

The Tower 152

Chapter 152

After everyone had found their places on Veck Jack, Lee Shin and his group flew toward their destination under Zephyr's guidance. They soon caught sight of the entrance to the third realm.

"The gate to the third realm doesn't seem much different from the gate to the second realm."

"No, but look at that. There aren't as many demons there, don't you think?"

In front of the gate leading to the second realm, numerous demons constantly fought to get a chance to enter the next realm. They also killed other demons to take their demonic power and become stronger themselves. With that newfound strength, they moved on to the next realm. That was how the Demon World worked.

However, the situation in the second realm differed slightly from the first.

"It's not that there aren't many demons here. Everyone is just being more cautious."

The demons in the second realm were significantly stronger than the ones in the first realm. And these demons made it really hard for others to move to the third realm.

"Zephyr," Lee Shin called out.

"Yes, Sir?" Zephyr replied.

"With your abilities, you should have no problem entering the third realm, so how come you're still here?" Lee Shin asked.

After observing Zephyr for a while, Lee Shin could tell that he was quite skillful. If he wanted, he could easily move onto the third realm.

"Hahaha... I, too, think I can get there, but I don't want to risk anything," Zephyr replied.

The third realm had grotesque creatures that were unlike anything in the second realm. While Zephyr was considered one of the four strongest in the second realm, he would be nothing more than an ordinary demon in the third realm.

"I could grow stronger much quickly up there, but wouldn't the probability of dying increase significantly as well?" Zephyr commented.

It was a valid point, one that some might consider cowardly, as Zephyr had chosen a relatively safer path.

"That's true," Lee Shin replied.

Lee Shin neither embraced nor criticized Zephyr's choice, as he could understand his reasoning.

"Let's get going. With you around, demons would bother us less," Lee Shin said.

The demons hiding near the gate acted like hyenas. They wanted to steal demonic power, so they employed two methods. They either waited for the gatekeeper to kill anyone reckless enough to charge it or joined the gatekeeper in killing the target. Occasionally, some demons failed to assess the situation properly and attacked, but even those creatures did not approach Lee Shin and his group because of Zephyr's presence.

"Watch for a while, and after we cross the gate, slip away. Understand?" Lee Shin said.

"Okay, I understand. But remember that I've warned you. Others would come after you," Zephyr said, seemingly worried.

"How did such a coward become one of the strongest here?" Alice passed by Zephyr, shaking her head.

The ground near the gate was slightly sunken compared to the rest. Boulders and mighty high cliffs surrounded the gate. The dark violet ground was stained with crimson blood patches, evidence of the fierce battles of the past. Under the gazes of the onlookers, Lee Shin's group crossed the area.

"Being watched like this sure is annoying. I have no privacy!" Vuela complained.

"You always boasted of your popularity before, so why are you bothered by unwanted attention?" Alice replied.

"This is not the same as that!" Vuela cried out.

"Just ignore them then," Alice replied coldly.

Veck Jack was about to reach the gatekeeper, but its path was abruptly blocked by a large-winged demon. And this demon wasn't alone.

"Ah... Zephyr, why are you clinging to those humans like a leech? You should be focusing on mining."

"Stop talking nonsense. I am not clinging to these humans! These humans here are my... s-s-slaves!" Zephyr, under the watchful eyes of the trio, shouted.

When the bird-like demon heard that, he looked at Lee Shin's group and felt puzzled.

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"Why do your slaves look so... pristine?" the bird-like demon asked.

"Well, how they look is up to me. So mind your own business," Zephyr replied.

"Hmm... Well, I don't care what you do with them. Anyway, what brought you all the way here without your subordinates? Did you leave them in the mine? Or do you actually trust these slaves? Hahaha!" the bird-like demon laughed at Lee Shin and the group.

The open mockery almost made Vuela step forward. However, another group appeared behind them. It was a group of rat-like demons, and they had blocked Lee Shin's group from behind.

"Belkin..." Zephyr muttered.

"Are these the Four Great Masters you mentioned before?" Lee Shin asked.

"Yes, that's right. The one with wings is Molbak, and the rat-like one is Belkin." Zephyr whispered so that the others could not hear.

"Just when I was starting to get bored... They arrived at the perfect time. Human slaves... Sounds interesting," said Molbak

"What the hell did you just say! You bird bastard!" Alice shouted.

"What...?" Molbak's face got distorted at Alice's words. "All right, I'll take my time enjoying you."

"What did you say? I am quite hungry, so the time couldn't have been more perfect. Let's have some fresh bird meat today," said Alice, mocking Molbak.

"You arrogant bitch! Make those humans get down on their knees right now and bring them to me!" Enraged to the core, Molbak shouted at his subordinates.

The demons behind Molbak jumped in the air and charged toward Alice. Meanwhile, Belkin had no interest in humans and had one thought: kill Zephyr and absorb his demon power.

"You fool. Why would you come to this place with those useless humans? Do you suddenly want to go to the third realm or something?" Belkin laughed at Zephyr.

"Yeah. This place has become boring," Zephyr replied.

"Hehehe... Before you go, leave your demon power here," Belkin said.

"Do you think you can take it with your skills?" Zephyr provoked Belkin.

"Saying you want to go to the third realm, you must have lost your mind. What nonsense from the weakest of the Four Great Masters here!" Belkin shouted.

The rat-like demons and Belkin charged toward Zephyr. The sight made him panic momentarily, but he quickly regained his composure and confronted Belkin.

‘Damn it... The wound from earlier is too severe.’

Even in his prime condition, Zephyr knew he would’ve had difficulty dealing with such an opponent. And with his current injuries, he knew he wouldn’t last long.

‘Am I going to die like this?’

As he silently resigned himself to his fate, the sky flashed.

Rumble— Crack!

The thunderbolts precisely struck only the targets inside this valley.

Bababam—!

A lightning bolt struck the group of demons in the air before hitting a cliff, scattering lightning sparks everywhere.

"W-What's going on!" The demons started to panic.

These lightning bolts were no ordinary thunderbolts. Each strike claimed the lives of dozens of demons in an instant.

Baaam—!

"Krehaah!" Molbak had been hit directly by a lightning bolt. He let out a shrill scream and perished on the spot, burned to ashes.

"W-w-what's happening? What kind of lightning bolt is...!" Zephyr trembled.

This time, another thunderbolt struck down, but it differed from the previous ones. Zephyr trembled uncontrollably and fell on his butt after witnessing that black thunderbolt.

"I-it must be the sign of the arrival of the Great Devil! Run! We have to run away!"

Belkin scratched the ground anxiously, his face pale, and fled in the opposite direction. However, a bolt struck the cliff before him, making it crumble. And the resultant rubble pile completely blocked his path.

"No way!" Belkin looked at the sky with a terrified expression.

Zephyr approached him from the side. He had also come here to escape, but his path was blocked too.

"Damn it! This is all because of you! If we had gone straight to the third realm, none of this would have happened!" Zephyr shouted.

"What the hell are you saying! Isn't this your trap? What is happening here!" Belkin shouted.

"Trap? What trap? What are you talking about..." Zephyr raised his head and glanced at the sky, looking at Lee Shin's group.

The lightning flashing in the sky was simply ferocious, yet the trio's expression hadn't changed a bit.

'Wait a second...'

A small lightning arc materialized on Lee Shin's fingertip. It flew toward Belkin and pierced his forehead.

"Keuak!" Surprised by the sight, Zephyr covered his mouth.

The aura of the black lightning from before was similar to the aura of this small lightning arc.

'Shit! This is insane...!'

Realizing that Lee Shin controlled the thunderbolts, Zephyr recalled what Vuela had said earlier.

- Don't think of playing any tricks on us. By the way, she's the weakest one here, so be on your best behavior.

Those words turned out to be true. Lee Shin's power far surpassed Alice's power. He thanked his past self for silently following them.

'If I had done something sly... One lightning bolt and I am done.'

As he was organizing his complicated thoughts, a tremendous amount of demon power erupted right beside him.

'Is this Belkin's demon power?'

He had no time to pay attention to Belkin because of the chaos, but Belkin and Molbak, two of the Four Great Masters, had died just a while ago.

Zephyr then anxiously looked around. Demons hiding in all directions were eyeing this demon power. However, they could not approach it easily after seeing the power of Lee Shin's group. He was the only demon here who could seize the power easily.

'What an unbelievable coincidence!'

Zephyr quickly activated his demon power after assessing the situation.

'Come this way!'

Demon power extended from Zephyr's fingertips and greedily devoured Belkin's demon power.

"Lee Shin! Look at that," Alice said with a worried expression, looking at Zephyr.

Zephyr's aura was unsettling.

"It's fine. Once he consumes all the demon power, the troublesome ones won't rush to grab it," said Lee Shin.

Lee Shin and Zephyr's gaze met as the latter moved toward Molbak's corpse. He hesitated after noticing Lee Shin looking at him. However, Lee Shin just shifted his gaze toward the gatekeeper, seemingly uninterested in him.

"From the third realm onward, things get serious. While there may be entities weaker than Zephyr, there would also be beings much stronger than him," Lee Shin said.

Alice and Vuela nodded in agreement. And unlike before, they seemed a bit nervous now.

"Are you going to the third realm?" As they walked toward the gate, the gatekeeper asked them.

The gatekeeper here was also a gargoyle, just like the one in the first realm. However, the power emanating from him was much stronger.

"Yes," Lee Shin replied.

"Human, you may pass. But the two behind you must take a test," said the gargoyle.

Vuela's pride was a bit hurt, but he stepped forward first.

Swoosh—!

There was a sharp sound of blades scraping, accompanied by the resounding clashing of metal. Along with it, a sword energy wave flew toward the gatekeeper.

Bababam—!

The gargoyle swung his mace to block the attack, and the attack broke the mace. However, the fragments reunited, and the mace returned to its original shape.

"Ugh, that's an annoying ability you got there." Vuela furrowed his eyebrows, seemingly troubled, but that was all.

In the subsequent exchange of blows, Vuela eventually defeated the gatekeeper.

"You passed," said the gargoyle.

"Well, is it my turn now?" Alice asked nonchalantly.

She started to warm up and then stepped forward. Vuela's Wave Cutting Sword had diced the gatekeeper, but he quickly returned to his original state and stood before Alice.

"It'll be over in a moment—" Alice activated her mana, but she opened her eyes wide after sensing something swiftly brushing past her side.

Baaam—!

Something suddenly struck the gargoyle, and it crashed into the wall. Zephyr came into view as the dust settled.

"Hahaha! This overflowing power...! I am almighty! A mere gatekeeper cannot stop me!" said Zephyr, glaring at the gatekeeper.

"Hey, you punk! It's my turn!" Alice shouted.

"Hahahaha! Don't worry! I'll take care of it, so you can go in while I'm dealing with the gargoyle," said Zephyr.

"Why is he suddenly acting like this?" Alice muttered with a bitter laugh.

"Go in quick!—Keugh! You bastard! You dare sneak attack me?!" The gargoyle had hit Zephyr's face with his mace. Zephyr spat some blood and charged at the gargoyle again.

"Says the guy who attacked me sneakily first," the gatekeeper muttered.

Vuela laughed at the sight.

"Let's go," said Lee Shin.

Lee Shin took a look at Zephyr and headed toward the door.

"If unqualified individuals use the gate, they will meet their end!" said the gatekeeper.

"What the hell do you mean by unqualified?! Who are you to judge?" Zephyr shouted.

Zephyr grabbed the gargoyle's head as it spoke, and slammed it to the ground.

Crack—!

The gargoyle's head shattered, and Zephyr stepped on the fragments and took a moment to relax.

"Huh... It was nothing. Didn't I do well..?" Zephyr trailed off after looking at the gate, startled.

Lee Shin and Alice had already crossed the gate, and Vuela was about to cross.

"W-wait a minute! Take me with you!" Zephyr rushed forward and grabbed Vuela's collar just in time before he crossed the gate.