

The Tower 124

Chapter 124: The Pestilence King

Zhuge Yun walked outside the Bilone Base that was located in the Purple Zone slowly, trying to organize his thoughts and stroking his chin. He was mumbling to himself.

"What the hell is in these bastards' minds?" Zhuge Yun muttered.

Zhuge Yun's escort nodded in agreement.

"There are many Qualified who have lost their spot in the combat forces because of the recent fight," said the escort.

"Ugh, he's an old man with too much ambition," Zhuge Yun muttered again.

Last time, while trying to recapture a new base, they suffered great losses from a surprise attack by the Solo Digit of the Fifth Demon Corps. Even if the people had been properly prepared for the fight, the chances of them winning would be low. However, since they were not prepared for such a surprise attack, there were even more casualties.

"Since they had suffered such great losses, do you think it is logical to face the Fifth Demon Corps head-on, again?" Zhuge Yun asked his escort.

"I don't understand it either," the escort replied.

"Of course we can't understand him. He's just obsessed with accumulating achievements and merit points for himself, regardless of how many people die under him," said Zhuge Yun.

Zhuge Yun's eyes, full of hatred, turned somewhere else in the base. Then he raised his fan to block the sun and frowned at the light that was still spreading around him.

"Just like we can't block sunlight no matter how hard we try, one can't hide his own greed. Tsk," Zhuge Yun muttered.

"It's almost time for the meeting," said the escort.

"Alright, let's get going. I'll have to think about how to squash these bugs that are slowly eating up the country," said Zhuge Yun.

Zhuge Yun had already agreed with Lee Shin on what to say. Zhuge Yun went into the conference room, hiding his bitter smile behind the fan.

"Now that everyone's here, let's start the meeting."

Several leaders of Bilone had gathered in the conference room. This matter was important enough for all of them to convene. After a few brief reports before the main issue, Wang Wang Zhaoren spoke up.

"They say the Demon Corps coming here was detected this time, right?" Wang Wang Zhaoren asked.

"Yes, that's right. It seems that the remnants of the Third Demon Corps are also joining hands with the Fifth Demon Corps to become the main force."

"Now is the time to kill the Solo Digit. With Bilone's power, we are more than capable of killing those," said Wang Wang Zhaoren.

Zhuge Yun stepped forward, frowning at Wang Wang Zhaoren's confident words.

"Don't you remember that our Qualified had died because of the reckless mission you commissioned last time against the Solo Digit?" Zhuge Yun said, looking at Wang Wang Zhaoren. He frowned after hearing Zhuge Yun's retort.

"Well, that was because it was a surprise attack. Are you really that scared of the demons?" Wang Wang Zhaoren smirked at Zhuge Yun.

"When the Fifth and the Third Demon Corps join forces, there is a high chance that two or more Solo Digits will come. Besides, there will be a higher chance of other name-class demonic beasts coming," Zhuge Yun replied.

"Tsk, this guy is pretending to be so smart... China is the strongest country in the world! Even now, our entire military force is gathering here, and you think we can't beat one Demon Corps and another half-broken one? If you're so scared, why don't you beg that Lee Shin guy for help and ask for reinforcements?" Wang Wang Zhaoren laughed at Zhuge Yun.

The scornful laughter toward Zhuge Yun could be heard throughout the conference room. Since Zhuge Yun's faction had not grown large yet, the people were easily swayed by Wang Wang Zhaoren's words.

'Having all of these fools at such high positions in the country is the problem...'

Zhuge Yun, who was sneering, spoke up, not caring what others thought about him.

"There was communication with Merteng," said Zhuge Yun.

At Zhuge Yun's words, people's attention was instantly focused on him. Communication with Merteng had been centered around Zhuge Yun. These people knew that the Third Demon Corps had been broken up because Zhuge Yun leaked that information.

"Just like you have said a moment ago, Mr. Wang Wang Zhaoren, I requested support from Lee Shin. So, he will probably come here just in time for the clash with the Demon Corps," said Zhuge Yun.

The atmosphere in the conference room changed in an instant. Lee Shin's arrival was not something they could take lightly. Wang Wang Zhaoren's expression also changed.

"What? How could you do that? Why would you ask for help from a challenger of such a small country?" Wang Wang Zhaoren shouted at Zhuge Yun.

"Yeah, I agree with Wang Wang Zhaoren. Why did you do that without consulting with us—"

"Well, think about it. If we clash head-on with the Demon Corps, the combat power of Bilone will surely decrease rapidly. Shouldn't we cut our losses?" Zhuge Yun asked the people gathered at the conference room.

The people started to exchange opinions with serious expressions. Wang Wang Zhaoren also listened to the opinions of those around him and changed his expression.

"Now that I think about it, that's a good point. Since we have a chance to deal with someone who will become a nuisance to China, let's take care of him now that we have the chance," said Wang Wang Zhaoren.

"Does that mean you'll kill him?" Zhuge Yun asked with his eyebrows furrowed.

"Yeah, hahaha! We'll just pretend like we're dealing with the war, and send Lee Shin off to the Demon Corps' stronghold. Then they'll destroy each other. After that, our great army will sweep away both Lee Shin and the Demon Corps."

"No, that's a dangerous idea."

As Zhuge Yun voiced his opposition, a smile crept up on Wang Wang Zhaoren's lips.

"Did you say 'dangerous'? Wouldn't it only be dangerous for you? Because you have been secretly trying to get close with Lee Shin," said Wang Wang Zhaoren.

"Who said I was trying to get close to Lee Shin? I hope you don't say such unpleasant things," Zhuge Yun replied.

"Hahaha! Then you can agree to this amazing plan, can't you? Even if it fails, Lee Shin can't blame us. If we say reinforcements have arrived late, what can he say about that?" Wang Wang Zhaoren asked.

"But if our core forces aren't quickly deployed, many people will die," said Zhuge Yun.

"Well, there's nothing we can do about that. It's inevitable that we have to make small sacrifices to achieve the bigger goal," Wang Wang Zhaoren replied.

Zhuge Yun glanced at the others for their reactions. Those who were neutral had stiff looks on their faces, but those on Wang Wang Zhaoren's side were obviously supportive of his proposal and seemed to be the opinion leaders. Zhuge Yun gritted his teeth and lowered his head.

"Alright then. Please proceed as planned," said Zhuge Yun.

"Good, this will be the best choice for us," said Wang Wang Zhaoren.

Zhuge Yun went to his office after the meeting and slammed his desk with his fist.

"An old man with such greed!" Zhuge Yun shouted.

"Please calm down."

Zhuge Yun took several deep breaths, then sat down and stroked his chin.

"Wait a second... If you think about it, it's actually a good opportunity," said Zhuge Yun.

"What do you mean?"

"Lee Shin is a challenger who has many achievements to his name as he climbed the tower. What will I get if I kill him? Won't I become known for being even more superior to such an accomplished man?" Zhuge Yun asked.

"I see.... So, that's why you agreed so easily to Wang Wang Zhaoren's plan."

"Yes, I must go to the battlefield myself. Be careful not to let that old man catch on," said Zhuge Yun.

"Yes sir."

"With the [Heshis' Glasses], I can find Lee Shin no matter where he is in the chaotic battlefield. I'll go and kill him as soon as he becomes tired," said Zhuge Yun.

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The next moment, Zhuge Yun took the glasses out of his pocket and smirked.

Meanwhile, Wang Wang Zhaoren was in his office, but his room was surrounded by an invisible barrier.

-... I'll go and kill him as soon as he becomes tired.

On Wang Wang Zhaoren's table laid a small conch shell. And from that small conch shell, Zhuge Yun's voice was flowing out.

"Hahaha, that fool. He doesn't even know he's being spied on." Wang Wang Zhaoren laughed.

"I knew it from the moment he agreed to our plans so easily. He was hiding his true intentions, as expected," the adviser said.

"His intentions are obvious. This conch shell is not just using an ordinary wiretapping device, but it also absorbs sound waves from the walls. He'll never be able to imagine I'm using such a device," Wang Wang Zhaoren said.

"Now that you know what he's actually thinking, what are you going to do about him?" the adviser asked.

"Well, I'll pretend to go along with him and then take his Heshis' Glasses and kill Lee Shin. If possible, I'll get Zhuge Yun himself as well," said Wang Wang Zhaoren.

"But if you do that, you'll have to enter the battlefield," the adviser said with a worried look.

"Don't worry, as long as I stay close to Zhuge Yun, I'll be safe. Besides, that guy won't be able to do anything to me overtly," said Wang Wang Zhaoren.

Wang Wang Zhaoren smiled, satisfied that everything worked out as he had planned.

The people of Merteng and Lantan decided to send a few selected people to move to the Purple Zone. The Veil Recapture Team consisted of only six people—keeping a small team was to avoid being noticed by the demons.

"Did they all really run away?" Baek Hyun, who was participating in the recapture operation, shook his head as he noticed fewer demons than expected on their way to the gorge.

Baek Hyun and the team arrived at the destination too easily, when they had expected it to be a rough journey.

"Still, there should be guys stationed at Veil," Kanoko suggested.

Inyuu expressed his agreement. "Right, it's not good to let our guard down, no matter whether Lee Shin is there or not."

Baek Hyun laughed at Inyuu. "It's funny that you're the one talking about letting our guard down." Inyuu's expression changed.

"When did I let my guard down?!" Inyuu shouted.

Han Sang-Hyun stopped them from fighting. "Stop it, we're at the gorge now."

As they looked at the bottom of the gorge, there seemed to be a huge number of demons. Besides, there was also a name-class demonic beast among them.

"Get on. I'll take care of the name-class, so you guys can just focus on finding the mana stone," Lee Shin said.

With those words, Lee Shin brought the Skeleton Crows out from the Shadow Space. They had to ride the Crows to go down the cliff.

Han Sang-Hyun got on the Skeleton Crow without hesitation. This time, there was a certain level of comfort in his expression, as if riding it once before had helped.

"Are you sure this is okay?" Park Hye-Won asked with a worried look.

"This seems like fun."

Park Hye-Won climbed onto the Skeleton Crow with a worried expression, clutching the bones of the creature as there was nothing else to grab onto.

"Let's go."

Lee Shin, skillfully controlling the Skeleton Crow, descended the cliff first. Han Sang-Hyun, Baek Hyun, and Park Hye-Won followed suit. Then, Inyuu and Kanoko descended after them.

"Aaaahhhh!" Inyuu screamed, shocked by the speed he was experiencing for the first time in his life.

"Master, stay focused!" Kanoko opened her eyes wide, waiting for the right timing to get off.

Han Sang-Hyun, who was in front of her, demonstrated the right timing.

Thud—!

The Skeleton Crow landed on the ground, using one of the demonic beasts as a landing pad. The other four also landed around Han Sang-Hyun. A group of demonic beasts rushed toward them, which caused the tension that had been eased slightly to suddenly increase again.

"Damn, there are a lot of them," Baek Hyun, who had come down from the Skeleton Crow, grumbled and drew his sword.

Kyaaahhhh!

The demonic beasts screamed as they rushed toward the group.

Swoosh—!

Baek Hyun's sword sliced the demonic beast's neck. It was not difficult. By now, small demonic beasts like these were hardly a threat to them.

"Can you take me back up please?" Park Hye-Won saw the demons flocking toward her and spoke to Skeleton Crow.

While she was unsure if the Crow had understood her, it flapped its wings and lifted off into the air, and she grabbed onto its feet. Park Hye-Won arrived at the top of the tallest building and scanned the gorge below.

Flying-type demonic beasts hid all over the cliffs, and demons were gathered at the far end of the gorge. She could not see many name-class demonic beasts, but there were many lower-class demons that kept pouring in.

'Are they trying to tire us out?'

Rumble— Crack!

At that moment, Park Hye-Won turned her gaze toward the direction where the loud sound of a thunderbolt came from. She saw that the number 26 demon, who had been protecting this place, was in a battle against Lee Shin. To be more exact, Lee Shin was practically thrashing him.

The demon, which looked like a T-Rex with a large head and sharp claws but relatively small hands and feet, charged toward Lee Shin with its ferocious teeth, trying to bite him. When Lee Shin jumped from a tree and ran away, the dinosaur-like demonic beast tore the tree apart with its teeth.

How powerful its biting force was. If anyone was bitten by those teeth even once, their bodies would be torn into pieces. However, even such menacing power was useless if the demonic beast could not get close to its opponent.

[Thunderbolt]

A bolt of lightning struck down from the sky following the movement of Lee Shin's fingers. It pierced through the thick skin of the demonic beast, electrocuting it.

"Kaaaahhh!" The demonic beast opened its mouth wide and screamed in agony, writhing in pain.

[Psychokinesis]

[Steel Plate]

[Penetration]

[Torque]

A while ago, because of the demonic beast's teeth, a branch of a tree was broken off. Lee Shin used his mana to sharpen the end of the branch and it turned into a spear of sorts. Then he threw it into the open mouth of the dinosaur-like demonic beast.

Lee Shin had covered the tree branch with steel and added more rotational and penetrating power to it. The demonic beast tried to bite and break the tree branch apart, but it was useless.

Crack—!

The branch, wrapped around with steel, burst out from the back of the demonic beast's head.

[You have defeated Dualcarss.]

[Your merit points have increased by 35,000.]

When Lee Shin clenched his fist in the air and then pulled back, the large tree branch stuck in the mouth of the fallen Dualcarss was extracted. At the same time, Lee Shin's black mana wrapped around Dualcarss.

"Get up and sweep away the rest," Lee Shin ordered.

The Undead Dualcarss, made of bone and decaying flesh, stood up. It took only a few minutes for Dualcarss to become Undead. Park Hye-Won was amazed as she watched that scene from afar.

"I heard that he caught Belzark... but I can't believe what he just did," Park Hye-Won muttered.

When Lee Shin killed his enemies, they became part of Lee Shin's combat forces. He was already unbelievably strong considering only his own magical ability, but he also could use the summoning spells of a necromancer. That was why many people felt his existence was simply unfair.

Who would dare to challenge Lee Shin? He had only climbed up to the 28th floor so far, but Lee Shin was so strong that there seemed to be no worthy opponent for him below the 50th floor.

'I need to get stronger, too.'

There was no need for Park Hye-Won to feel discouraged by Lee Shin, because he was in an entirely different league. She just had to accept that fact.

Woong—

At that moment, something quickly passed by Park Hye-Won's side. It was a swordsman holding a black sword and emitting black mana.

Bang—!

As the black sword struck the ground, dozens of demonic beasts instantly disappeared.

‘Wow... Right... Master also had Belzark...’

When Belzark was her enemy, it was terrible and terrifying, but now that Belzark was an ally, he gave her a lot of confidence. The fight ended with the victory of the Veil Recapture team.

Even though they were few in number, the skills of this elite group made up of the Qualified of Merteng were exceptional. Even without Lee Shin, it would not have been difficult for these people to recapture this place. Sonoda's reinforcements, who thought that the recapture would not take long, arrived shortly after.

"Now we'll organize a few things and make Veil into a citadel," said Sonoda.

Lee Shin thought something was suspicious in Sonoda's words.

"It feels like you're sacrificing too much for the sake of Merteng," Lee Shin muttered.

Both the reinforcements of the Navy Zone and the Veil of the Purple Zone would belong to Merteng. Although they were part of an alliance which centered around Merteng, Lantan was still sacrificing too much. Sonoda noticed that Lee Shin was suspicious of her intentions so she smiled faintly.

"I'm just trying to correct the mistakes that I made in the past. It's not a bad investment for the future," said Sonoda.

"We'll have to wait and see if that's true or not," Lee Shin replied coldly.

"Alright, you'll see at the end," Sonoda said.

There was no hesitation in her.

"This area is cleared. Where are the other Demon Corps?" Lee Shin asked Sonoda.

"There's a base of Stan not too far from here. They were completely wiped out by the Fifth Demon Corps in a recent attack. Maybe the remnants of the Fifth Demon Corps are still there," Sonoda said.

"No, but remnants are useless," Lee Shin replied.

"They aren't. Why would they attack Stan's small base before the battle with Bilone? Although the main offense for the Fifth Demon Corps has escaped, quite a lot of their troops are still there," Sonoda said.

Listening to Sonoda's words, Lee Shin was lost in his thoughts momentarily

"Could it be... the Pestilence King?" Lee Shin asked Sonoda.

"Yes, that's right. Since half of the Third Demon Corps was wiped out because of us, the other half would join forces with the Fifth Demon Corps to kill Bilone; and in the meantime, the Pestilence King will try to reproduce the lost troops at Stan's base," Sonoda explained.

Thinking about the name Pestilence King, Lee Shin frowned. That was because Lee Shin remembered he had no choice but to let him go earlier.

"Didn't you say you'll be going to Bilone? What do you think about killing the Pestilence King before going to Bilone?" Sonoda asked Lee Shin.

"Yeah, I think that's a good idea. It's best to kill the potential threat quickly," Lee Shin said with determination.