

## **The Tower 144**

### Chapter 144

Lee Shin headed straight for the coast. Since he had departed from the outskirts, he wasn't that far away from the coast. The trees blocking the sky gradually disappeared, and before he even realized it, a dark sky appeared.

'Is it already night?'

[Hunger has struck.]

[Your satiety level is at 93%.]

[The satiety level will decrease by 10% every 30 minutes.]

[Hunger disappears when the satiety level reaches 100%.]

Although Lee Shin had stored some Drosophila branches between the tents, he did not immediately take them out to eat. He needed emergency rations because he still had a long way to go.

'There should be a fair amount around this area.'

There were quite a lot of clams and barnacles on the coastline. Lee Shin believed that by incorporating those items into his diet, he could restore approximately seven percent of his satiety level.

'There are a bit less than I thought.'

After the first day, this coastline would submerge and disappear into the sea. Therefore, it was a place that provided abundant food. However, judging by the small amount left, other challengers had already visited and taken most of them. Nevertheless, Lee Shin picked up the remaining barnacles hidden between the rocks.

[Your Health Points have increased by 50.]

[Your Mana Points have increased by 50.]

[Your satiety level has now reached 100%.]

[Your hunger has disappeared.]

Hunger would be permanently stacked if he failed to sate it. That wasn't that big of a deal for the first two times, but from the third, the hunger would become permanent. No amount of food could sate that.

After five times, one would start to doubt reality and have delusions. That was why sating hunger at the right time was important.

Lee Shin looked around after dealing with his hunger. Unlike the inner parts of the island, the coastline was a very open area, making detecting his location an easy task, as this location itself could be easily discovered.

"Hmm..." Lee Shin looked around and wondered.

He noticed red clumps of sand, likely sand and blood, in various places on the sandy beach. How many battles had taken place here? Since he had arrived late due to the previous battle, he could not see any challengers around.

'There's no merit in staying here for long.'

The coastline would disappear into the water after this night. Therefore, instead of staying here, Lee Shin thought that it would be more efficient to quickly enter the inner part of the island, obtain the first kills of the plants, or find a spot and increase his abilities. After all, he knew various ways to increase his abilities besides killing plants.

‘They target those who came to the coastline late; it's no different from before.’

Lee Shin focused his senses on the gaze he felt from the inner part of the island. The fights that had started in the early stages should have ended by now.

The individuals walking around now were likely to be the victors of those battles. However, could these challengers recklessly ambush Lee Shin, who was confidently strolling along the coast? Thinking about the complex thoughts that must be galloping in the other challengers’ minds, Lee Shin wanted to laugh but hid it.

The tent strapped to his back, the bunch of Drosophile branches on him, and the dagger hanging on his waist were like warning signs to the challengers hiding around.

What if they attacked, and Lee Shin just killed them all, stole their stuff, and increased his own stats? Why else would he be strolling in such a dangerous area?

‘Just as expected.’

No challenger approached Lee Shin until the end, so he arrived at the cliff peacefully. He was at the end of the sandy beach, a place with towering cliffs and spear-like rocks. There, he saw his starting point.

Splash—!

Fierce waves crashed against the towering cliffs one after another. He marched into the water instead of going deeper into the island. As his lower body entered the water, a message popped up in front of him

[Your satiety level is decreasing rapidly.]

He had just increased his satiety level to a hundred percent, but now he had no time to waste. Once completely underwater, he opened his eyes wide and swam along the cliff.

Woong—

When Lee Shin turned his head toward the rushing seawater, the distant dark shadows became increasingly clearer.

Woong—?Bam—!

A water wave rushed toward him from a distance. The seawater surged and collided with the cliff as it approached Lee Shin. The attack was so powerful that rocks tumbled down from the cliff.

'If I weren't a Predator of the Sea, it would have been tricky.'

[Predator of the Sea]

Having caught the predator of the sea, you are the true predator of the sea!

# You can breathe underwater for 10 minutes. (It resets upon leaving the water.)

# Your water resistance has been increased by 20%.

The enemies kept their distance to avoid being attacked and only shot out waves. Even though he was deep inside the water, the enemies were still within his attack range. However, he could not waste his mana on them, as he did not know what kind of creatures lurked inside.

Woong— Woong— Woong—!

Bang! Bang! Bam—!

The waves brushed past Lee Shin, hitting the cliff repeatedly.

[You have suffered 1,300 damage.]

Lee Shin felt how much the increased water resistance and his ability to breathe underwater for 10 minutes affected his movements. Frowning at the unexpectedly intense attacks, he finally activated his mana.

The effect of the Predator of the Sea was also coming to an end. Therefore, if Lee Shin continued to endure the attacks to save his mana, he could end up in a dangerous situation.

[Lightning Strike]

Pizz—!

Thunderbolts suddenly struck down the enemies and electrocuted them. Lee Shin demonstrated an almost divine level of mana control. Using a minimal amount of mana precisely in the right place instead of pouring it out was a skill, one that ordinary wizards found difficult to master.

‘Great.’

Their movements came to a halt. Since they were underwater, the power of the lightning had intensified, making the paralysis last a bit longer. Considering the mana he had, he only used enough to temporarily paralyze them.

Lee Shin soon saw a cave leading into the depths of the cliff.

Woong—

Regaining their senses, the enemies fired waves again, but Lee Shin evaded the attack and entered the cave. After swimming through the passage, he encountered a space leading upward.

"Hooah!" Lee Shin had been holding his breath until now, so he took a deep breath and emerged from the water.

This area had jewels embedded in the walls, illuminating the way, and dotted with small plants throughout.

‘Are these recovery herbs?’

These recovery herbs did not increase the upper limit of one’s Health Points or Mana Points. The herbs simply refilled them if they were depleted. They did not fully restore one’s condition, but it was enough for partial recovery.

[Your Mana Points have been restored by 100.]

[Your Mana Points have been...]

‘I feel relieved.’

His Mana Points had been running dangerously low, so he was slightly relieved now.

Thud— Thud—

Step by step, Lee Shin observed the surrounding environment.

‘This is...’

The walls had paintings of branches—twisted branches stained with dark red blood adorned the painted surfaces.

Thunk.

When Lee Shin stepped on the floor, the tile sank a bit, and he heard faint rustling from the darkness.

‘Tsk, was it a trap?’

Soon, a sound akin to a colossal boulder rolling echoed through a passage. Frowning, Lee Shin swiftly gathered mana in his hand. A massive boulder, nearly filling the entire passage, barreled toward him with the intent to crush him.

[Steel Spear]

A steel spear materialized in the air; it began spinning and flew forward.

Bang—!

The spear shattered the boulder blocking the passage. Lee Shin sighed deeply and stepped on the rubble to cross over.

‘I’m not sure if my mana will hold up,’

Thanks to the recovery herbs, his mana was now at 7,520 points. However, countless traps were undoubtedly waiting for him in the inner part. If he could not pass through this place now, this stage would be nothing short of a failure.

‘I will clear it no matter what.’

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"Ptui!" Lee Shin spat out the dust and debris that had gotten in his mouth.

He still couldn’t believe that this trap had been the entire ceiling collapsing on him. As the dust cloud settled, Lee Shin frowned and dusted himself off before stepping out of the pile of rocks.

He looked at the large hall before him and at the slate standing proudly inside. Plants that wriggled like worms were all around the slate, seemingly protecting the slate.

Thump!

As Lee Shin stepped closer, a branch whipped the ground and charged toward him. Lee Shin drew the dagger he had roughly attached to his waist and sliced through the branch. The branch oozed some green liquid and recoiled. He did not find the attack particularly threatening, so he remained calm.

‘It feels like they are aware of my presence.’?

As if gauging the skill of the intruder, the vines didn’t recklessly attack Lee Shin.

‘If they won't come to me, then I'll go to them.’

Lee Shin concentrated his mana on his fingertips.

[Fire Ball]

A fireball materialized in the air and flew toward the stone slate. When that happened, a plant—with a mouth—sprung out with its mouth open wide and swallowed the fireball.

"..." Lee Shin could not believe what was going on.

His attack did not change anything. The fireball simply disappeared into the creature's mouth. Lee Shin frowned and shot an ice spear this time. Again, another creature sprung out and bit through the ice spear with its sharp teeth.

‘Their mana resistance is quite high.’



Lee Shin could use magic with a slightly stronger power than before, but he wasn't sure that was enough to kill the creature. He did not even have enough mana to gauge the extent of its mana resistance.

Lee Shin now had about 3,400 mana points remaining. It was enough to deliver a mighty blow, but he would be in danger if even that didn't work.

This time, the vines launched their attack. Unlike before, nearly ten branches flew toward Lee Shin. He held his dagger in a reverse grip and began cutting down the branches approaching him, one by one. Still, this wasn't a favorable position for him as his swordsmanship skills were lacking.

'Well, I don't think there's any other choice.'

Lee Shin's shadow lengthened, and from within it, Warrie emerged.

[Warrie's stats have been adjusted.]

Warrie's stats had also decreased to 100 or below. If one were to compare Warrie and Lee Shin's stats, Lee Shin's would be higher, but Warrie was an excellent swordsman, much better than his master.

Lee Shin had to be quick because time was not on his side. He and Warrie exchanged a few glances, and Warrie received the dagger from Lee Shin and rushed toward the stone slate.

Swish! Swish! Swish!

Warrie's strikes flowed smoothly one after another; he had seemingly grasped the opponent's attack pattern. Still, his shining red eyes continuously examined his enemy's attacks.

"This is so obvious!" Warrie laughed at the opponent.

Swish! Thud—

Another thick branch of the plant fell to the ground, writhing. Warrie kicked the writhing branch aside and stabbed the heart of the creature surrounding the stone slate.

Swoosh—!

"Keugh!" gasped the creature called Evermind.

Evermind could control and manipulate various species of plants. After stabbing the creature, Warrie received a blow to the ribs from a branch and was pushed back.

"Well done! Now you may go back inside," Lee Shin said with a smile of satisfaction.

He then activated his mana, which he didn't have much of after summoning Warrie. There was no room for failure this time.

Snap!

Lee Shin snapped his fingers, and at the same time, cracks appeared in his dagger's blade, and a gust of wind arose.

Swoosh— Swish— Swoosh—!

Fragments of the dagger flew toward the stone slate and the plants, shredding them into pieces.

[You have killed Evermind.]

[Your Health Points have increased by 600.]

[Your Mana Points have increased by 1,400.]

[Your Strength has increased by 3.]

[Your Agility has increased by 2.]

[Your Intelligence has increased by 5.]

[Your Dominance has increased by 10.]

[You are the first one to kill Evermind.]

[You have obtained a Unique Box.]

Evermind and the plants it controlled were mere dust particles floating in the air now. As Lee Shin approached the stone slate, a small box hidden beneath the plants came into his view. When he opened the box lid, he found a green marble and a round mechanism inside. He engaged the mechanism and pressed the button on the top.

Click.

Suddenly, a map of the island appeared on the device, along with five points. One marked Lee Shin's current location, while the other four indicated the other locations with similar stone slates. He then inserted the green marble into the circular hole in the middle of the stone slate.

The slate shone with green light before the light shot up toward the ceiling. People on the island would notice this soaring light and soon realize that something was there. Lee Shin then picked up the Unique Box and opened its lid. This time, a purple light lit up the area.

[Palthaeon's Gauntlets]

Palthaeon, the fearless martial artist who hated magic, favors these gloves.

# Absorbs magic and converts it into mana.

It was a brown leather glove for a single hand. Lee Shin had no weapon now, so this worked out well for him. Equipped with Palthaeon's Gauntlets, Lee Shin possessed ample combat prowess to deal with situations even without mana. Satisfied with this advantage, he nodded and walked along the path behind the stone slate.

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Thud—!

As Lee Shin pushed aside a heavy stone, light poured in. He raised his hand to cover his eyes from the bright sunlight. The third day had already passed, and the sun was rising again.

[Hunger will strike after an hour.]

The hunger for the fourth day would soon strike. However, Lee Shin thought that finding food would be easy. He was now in a better condition than when he lived underground.

Lee Shin now seemed like a complete mess. The many plants and traps he had encountered while breaking through the stone slate had exhausted him. However, this challenging journey had brought about a remarkable transformation in his stats, setting him apart from his previous state.

[Lee Shin]

# Class: Death Ruler

# Status: Sealed - Unlock Level 3 (Details\*)

# Title: Details\*

# Health Point: 31,320/38,200

# Mana Point: 51,960/62,800

# Strength: 131

# Agility: 125

# Intelligence: 147

# Dominance: 113

# Divine Power: 23

# Luck: 8

# Divinity Class: 3

# Chaos: 2

# Skills: Details\*

No one would believe these were the stats of a challenger who had just finished the third day. The three days of continuous running had been rewarding for Lee Shin.

"Am I closer to the next stone slate than I thought?" Lee Shin muttered.

He then pressed the radar button to confirm the location of the next stone slate. There was one relatively close to the entrance. Following the rough map in his head, he made his way through the forest.

'The challengers...'

Lee Shin immediately concealed his presence upon sensing the presence of other challengers. He could hear the voices of many challengers. Approaching cautiously, he peeked from behind a tree to observe them.

There were more than thirty challengers gathered there. When Lee Shin saw that, he frowned and pulled his head back.

'It will be troublesome if I get involved.'