United States, but their abilities are not as great as I thought. Is this all you can do? I didn't think you would be so foolish," said Lee Shin.

"If you don't know anything, shut up," said the challenger from America.

"What don't I know? Can you get me out of here? If you can, let's make a contract right away. I prefer the United States, but if there's no hope, I'll have to go to China," said Lee Shin.

The American challenger had a complicated look on his face. The Chinese challenger glared at the two of them, gritting his teeth.

"What you can d—"

"We can get you out of here. If you make a contract right now, we'll sweep these Chinese guys and take you to Meldeuren. We'll also rescue the Korean challengers who have been captured," said the American challenger.

Lee Shin smiled at his words.

"Really? Then show me what you can do. I'll make a contract right away," said Lee Shin.

"Alright," the American challenger replied.

"Ha! What can you do alone? You're a guy who can't even use mana," said the Chinese challenger.

At those words, the gaze of the American challenger turned cold.

"Do you think you're the only ones with artifacts?" the American challenger said.

The American challenger pulled out a giant greatsword that was wrapped in black cloth from behind his back. When Zhuge Yun saw that, his eyes widened.

"Oh shit!" Zhuge Yun frantically swung his fan, but the sword had already been thrust into the ground and the wind that Zhuge Yun had sent out disappeared as it collided with the sword.

Wooong—

"Connect," said the American challenger.

As he spoke, a fierce wind arose surrounding the sword, and a portal began to materialize in front of it.

"What, what is that!"

"It's a mythological weapon called [Burtgang]. It's said that if the user has the ability to wield this weapon, they can connect with all dimensions," the American challenger explained.

"How did you guys get hold of such an artifact?" the Chinese challenger shouted.

"It's not the challenger who has it, but the United States," said Zhuge Yun.

Zhuge Yun watched as people walked out from the portal. After about twenty people emerged, the portal closed. The American, a Qualified with the Black Pattern, sat down as if he was exhausted.

"What happened? Ren?" a woman with her long yellow hair tied up asked Ren, the American challenger.

"China betrayed us. And Lee Shin said that he would make a contract with the United States if we can get him out of this situation," Ren explained.

"Really?" the woman asked.

The woman looked at Lee Shin, who had a calm expression on his face.

"Is it true?" the woman asked Lee Shin.

"Yes," Lee Shin replied.

"Then make the contract," said the woman.

"Um, I think you guys are mistaken. No Chinese challengers have fallen yet. Do you think China will be pushed back just because you guys showed up?" Lee Shin asked.

"Well, now that we're here, the situation is considered over," said the woman.

The woman seemed annoyed that she had to explain the obvious, but she forced herself to hold back and explained to Lee Shin. Upon her words, Lee Shin looked at the twenty people around her.

Each of them was wearing similar weapons and equipment.

"If mana doesn't work, there's nothing as important as equipment," said Lee Shin.

"That guy has an artifact."

"Ha." The woman laughed loudly at Lee Shin's words and reached out into the air. A shimmering silver sword appeared on her previously empty hand with a flash of light.

'Is that Misteltein?'

Lee Shin chuckled at the familiar sight of the sword. Lee Shin never thought he would be able to see two American artifacts here. The woman charged toward Zhuge Yun, and the rest of the American challengers rushed toward the Chinese challengers.

Although the Chinese challengers were greater in number, the individual abilities of the American challengers were superior. Armed with armors and weapons, they were stronger than the Chinese challengers in a situation where they could not use mana.

"You must be Selena, right?" Zhuge Yun, who was blocking her attack, asked.

"Who are you? I've never seen you before," replied the woman named Selena.

"My name is Zhuge Yun. Hahaha."

Even in a situation where the odds had been reversed, Zhuge Yun still laughed. Selena narrowed her eyes.

'What is that fan?'

Her Misteltein was a weapon that handled light attributes. However, the opponent's fan was not easy to deal with, as each swing sent forth an attack of a different attribute.

Rumble— Crack!

A lightning bolt struck from the sky. Selena was pushed back by a sudden lightning strike and lost her opportunity to deal a blow. The ground shook and the wind came rushing toward her, as if the forces of nature were also helping Zhuge Yun and targeting Selena. Until now, Zhuge Yun had not moved from his spot.

'He's quite good.'

Selena gripped her sword even tighter. Lee Shin observed the abilities of the artifacts as he watched the fight between the United States and China. Seeing it in person was completely different from watching it on video, and Lee Shin thought that there was a need to understand those artifacts in detail.

'It's a showdown between the Plantain Fan and Misteltein.'

Both Zhuge Yun and Selena were quite skilled in using their artifacts. The Plantain Fan was known to be quite difficult to use, yet Zhuge Yun was displaying a great mastery of it. Since the use of mana was blocked, the two faced each other with their artifacts and mustered all the strength they had. Their combat powers were decreasing rapidly, but the battle between the two was still tense.

"Light, come forth!" Selena shouted.

As she lifted the sword, light shot down from the sky and penetrated the American challengers. It was Misteltein's ability to imbue light attributes into weapons. With that ability, the odds of victory were leaning more and more toward the United States. Lee Shin felt it was time for him to step in.

"Where are the challengers of Merteng and Lantan that you captured, Zhuge Yun?" Lee Shin asked.

While Selena was briefly in a subdued state, unable to break through Zhuge Yun's defense, Lee Shin spoke to Zhuge Yun. When Selena saw that, she did not interfere but rested for a moment.

"Why should I tell you? You're going to join the United States anyway. We would rather kill them than send them to the enemy," said Zhuge Yun.

"The contract hasn't been made yet," Lee Shin said.

Upon hearing that, Selena's expression momentarily distorted, but she decided to observe the situation a little more.

"I think I made it clear that I wanted to join a country that can show me their abilities well," Lee Shin said and looked at Selena.

"What is it that you want to say?" Selena asked Lee Shin.

"Did you know that Zhuge Yun didn't even move a step from his spot despite your continuous attacks?" Lee Shin said to Selena.

Upon hearing that, Selena's expression changed, and Zhuge Yun looked at Lee Shin with surprise.

"I get that your abilities are better shown in a team environment. But, even if your comrades win, if you can't beat Zhuge Yun, you will be losing the fight," Lee Shin said.

"What are you talking about! Why would I lose? Do you think this is all I have?" Selena shouted at Lee Shin.

"Then show me. If you can make Zhuge Yun move even one step, I'll sign the contract with the United States immediately," Lee Shin said.

Selena's lips trembled at Lee Shin's provocation. Her pride was hurt and her aura changed.

"I'll make you regret saying those words, Lee Shin. Did you say one step? I'll do you one better and erase Zhuge Yun from this world," said Selena, glaring at Lee Shin.

A bright, white light began to ripple above Misteltein. At the same time, Zhuge Yun, who sensed the danger, pulled out an old book from his arms.

'The book on the Eight Formations Chart...?'

Lee Shin's mouth slightly opened with surprise at the sight of the book on the Eight Formations Chart. Now, it was clear why Zhuge Yun appeared to be so calm even with Selena's appearance. In fact, Lee Shin could finally understand how such a challenger from a relatively low floor could use such a high-level combat formation.

'I can't believe he had obtained the Plantain Fan as well as the book on the Eight Formations Chart... The usage of the book requires a whole different level compared to the Plantain Fan though...'

Just like Lee Shin had assumed, Zhuge Yun was unable to properly utilize the ability of the book on the Eight Formations Chart, not even ten percent. That was why Zhuge Yun did not want to reveal this skill, especially not in front of Lee Shin.

'Lee Shin probably knows about the ability of the Plantain Fan already. Besides, there is a good chance he already knows about the Eight Formations Chart as well.'

Zhuce Yun knew that there was no other way. Since Lee Shin was unable to use mana, Zhuge Yun thought he should first deal with the challengers from the United States and think about his future plans afterward.

The next moment, Zhuge Yun's book on the Eight Formations Chart unfolded in his hands. At the same time, Selena's wrist twisted, and Misteltein drew a circle in the air.

[Judgment of Light]

As the light formed a circle and left an afterimage, a white flash of light shot inwards from its perimeter. Selena, who had been laughing as if Zhuge Yun would surely fall with that one blow, suddenly frowned.

The pages of the book on the Eight Formations Chart flipped and stopped at a page with unknown letters and pictures, emitting light.

"Compromise!" Zhuge Yun shouted.

As Zhuge Yun shouted, the beam of light suddenly changed its direction and shot toward the sky. Despite the unbelievable phenomenon, Selena did not give up and shot a beam of light again. Zhuge Yun was already sweating and nervously staring at the light in front of him.

[Stone Flip]

At that moment, Zhuge Yun lost his balance as the ground beneath his feet suddenly rumbled and turned over.

"Keugh...!" Zhuge Yun gasped.

Zhuce Yun could not understand what was going on. With a look of confusion, Zhuge Yun hastily tried to focus on his Eight Formations Chart again, but it was futile.

Baaamm—!

The light attack had swept over Zhuge Yun, pushing him backward and leaving him gasping for air.

"Ha... ha..." Zhuge Yun was out of breath.

For the first time, Zhuge Yun was shaken, which was understandable. To maintain this combat formation, he had to make himself its pivot.

'My mana is returning.'

Lee Shin started to laugh when he realized that his guess was correct. Stone Flip was a spell that flipped the ground over, but its effect was quite small, only affecting a small area. Lee Shin barely managed to move a small amount of mana and sent the mana under Zhuge Yun's feet.

Although it was a weak spell that could only be used once, its effect was certain and the result was great. Zhuge Yun frantically tried to maintain his central axis, but it was no use.

"How on earth...?" Zhuge Yun muttered in disbelief.

"I mean... I have a lot of questions to ask you, but there's no time for that," Lee Shin replied.

The next moment, Lee Shin could sense that the mana began to be constricted again. Lee Shin could feel the power of the Eight Formations Chart and realized that unless he completely destroyed the combat formation or killed Zhuge Yun, who had become its axis, Lee Shin would not be able to escape from this shackle.

However, now that Lee Shin's mana had returned, it was not that difficult for Lee Shin to break this combat formation.

[Summoning of the World of Death]

With the power of death, an indescribably formidable world began to descend upon the combat formation that had trapped them.

"What... is this?" Startled, Zhuge Yun's eyes opened wide.

Zhuge Yun had never heard that Lee Shin possessed such an ability.

'The combat formation is...!'

The combat formation was destroyed in an instant. After that, Lee Shin's mana began to return to him at a rapid pace. A sense of impending doom filled Zhuge Yun. And Selena felt the same way.

[Shadow Space]

Lee Shin's shadow was enlarged, and the undead crawled up from it.

"I'll ask you again. Where are my kids?" Lee Shin asked, glaring at Zhuge Yun.

