

The Tower 199

Chapter 199: The Defense

The Eternal Gate had been open for a year now. As Lee Shin had anticipated, no more Dimension Gates appeared, and more challengers returned to South Korea.

Once a quiet, small city, Daejeon had become busier and more populated than ever. Now known as the second capital after Seoul, it attracted numerous challengers due to the appearance of the Eternal Gate.

Being in Daejeon allowed people to see famous challengers from around the world, but the best part was the protection provided by these challengers. Daejeon had become a safer place than Seoul.

"G-gate, it's a gate!"

"Hurry up and report it to the Association!"

"Okay, I got it!"

People strolling on the streets of Daejeon's Yuseong District suddenly shouted upon seeing a new white gate appear in the sky. However, not many panicked or were scared, as all renowned challengers were in Daejeon today.

"Is that it?" Samuel asked.

"Yes, but it feels somewhat different from the previous gates," Cha Yu-Min replied, looking at the gate.

Samuel, the Chairman of WCA, and Cha Yu-Min had rushed there upon hearing the news.

"Wow... The energy from the gate is quite extraordinary," muttered Sevrino, examining the new gate with his dimensional energy detection device.

"What do you mean by that?" Chairman Samuel asked.

"This gate's dimensional energy is much stronger than the previous ones. Hmm... it seems like the total amount of dimensional energy Earth can withstand has increased significantly," Sevrino replied seriously, rubbing his chin.

"How much has it increased?" Chairman Samuel asked.

"It's three times stronger than the gate that appeared two months ago," Sevrino replied.

"Mr. Cha Yu-Min, you faced the beast that appeared then, right?" Chairman Samuel asked, raising his eyebrow.

"Yes, I defeated it. Beasts like that appear on the 70th floor and up," Cha Yu-Min replied.

"Okay, then... The next wave should either be a quantitative or qualitative increase. Three times the enemies, or enemies three times stronger," Chairman Samuel muttered.

No enemies had come through the gate yet, probably because the gate wasn't fully active. They had a rough estimate of what was to come based on the energy measurement.

"Oh, Chairman!"

A black sedan made its way through the crowd toward Chairman Samuel. When its gate opened, Jeon Jae-Yong, the Chairman of the Challengers Association, appeared.

"You were already here," Jeon Jae-Yong said.

"Yes, the conference was nearby," Chairman Samuel asked.

"The gate... Has it not opened yet?" Jeon Jae-Yong asked.

"No, it hasn't opened yet," Chairman Samuel replied.

Jeon Jae-Yong looked around, taking in the many famous challengers present.

"I see that we have Mr. Cha Yu-Min and Jonathan here with us and Vergo from England... So, even if the gate opens, I would not worry too much," Jeon Jae-Yong muttered, looking around.

"No, we will have to be concerned," Chairman Samuel replied.

Jeon Jae-Yong tilted his head in confusion. Simultaneously, the shining white gate vibrated strongly, and something emerged from within.

"Is that an Angel...?"

That race had pure white skin, golden eyes, and white feather wings on their backs.

"What the hell is going on...?" Cha Yu-Min muttered.

The Angel's appearance made Cha Yu-Min clench his teeth and activate his mana. This opponent was unforeseen, as the thought of Angels invading Earth had never crossed his mind.

"We need to evacuate the people here."

"Chairman Samuel!"

"Our staff is already moving. We will request government support," Chairman Samuel replied.

The Association staff and government officials guided people to evacuate from Yuseong District. If a fight broke out with the angels, they couldn't predict the potential magnitude of the fight. A lot of angels had appeared from the gate, and they were all flapping their wings in the air.

Furthermore, only challengers from the 50th floor and above could fight toe to toe with Angels. There were 50 challengers here, but even that was insufficient manpower to fight off the dozens of Angels.

"Still, dealing with just these regular Angels should be possible."

"Fortunately, Combat Angels have not appeared—" Chairman Samuel was interrupted by another intense vibration.

Angels with two sets of wings emerged from the gate.

"Oh fu... dge," Chairman Samuel, who rarely uttered profanity, almost let one slip.

The Angel side now had Combat Angels, six Combat Angels to be accurate.

"Who is in charge of this place?" asked a Combat Angel while looking around.

Chairman Samuel looked up and faced the Angel as he stepped forward.

"It's me," Chairman Samuel replied.

No one around objected to Samuel taking the lead.

"We are Angels from the heavenly realm. We have come to assess Earth's current situation and to offer support," the Angel said.

This unexpected statement surprised Chairman Samuel and the other nearby challengers, as they had not expected that the Angels were here to provide support.

"Huh? What are you talking about? You are here to offer support...?" Chairman Samuel asked in confusion.

"The weakest race, humans. There are Earthlings here who haven't even begun to harness their potential, so we—the heavenly realm—have deemed you unfit for interdimensional competition," the Angel replied.

"We are fit enough," Chairman Samuel replied.

"No, you guys still don't know anything. And that is why we've come to protect Earth," the Angel said.

Chairman Samuel clenched his teeth, and his expression hardened. Humans: The weakest race. He despised that label. Everywhere he went in the Tower, humans were looked down upon and scorned as the weakest race. And now, Angels had come to protect the weak, helpless humans.

'Will it truly be protection with pure intentions?'

"Protection" for Earth did indeed sound good. However, as someone who had faced numerous challenges and encountered treacherous individuals, Samuel found it difficult to believe as there was no such thing as a free lunch.

"We are constantly growing stronger," Chairman Samuel replied.

"Are you referring to the Tower?" the Angel asked.

"Yes, that's right," Chairman Samuel replied.

"That's funny. How long has it even been since humans entered the Tower?" The Combat Angel with short brown hair scoffed at Samuel. "Do you even know why Earthlings were allowed to enter the Tower?"

'Why we were allowed to enter...?'

The mocking laughter, the relaxed demeanor, and their tone suggested they knew something; this bothered Samuel. He wondered if they really knew the reason.

"Well... What's the reason?" Chairman Samuel asked.

"It was to prepare Earthlings for interdimensional war," the Angel replied.

"Huh...? Who would do that?" Chairman Samuel asked.

"You don't need to know that. To protect your dimensions, you need strong individuals. The Tower allows Earthlings to accumulate achievements and experience numerous worlds, fostering their growth. However, you Earthlings rushed into the interdimensional war much faster than expected," the Angel said.

At first, it sounded like the Angel had said that for their benefit, but Samuel could see the inconsistencies.

'The reason he gave for why Earth must fight in the interdimensional war is what I find most absurd. After all, we've never opened any gates ourselves.'

The Angel deliberately omitted that point. Simply put, if they thought of it as Earth receiving protection from these Angels, the matter would be resolved. However, a nagging doubt prevented Samuel from easily believing it.

'If only Mr. Lee Shin were here... His view on the situation would've surely helped.'

Unfortunately, Lee Shin was in the midst of conquering the Tower, so Samuel could not seek his advice.

"Mr. Chairman, I don't think it is the time to come to a definite conclusion."

Someone murmured by Samuel's side.

"Why is that?" Samuel asked.

"Angels inherently seek righteousness. However, they adhere to strict regulations and hold unchanging values."

"So, you're saying there is potential for conflict," Chairman Samuel replied.

"Yes, that's right."

Chairman Samuel nodded, recognizing the validity of the statement. While the Angels' help could save Earth from certain destruction, accepting it would also bind Earth to the heavenly realm. This was a decision that required careful deliberation.

"I am sorry, but please give us some time. This is not a decision I can make alone," Chairman Samuel said.

The Angel's face contorted, and he pointed his golden lance at Samuel.

"Answer me now. You clearly stated earlier that you're the representative here," the Angel said angrily.

"The Earthlings here don't represent the entirety of Earth," Chairman Samuel said.

"Ridiculous. Do you think I'm unaware that most of Earth's energy is concentrated here?" the Angel replied.

"..." Samuel was wrapped in contemplation.

The Angels' demeanor was quite firm. Judging by their number, it was evident that they were staging a show of force.

'Now I'm certain.'

It was clear from the Angels' attitude that they never intended to give the humans a choice. Also, he realized that they should not accept the Angels' assistance.

"I will refuse," Chairman Samuel said.

Samuel had made the decision after careful consideration, and his firm resolve surprised his colleagues. Cha Yu-Min calmly nodded his head, and Sevrino observed the situation from the back with an intrigued expression, then discreetly stepped back. And this entire scene was being broadcast live to the whole world.

"Ladies and gentlemen, Chairman Samuel has made an unexpected decision," said Sami Harrison.

Present at the scene, Sami Harrison had started broadcasting the moment the gate appeared. As always, viewers flooded into her broadcast. Due to the tense atmosphere, she could not speak loudly, but she was quietly discussing the situation with her viewers.

Why is he refusing to get assistance when the Angels are offering to help?

Yeah, I don't quite understand that either. Aren't Angels supposed to be good guys?

What are they talking about? They barged in and were talking like that. So how are we supposed to think they're good?

They've built up their reputation so well that they're seen positively no matter what they do.

Man... but look at the atmosphere. A war with the Angels could break out anytime.

After watching this broadcast, all the challengers are heading to Korea.

Just wait a little longer! I'm on a flight to Korea right now, too! Let's show our strength as Earthlings!

Did you say we're the weakest race? Bullshit! Angels, I'm coming to get you!

The public was divided on whether Earth should seek help from the Angels or rely on its own resources. But as time passed, one side of the debate gained more support than the other.

"Do you believe Earthlings can protect themselves?" asked the Angel.

"We have done so until now and will continue to do so," Chairman Samuel replied.

"Is that so? Then look at this," said the Angel.

The Angel thrust his golden lance into the air. It split the space above; as if a screen had appeared there, they could see a scene from somewhere emerge through the rift.

Gloop— Gloop—

A colossal, muscular mass continued to expand in size. And from within it, strange and grotesque beasts kept emerging.

"What's that?"

"Where is that place?"

Then, the scene shifted to another place.

- Aaaaah!

- Mom! Mom!

- Please help... please...

- Uaaaah!

- Not my daughter! Just take me instead...

The beasts from the muscle mass were now indiscriminately capturing, killing, and devouring people. Most of these victims were ordinary individuals who lacked the strength to defend themselves. With a stern gaze, the Angel observed the humans lying on the ground, silently conveying the message, 'Can't you see? Your land is under attack.'

Chairman Samuel gritted his teeth and immediately pulled out his phone. His phone began to ring.

Click.

"Check the location right now and—"

Crack!

A blinding light had pierced Samuel's phone, and it fell. With eyes wide open, he stared at the sky with contempt. The Angel, with a stoic expression, pointed directly at Chairman Samuel.

"I was in the midst of a conversation with you, human," said the Angel.

Chairman Samuel glared at the Angels. The other challengers present caught on to the fact that the place was Mayotte and began moving in that direction.

"Stop that!" the Angel shouted.

Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh!

Lances fell one after another in front of the challengers, who had started to move. Startled by the sudden attack, they quickly turned around to look at the Angels.

"You said earlier that the ones here are not all the challengers. So, try to protect that place with the remaining Earthlings. If you guys can do that, then I will acknowledge Earthlings' ability to protect themselves," the Angel said.

The Angel's statement frustrated the challengers and the people worldwide.

These insane bastards!

Let's just kill all of them and go!

Angels are worse than demons. This damn son of a bitch.

They're totally nuts, aren't they?

In the midst of this, Cha Yu-Min exchanged glances with Chairman Samuel. The others did the same—they could no longer tolerate the Angels' actions.

"More than six challengers here have reached the 80th floor. We will handle those Combat Angels and—"
" Cha Yu-Min was interrupted.

"Wait a second... take a look at that," Chairman Samuel said.

Chairman Samuel sternly observed the situation at Mayotte. The space above Mayotte twisted, and a black hole emerged. From within it, six challengers appeared.

- If it weren't for you, Ms. Yu Jia, things would have gone terribly wrong.

- Man, we were lucky.

- But Ms. Aphzal Tashi came here on a trip with Mr. Ethan...

- It's okay. When something like this happens in one's country, they should help.

- Hmm... There are quite a lot of beasts...

- Thank you for coming, Mr. Para.

- No, the Empire had received grace as well. So, it's only natural to help.

Yu Jia, Park Joo-Hyuk, Baek Hyun, Natasha Poly from Germany, Aphzal Tashi the Cyclops, and Para McMatain the Great Wizard had emerged from the black hole.

"We're good... With that much combat power, we can certainly put up a good fight...!" Chairman Samuel smiled with hope and punched the air.

The reactions of the others on the scene were the same.