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Chapter 197

The God of the Golden String who did not sound particularly impressive when looking at the name, the abilities he displayed now were beyond expectations.

‘Even though coming to Earth must have caused his power to take a significant cut, can he still exhibit this level of strength?’

Lee Shin was not aware of what had happened to the god recently, but the God of the Golden String had broken free from a substantial amount of the limits that were set on him by consuming the mana of Pyon Dunaide. This proved that Pyon Dunaide had possessed exceptional mana quality and innate prowess.

Losing Pyon Dunaide was undesirable for the God of the Golden String, but it was necessary in order to confront Lee Shin.

"I will show you the power of a god," the God of the Golden String said.

When the god raised his hands, the buildings on either side of him transformed into thousands, even tens of thousands, of golden strings and covered the sky.

"Aren't you pushing yourself too hard?" Lee Shin said.

Despite being surrounded by an immense quantity of golden strings that seemed could engulf the sky, Lee Shin remained composed.

‘He’s trying to pour out all his power of a deity from the very beginning to end this quickly.’

However, Lee Shin was aware that it meant the god himself was also not at ease. It seemed like he did not have much time either. The god might have found a way to reduce the penalties of crossing over to Earth with some abilities, but even if the god were to muster up all of his power, it did not really matter to Lee Shin.

[Divine Realm Breaking Force]

Lee Shin's blue eyes locked onto the god. Tremendous pressure could be felt in the entire space. The sensation of something suppressing his power made the God of the Golden String flinch.

"What on earth... is this power...?" The God of the Golden String seemed confused.

The waves of the golden strings, that a moment ago felt so grand, broke apart and scattered. Lee Shin even managed to deflect the falling fragments of the golden strings away from himself using psychokinesis. He smirked.

"Well, if you don't know, you should die," Lee Shin muttered.

Since the surroundings were already in chaos, Lee Shin did not have to worry about the damage that could be done anymore. Therefore, he instantly expanded his mana without hesitation.

[Prison Ground]

Masses of mana that were thrown into the air enveloped the god's feet and lifted the ground.

Thud—

Rocks around the god rose up and formed a circular barrier, entrapping the god. At the same time, a sphere of electric current that shot bluish mana to the sky violently spun in the air, gathering thunderbolts and wind.

[Full Driving Thunder]

[Gust]

Rumble—!

The gentle breeze quickly turned into a ferocious gust, and the sphere of mana that gathered thunderbolts like a magnetic field created a storm filled with lightning energy.

Grraaaah!

The rocks that confined the god slowly transformed into golden strings and wrapped around the god even more densely. The god's flickering golden gaze was fixated on the sky. The storm of thunderbolts swept the golden strings away, erasing them from existence.

"How can a mere human possess such power...!" the god muttered.

The challengers who were engaged in battles nearby had already started to flee after witnessing the overwhelming force of Lee Shin and tried to stay far away from him. In fact, the wizards had lost the will to fight and were now filled with an awe for Lee Shin that transcended their adversarial relationship.

"Keugh...!" the God of the Golden String groaned.

The God of the Golden String confronted the storm of thunderbolt head-on.

Pizz—

Rumble—!

With every movement of the storm, the ground flipped, and the air exploded. Cars and various structures caught in the storm's path exploded mid-air, sending debris flying around.

"Keuaaaaah!" the god roared fiercely, as he manifested his power of a deity to reverse the storm entirely into strings of gold.

Thunk—! Pizz—

However, most of the God of the Golden String's divinity class had been obliterated. Therefore, there was no power left in him to counter Lee Shin's magic. The golden strings that formed were torn apart and consumed by flames in real time. Besides, the armor made from these golden strings that had been protecting the god shattered into pieces.

"Keugh...!" The God of the Golden String collapsed to the ground.

Lee Shin, having scattered mana forcibly to subdue the storm, approached the fallen god. The presence of the God of the Golden String was gradually fading.

"How... can I...? How can I lose... to a human..." the god muttered in shock.

"Why did you attack Earth?" Lee Shin asked.

Lee Shin was aware that this god stood above the Emperor of Lostria. It was easy for Lee Shin to deduce that this god was the mastermind behind the Earth's invasion.

"I... wanted to go... to Astria." The god barely managed to reply with his last remaining bit of strength.

"Astria? What does that have to do with invading Earth?" Lee Shin asked as his facial expression stiffened.

"The gods... who are... there..." The God of the Golden String's body disintegrated like dust.

Unable to finish his sentence, the god gave a pitiable glance and vanished completely.

A message appeared.

[You have killed someone with a Divinity Class of 10 or higher.]

Lee Shin wondered if the God of the Golden String had truly disappeared from existence. He also thought about what he meant by wanting to go to Astria. Had the higher-ranking gods in Astria manipulated other gods who could not make it to Astira to attack Earth?

‘Of course they are involved in nothing but the dirty deeds as always.’

Lee Shin actually found this somewhat a relief. He was getting stronger day by day, and unless a higher-ranking god directly invaded Earth, he had no equal opponent. If these minor gods kept invading Earth, Lee Shin could become the Adversary in a much quicker time.

‘But, I think most of those who considered attempting an invasion probably won't after this incident.’

This was the significance of having a powerful god in the world. It was like having a deterrent that prevented other gods of other dimensions from recklessly invading. The influence a single strong individual held was immense. Considering this, it was better for Lostria to be subservient to Earth.

‘In that case, they will have me as their barrier at least.’

The next moment, Lee Shin looked at his surroundings. The battle with the God of the Golden String did not take long, but the surroundings were now a scene of utter chaos.

‘But this much of a damage is nothing compared to what I’ve gained, the Empire.’

The next moment, Lee Shin could see that Kim Kang-Won and Cha Yu-Min had arrived in Busan and suppressed the wizards. The wizards were severely beaten up and could hardly keep their eyes open. Besides, judging by the appearance of the wizards, it seemed a large-scale battle would not be necessary after all even if they were to cross over to the Empire instead.

"Mr. Lee Shin!" Yu Jia cried out.

She had arrived through the Black Hole, and looked at Lee Shin with a concerned expression.

"Are you okay?" Yu Jia asked.

"Yeah, I'm fine. How's the situation in other places?" Lee Shin asked.

In the U.S. and China, wizards had also invaded. Therefore, Lee Shin was curious about the situation there.

"It seems like things are getting wrapped up there too. They say that the wizards have lost their momentum now that their god is defeated," Yu Jia explained.

"So, how many challengers are there?" Lee Shin asked.

"Umm... Just a moment please," Yu Jia replied.

She took out her tablet and checked something. She then gave Lee Shin the list. It seemed like someone from Reverse was providing her with the information.

"Cha Yu-Min, Kim Kang-Won, Park Joo-Hyuk, Park Hye-Won..." She read out loud the names of the challengers.

Lee Shin heard several familiar names. The rest had not arrived in Busan yet.

"Tell those who have not arrived to go support other countries because South Korea is under control now," Lee Shin said.

"Okay, I got it," Yu Jia replied.

"And gather the remaining challengers here," Lee Shin said.

"Huh? What are you planning on doing with them?" Yu Jia asked, looking confused.

"What do you think I'll be doing?" Lee Shin muttered.

After saying that, Lee Shin looked into the distance, looking at the Gate that was still shining bright. When Yu Jia noticed what Lee Shin was looking at, she nodded.

"Are you planning to go right now?" Yu Jia asked.

"Yes, that's right," Lee Shin replied.

Cha Yu-Min and Kim Kang-Won, who was near Lee Shin, approached him.

"Mr. Lee Shin," Cha Yu-Min called out.

"Yu-Min," Lee Shin replied in a soft voice.

Cha Yu-Min scratched his head as if he was still trying to get used to Lee Shin's way of speaking. That was because Lee Shin had decided not to keep his distance from Cha Yu-Min anymore, unlike how he acted when they initially met recently. Lee Shin started to talk to Cha Yu-Min as he had used to in his past life.

"Yes," Cha Yu-Min replied.

"So, what's the plan now?" Kim Kang-Won asked Lee Shin.

"Please suppress the wizards and gather them here," Lee Shin said.

Then, he looked at the multitude of challengers who were gathered around him. He was not the only one on Earth. There were many comrades on Earth, including Yu Jia, Cha Yu-Min, Kim Kang-Won. They all looked at Lee Shin with determined eyes.

"We will be heading to the Empire. Today, the Empire that intended to invade Earth will meet its end," Lee Shin said with determination.

In a medical facility within the Empire, Para McMatain forced himself to sit up upon hearing the sudden news.

"What the hell are you talking about! The Earthlings are here to attack?" Para McMatain shouted in anger.

"I-it turns out that... the god had lost to Lee Shin..."

"...Huh? What nonsense is that...?" Para McMatain could not believe what he was hearing right now.

How could a god lose to a human? Did that make any sense? From Para's perspective, who had never properly seen a god, it sounded utterly absurd.

"At least you should come along, Mr. Para..."

"Fine," Para McMatain replied.

As Para urgently left the sick room, a commotion could be heard from another room.

"Y-Your Majesty!"

"Are you alright?"

Startled by the voice, Para turned his head.

'The Emperor has woken up?'

Prominent physicians and wizards in the Empire had all said that it would take at least several months for the Emperor to wake up. That was why Para was shocked to hear this news and wondered why the Emperor was suddenly awake now. However, the Emperor's well-being was more important to Para than Earth's invasion which was happening at the same time. He hurriedly went to see the Emperor.

"Your Majesty!" Para McMatain cried out.

"Para... Were you awake too?" the Emperor asked.

The Emperor seemed better than Para expected. His complexion was fine, and the mana within him had recovered greatly, nothing like when he had collapsed.

"What happened? How did you suddenly get better so quickly...?" Para McMatain asked; it did not make sense to him.

"I don't know either. The mana that was taken by the god is gradually returning to me," the Emperor replied.

It seemed like the Emperor's words were true, because his complexion was visibly improving in real time. Realizing that the Emperor was okay, Para remembered why he was rushing out.

"Your Majesty, I've heard that the Earthlings have invaded the Empire right now," Para McMatain reported to the Emperor.

"...Huh? What did you just say?" the Emperor shouted.

As soon as the Emperor heard the news, he got up from the bed, grabbed his outer robe, and got dressed hastily.

"Your Majesty, dressing like that is kind of..." Para McMatain muttered, looking at the Emperor.

"Shut up. Do you think I care about my appearance right now?" the Emperor shouted.

"Alright. Let's get going," Para McMatain replied.

"Let's go," the Emperor replied.

The two of them rushed outside and ran all the way to the castle wall. When they arrived there, they were able to see the Undead Corps. There were Skeletons walking with a scraping sound and the Undead that were flying through the sky.

"Could it be... that guy named Lee Shin?" the Emperor muttered.

The Emperor quickly scanned the vast field, searching for the master of those Undead.

"I think so, because I heard that Lee Shin was a wizard as well as a necromancer who can handle both magic and the Undead," Para McMatain explained.

Although Para tried to keep his voice calm, he was trembling inside. He could not believe that a wizard strong enough to easily defeat Para himself was also capable of leading such a massive army of Undead.

"So, in the end, the god was defeated by Lee Shin...?" the Emperor muttered.

The Emperor could somewhat already tell that Lee Shin had killed the God of the Golden String because he could sense his mana filling up in real time. The Emperor could tell that he was getting his mana back from the god because the god had been defeated.

However, he was not necessarily pleased that his mana power was returning to him. That implied a bigger threat, one that is approaching him now.

"I don't think I'll be able to demonstrate my true strength now due to my injuries," Para McMatain said to the Emperor.

Para clicked his tongue in frustration. He had wanted to face Lee Shin once again, and although the opportunity had arrived, his physical condition prevented him from doing so.

"It's fine. I will face Lee Shin myself. Then, I'll be able to see if the choice I made in the past was a mistake or not," the Emperor said with a smirk.

The Emperor had devoted his entire life to the Empire, offering his mana to the God of the Golden String. However, this god had died, and the one who had killed him was now attacking the Empire. The Emperor thought that facing this guy named Lee Shin himself would provide the answer whether it had been worthwhile devoting his entire life to the god or whether he had been deceived by a worthless being.

"Para," the Emperor called out.

"Yes, Your Majesty," Para McMatain replied.

"When I was young, I wanted to become a Great Wizard. So, actually, when you reached the level of a Great Wizard, I was a bit jealous as well," the Emperor said.

"Oh, is that so?" Para McMatain replied.

Para was nonchalant in response, because he thought it was only natural.

"Even though I am finally set free from the shackles of the god...the Empire's downfall is imminent before me this time," the Emperor said.

"Don't worry about it, Your Majesty. It won't turn out that way. I will stop that from happening," Para McMatain replied.

"But weren't you defeated by him once?" the Emperor said.

"...Well... Friendly matches and real battles are different—" Para McMatain tried to explain but the Emperor interrupted him.

"It's fine," said the Emperor.

The Emperor's face showed no trace of regret; instead, it was filled with a sense of liberation. As the Emperor unleashed his abundant mana forward, he was amazed by what he could do.

‘Did I really give this much mana to that damn God of the Golden String all this time...?’

Even at this moment, the Emperor's mana was recovering. As he wielded his mana freely now, the Emperor felt like he could accomplish anything.

"Split!" the Emperor shouted in excitement.

As his mana settled onto the ground, the surface of the Earth started to tremble and started to crack open.

Crack—!

Skeletons fell through the cracks that formed in the ground. The next moment, the Emperor, now charged with fervent power, conjured flames in the air.

‘Wow... This is how capable Pyon Dunaide is...?’

Para McMatain, who had been watching the Emperor's magic from the side, was amazed. He was aware that the Emperor had not been able to properly use and practice his magic for a long time, as most of his mana had been taken by the god.

However, now that his mana was returning, seeing the Emperor execute magic at such a grand scale so naturally made Para McMatain wonder if the Emperor's talent might have been even greater than his own.

‘Only if the opponent was not Lee Shin, the Emperor might have been able to win.’

Watching Lee Shin flying on a Skeleton in the distance, Para McMatain clenched his teeth. Despite the Emperor's remarkable talent, he was still an unpolished gem. On the other hand, Lee Shin had already reached a level of mastery. Therefore, the Emperor could not be compared with Lee Shin.

[Fire Strike]

Dozens of arrows of fire spread through the air, striking the flames created by the Emperor fiercely.

Swoosh—!

Fwooosh—!

As the Emperor's flames clashed with Lee Shin's arrows, the flame seemed to get absorbed by Lee Shin's magic and even bolstered the power of Lee Shin's Fire Strike.

"No way...!" the Emperor shouted.

The Emperor looked baffled, and Lee Shin laughed at the sight of him.

"You still have a long way to go, little one."