

The Tower 130

Chapter 130: Belial

Clark maintained a stoic expression even in the face of Lee Shin's threat. It seemed like he would calmly accept his death if Lee Shin were to order it. Lee Shin withdrew his black mana, looking at Clark's reaction.

Lee Shin didn't know if Clark had anticipated this and acted accordingly, but it wasn't like he really wanted to destroy Meldeuren. Clark spoke up upon noticing the change in his mood.

"We have nothing to say, but the public's opinion differs," said Clark.

"The public? Do you really think there is a public in the Tower? Or are you trying to force Earth's values on us?" Lee Shin asked Clark.

"No, Sir. However, you are wrong to assume there is no public in the tower. We are all residents of the Tower and, therefore, the public. Even if power reigns supreme in the Tower, there is still a certain line that should not be crossed," said Clark.

Clark took a sip of tea from his cup on the table.

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"For example, those who follow you, Mr. Lee Shin, are all from Earth. Therefore, their values and ideals are ultimately a product of Earth. It will be difficult for you to ignore those values as long as you care about them." Clark spoke as if he was untouchable thanks to other humans.

"Is that supposed to be a threat? What are you so confident about?" Lee Shin asked Clark.

"It's not a threat. It's just my personality. I simply think that this person, Lee Shin, likely really cares about public perception," said Clark.

"And why is that?" Lee Shin asked again.

"I believe you are fundamentally a person with human ethics. Although you were born in the Tower, your behavior matches that of someone born on Earth," said Clark.

"I have never said I was born in the tower," said Lee Shin.

"Then, are you really Korean?" Clark asked Lee Shin.

Clark's eyes gleamed sharply. He might not learn much from Lee Shin's reaction, but it would still be valuable information. Lee Shin laughed, realizing Clark's intention.

"Yes, I am Korean," Lee Shin replied.

"R-really?" Clark's pupils widened.

"Even if I say it's true, would you believe it?" Lee Shin asked again.

At that question, Clark's trembling pupils gradually became normal. Lee Shin was right. The veracity of this information, provided by Lee Shin, could be confirmed by one person only: Lee Shin himself. Since Clark could not discern the truth, there was no way to confirm it.

"I guess that was a meaningless question," said Clark.

Clark took another sip of his tea.

"Anyway, in my opinion, you are not much different from the humans on Earth," said Clark.

"I've killed many people," Lee Shin replied coldly.

"I think that was inevitable. Even in those situations, there were some lines that you didn't cross. Typically, the norm for humans from other dimensions differs from Earth challengers," said Clark.

"..." Lee Shin did not say anything after that.

Lee Shin wanted to stop arguing with him. Conversations like this with Clark would only lead to passing information to him. Therefore, he finished his tea and coldly stared at Clark.

"Let's get to the point. Where is the devil?" Lee Shin asked Clark directly.

"I don't know," Clark replied.

Swoosh—

"Keugh...!" Clark gasped.

Lee Shin had abruptly extended his mana and grabbed Clark's neck. Clark couldn't move from his place, so he glared at Lee Shin with bloodshot eyes. His veins bulged out as he groaned.

"If I only had that morality, I wouldn't have killed you here," said Lee Shin.

"Keugh... Kek...?Please... listen... to... me... ugh..." Clark barely managed to speak.

Lee Shin stopped using Psychokinesis, and Clark gasped for breath and grabbed his throat. Clark quickly downed his tea and then slowly opened his mouth with a red face.

"Krk... The two people who knew the devil's location disappeared," said Clark.

"Even so, I don't think it makes sense that Meldeuren did not ask them about the demon's location in advance," Lee Shin replied.

"All we know is that the devil is hiding in De Gret Dale. After traveling away from the location, the two people simply forgot the location." Clark tried to explain and convince Lee Shin.

Lee Shin furrowed his eyebrows at those words.

"Then how did they find the devil again?" Lee Shin asked Clark.

"Their memory returned whenever the devil wanted. However, the system was set up so that these challengers could not talk about it."

Clark hung his head down in dismay.

"We could not even send other people behind them because every member on the first team we sent died. The devil denied entry to everyone. The ones who followed those two challengers closely to negotiate were also treated the same way. Consequently, we couldn't even discuss the current situation," Clark explained.

"Hmm... De Gret Dale. I'll have to go there then," Lee Shin touched his lips and muttered.

"Are you going there alone?" Clark asked.

"Yes," Lee Shin replied.

"I'll have a guide go with you. There's someone who knows the geography of De Gret Dale to some extent," said Clark.

Lee Shin nodded.

"Also, I have one last request for you. Could you please keep this promise?" Lee Shin asked Clark.

"A request...? What is it?" Clark asked Lee Shin.

"Well..." Lee Shin started talking about his last request.

Lee Shin arrived at De Gret Dale with the guide Clark had provided. There was no point in trying to explore the vast Gret Dale, so the guide took him deep inside from the get-go.

"This place is almost untouched by humans. People in Meldeuren think it's because of the devil," explained the guide.

The deeper one went inside, the more powerful the demons they had to face. In addition, there were countless reports of people getting lost and disappearing while wandering around, so many people simply gave up on exploring this place altogether.

"But I think it should be fine if I'm with you, Mr. Lee Shin. I saw you at the Valley of Despair a few hours ago!" the guide said.

"Oh, is that so?" Lee Shin asked back.

"Yes, you are truly amazing!" exclaimed the guide, pressing herself tightly against Lee Shin.

Lee Shin pushed her away with his arm.

"Oh, I'm sorry. Anyway, it's a great opportunity for me to go inside without fear," the guide muttered.

The guide moved slightly away from him and started guiding again. He clicked his tongue as he watched her. Even though Clark had mentioned that he would send a guide to Lee Shin, how many people in Meldeuren weren't familiar with the geography of De Gret Dale?

A single glance was enough to say that this woman was a beauty. She actively spoke to him but also wasn't burdensome. Lee Shin guessed that this, too, was per Clark's instruction.

"Wow... there's a valley in a place like this?" said the guide. After passing a dangerous slope, they came across a valley.

Lee Shin did not hear her words because he was too focused on what was inside the valley. Before she had even entered the valley, Lee Shin's was already darting through it.

"The Demon Realm," Lee Shin muttered.

After walking for a while, they came across a sharp cliff towering over a small cave beneath it. The cave was shrouded in a thick blanket of black fog.

"Oh my. Is that...?" the guide asked Lee Shin.

"Let's go back now," said Lee Shin.

Lee Shin didn't venture inside the small cave and turned back. The guide followed suit, glancing at him and the valley repeatedly. They both walked out of the valley without uttering a word until they arrived at the entrance of De Gret Dale.

The guide's pupils were fixed in place as if she had lost focus. Lee Shin protected her with his mana so that she would not be lured away and safely brought her out of De Gret Dale.

"Huh...?" The guide regained her composure and looked around.

Her confused eyes turned to Lee Shin.

"Why are we here?" asked the guide to Lee Shin.

"Because it's time to go back now," Lee Shin replied.

"Huh? But we haven't found the devil yet," said the guide.

"We have found it," Lee Shin replied.

Lee Shin looked into her eyes as if he was examining her soul.

"Oh..." She slowly nodded and sighed after realizing that she had lost her memory.

Lee Shin had tested her, trying to see if she was pretending to have lost her memory. However, she had truly changed as if possessed by something as they had left De Gret Dale together.

"Please go back to Meldeuren," Lee Shin said, looking at the guide.

"Huh? But what about you?" she asked back.

"I have something to do. Also, when you return, please tell Clark to do what I have asked properly," said Lee Shin.

"Ah... Okay," the guide replied.

The guide seemed disappointed to say goodbye to Lee Shin. He turned without any regret, but she suddenly grabbed his collar.

"Can we see each other again?" Lee Shin asked Lee Shin.

"If you're still alive," Lee Shin replied.

With those words, Lee Shin left, leaving the guide staring at his fading silhouette. Then, she finally began to move.

"But how did he find the devil's location? How? Wait a second..." She turned around with a surprised face after thinking about it repeatedly.

She could not figure out how he still remembered the devil's location.

'If he lost his memory like I did, he should have been just like me.'

The guide could not solve that problem, so she rushed to Meldeuren, thinking she should tell Clark about it.

Lee Shin, who had left De Gret Dale, returned to the Black Zone.

'Now that I've found the main body, I need to secure as much power as possible.'

The demon inside De Gret Dale was named Belial—who used to occupy one of the seventy-two thrones of the Demon World. However, she suffered a fatal injury due to competition in rank and hid in Isocia to regain her strength.

This world raised one's abilities based on Patterns. If challengers cleared this world, they received rewards based on their Pattern. However, creatures unqualified to become challengers gained power through a different route.

They could not take that power out of Isocia, and they couldn't receive Patterns in this world.

'But it seems that she knows how to use this power.'

Lee Shin tried to recall the information he had obtained from invading the Demon World in his previous life. The king-class demon Belial had found a way to use the power of Patterns and was hiding in Isocia. This used to be unconfirmed information, but now, Lee Shin had confirmed it himself by coming to Isocia.

‘She seems weakened now.’

Even though Belial was recovering from a fatal injury after being removed from the seventy-two thrones, her status as a king-class demon remained. It was difficult to imagine a challenger who had not even passed the 13th floor capturing a demon of her caliber.

The tower was a place to accumulate achievements. It was a one-way street from which one couldn’t return. So, shouldn't they take each step carefully?

‘My goal is to kill God.’

Humans were a frail species, so if one of them proclaimed that they would kill God, they would be laughed out of whatever dimension, party, or group they were in. But that was exactly what Lee Shin was trying to do. For that, he had to challenge himself constantly. He had to make greater achievements than anyone else.

"Kiiiiik!"

"Kruk! Who are you?"

Lee Shin arrived at the demons' castle in the Black Zone closest to De Gret Dale. The demons there roared when they saw someone invading their territory.

"I'm sorry, but you'll have to be my sacrifice," Lee Shin said, looking at the demons.

Only a few merit points were left for Lee Shin to obtain the White Pattern. Despite there not being many name-class demons in the castle, there were enough for him to acquire the White Pattern.

"Krukruk! You must be out of your mind!" shouted one of the demons.

The demon slammed his thorn-riddled hammer on the ground here and there.

"Kill that guy!" the demon ordered.

At the command of that demon, many demons rushed in from all sides. Humans hardly visited this place because of its proximity to De Gret Dale. So, the demons here secretly increased their strength under the influence of the devil's power. However, Lee Shin only saw these demons as potential merit points.

Rumble— Crack!

The thunderbolts striking from all sides turned all the demons near him into ashes. When one bolt of lightning hit the ground, at least two or more demons died immediately.

[You have defeated Queret.]

[Your merit points have increased by 500.]

[You have defeated Roop.]

[Your merit points have increased by 1,600.]

[You have defeated Aus.]

[Your merit points have increased by 2,300.]

[You have defeated Aragni.]

[Your merit points have increased...]

[...]

The system messages popped up endlessly, and Lee Shin's merit points skyrocketed. He didn't even have to completely behead the demon in charge of this place. The merit points quickly reached the target.

[You have used 1,300,000 merit points.]

[You have acquired the 『White Pattern』.]

[White Pattern]

You have received the qualification to go to the White Zone.

Your Health and Mana points increase by 45%.

Your overall stats increase by 60%.

His health point, mana, and other stats surged again. He smiled as he looked at them. He did not smile because of the stat increase; he was thrilled to witness the absolute difference between the Black and White Patterns. The most significant difference was that the White Pattern had increased all his stats by at least 50%.

[Due to the Divinity Class, all abilities have increased by 30%.]

[The resistance to all attributes has increased by 30%.]

With this new Pattern, Lee Shin could move up one level in his Divinity Class and the Chaos Stat. That was very important to Lee Shin.

"Phew..." Lee Shin took a deep breath and looked toward De Gret Dale.

Finally, it was time to achieve his real goal in this world.