

## **The Tower 201**

### **Chapter 201**

Yu Jia had swiftly resolved the situation in Mayotte by bringing Laurent to the island and conducting search and rescue operations for survivors. Thanks to her efforts, many individuals survived despite the near-destruction they had faced. The remaining challengers and the American forces dealt with Ronaz's subordinates.

"We handled it ourselves. Did you see that?" said Samuel, watching the situation through the Heavenly Gaze.

The stifling tension instantly dissipated. Sikael and the Angels, still floating in the sky, cast stern gazes at Samuel and the challengers before retracting their lances, all without uttering a single word.

"Do you think this is the end? Do you think all the enemies will be this easy to deal with?" the Angel asked mockingly.

"I'll think about that when the time comes," Chairman Samuel replied.

"You will regret it, you Earthlings," said Sikael.

Sikael turned around after uttering those words. Suddenly, a gate materialized, and the Angels vanished into it. The previously anxious challengers breathed a collective sigh of relief after they left.

"I was terrified at the thought of facing the Angels head-on," said Ethan, returning to his human form.

"Haha, what are you saying? You acted so confident, though." Jonathan, standing beside him, chuckled.

"Jonathan, were you that scared of the Angels? You didn't even say a word," said Vergo, teasing him.

"You're still very emotional. Do you think fighting the Angels would be good for Earth? No. Earth has more enemies than you think." Surprisingly, Jonathan retorted nonchalantly.

"This coming from someone who used to talk shit about Cha Yu-Min all day, every day?" Jenny, who was standing next to them, pointed out.

"Haha, let's not talk about the past." Even though Cha Yu-Min heard the conversation, he just laughed lightly, as if he were used to it.

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After clearing the 75th floor, Lee Shin returned to the Lardel Archipelago. Word of his return spread, prompting people to gather on Island number 43 and share the latest news about Earth with him.

"What...?" Lee Shin was shocked.

Lee Shin learned about the unexpected demon invasion, which occurred on a secluded island lacking a gate detector, resulting in the near annihilation of its inhabitants. The Angels exploited this situation to intimidate the people of Earth.

Lee Shin found the situation so ludicrous that he had to stop himself from bursting into laughter. He furrowed his eyebrows as he thought about the Angels' atrocities. How could they pressure and suppress the challengers of Earth to stop the devil?

'I guess I'll have to visit the Demon World at least once.'

If not for the challengers who had gathered to increase Earth's combat power, the Earthlings would have suffered significant damage this time. With the demise of Astaroth's direct subordinate on Earth, the demons would certainly target Earth again, seeking revenge. However, Lee Shin believed that would be their downfall.

"It was a good idea to postpone the alliance with the Angels once," Lee Shin said to Kang Sang-Jun.

"Is that so? Whew... I'm relieved to hear that." Kang Sang-Jun, the Deputy Director of the National Security Agency and Lee Shin's right-hand man, let out a sigh of relief.

He must have been anxious about refusing the Angels' offer.

"But if you said 'once,' does that mean..." Kang Sang-Jun muttered.

"If they come again next time, we'll renegotiate when I'm still around," Lee Shin replied.

Dealing with the Angels' overbearing attitude couldn't have been easy for the Earthlings without him. He couldn't believe they had tried to negotiate with the Earthlings by pressuring them with their Combat Angels.

'They knew for sure that I was not around.'

Otherwise, they would have avoided negotiating with Earthlings with such a few Combat Angels.

"Next time, the Angels will come with much greater combat power," Lee Shin said.

"Even more combat power? Then, by how much...?" Confusion appeared on Kang Sang-Jun's face.

Lee Shin could understand his reaction. After all, from Kang Sang-Jun and the Earthlings' perspective, those few Combat Angels were intimidating enough.

"A Great Angel might appear next time. So, tell everyone to strengthen themselves as much as possible by then," Lee Shin said.

"Did you just say a Great Angel? What if they come while you're inside the Tower?" Kang Sang-Jun asked with a worried look.

"It won't happen like that. Those guys can not come to Earth as they please for at least a month now. Besides, it might take even longer for a Great Angel or something like that to come over," Lee Shin said.

"Well... Okay then," Kang Sang-Jun replied.

Being confrontational with the Angels would put Earth in an unfavorable position. The confrontation with the Angels was not a favorable direction for the Earthlings.

Allying with the demons was almost impossible, and the gods of Astria were just as hostile, if not more so. If even the heavenly realm turned hostile toward them, Earthlings would end up in a bad situation. The heavenly realm must have been aware of this, which explained their aggressive approach.

"Mr. Sevrino," Lee Shin called out.

"Oh, have you arrived?" Sevrino replied.

Sevrino had been waiting for him on Earth.

"How is the research on the gate going?" Lee Shin asked Sevrino.

"We are making some progress but need more time on it. But thanks to the improved performance and efficiency of the gate detector, we should be able to install it in more locations now," Sevrino replied.

"Are we still unable to stop the gates from opening?" Lee Shin asked.

"No, we can't block them, especially if powerful beings like the gods force it open. In theory, we can stop a gate from opening by using energy of an equivalent magnitude, but that kind of power source is quite difficult to find," Sevrino explained.

"All right then. Let's keep trying," Lee Shin said.

"Of course," Sevrino replied.

Just as Lee Shin was about to depart, a sudden thought struck him, making him turn back.

"Oh, and..." Lee Shin muttered.

"Yes?" Sevrino replied.

"Do you happen to know of any way to get to the heavenly realm?" Lee Shin asked.

Lee Shin had no plans to visit the heavenly realm yet, but he might visit if there was a way.

"It is impossible at the moment. But, if the Angels come over again, I will try to collect their dimensional coordinates," Sevrino replied.

"What about the demon world?" Lee Shin asked again.

"Opening a gate from Earth to the demon world is difficult, but if the demons open a gate, we could forcibly keep that gate from closing," Sevrino replied.

"Oh, is that so?" Lee Shin asked, looking interested.

It was great news for Lee Shin. He wanted to let those beings attacking Earth by opening gates know that they could also suffer great defeats. The gate maintenance device was essential for that.

"Thanks for your help," Lee Shin said.

"All right," Sevrino replied.

After leaving the Eternal Gate, Lee Shin looked back at the city of Daejeon; it had undergone a remarkable transformation. In Seogyo-Dong, a massive magic academy staffed with experts from the Empire had been swiftly constructed. This institution evaluated the magical aptitude of applicants every quarter, offering instruction to those who passed the tests.

These magic academies had been established in Korea, the United States, China, Britain, and Germany, with the one in Korea having the largest scale.

"Huh? Is that you, Mr. Lee Shin?"

When Lee Shin entered the academy, a passerby recognized Lee Shin. The student seemed surprised to see Lee Shin there.

"Wow! Hey, hey! John! Come over here!"

A black student in the distance turned around because of this student. As if he had also recognized Lee Shin, he cast the Haste spell and quickly ran toward Lee Shin.

'He already knows how to use the Haste spell?'

Even though they were from the first class, they had only been here for about four or five months. Yet they were already using Haste naturally, indicating they had a remarkable talent.

"Hello, Sir! Nice to meet you. My name is John, and I am a fan," John introduced himself to Lee Shin.

John introduced himself with a somewhat shy tone. Looking at John's shining eyes made it a bit awkward for Lee Shin to just walk by.

"Yeah, nice to meet you," Lee Shin replied.

"Wow... Did you come here to give a lecture or something?"

"Wow! Really? Is that true?"

Their loud chatter caught the attention of the other students, so more students gathered to see Lee Shin after sensing his presence through the academy windows. It made Lee Shin feel like he needed to leave the academy fast.

"John, you used the Haste spell just now, right?" Lee Shin asked John.

"Huh? Yes, I did!" John replied.

"Haste spell is a buff magic that enhances the speed of the entire body. If you focus that spell on your legs to walk faster, you will disrupt your balance. Try to distribute that mana evenly throughout your whole body. It will increase the efficiency," Lee Shin suggested.

"Oh! Yes! Yes! I get it! Thank you!" John replied with excitement.

Tears welled in John's eyes as if he had received an incredible gift. While Lee Shin didn't think that it was that significant of advice, the student seemed to take it that way. Standing beside him, his friend seemed interested in talking with him, but Lee Shin quickly left due to the other students crowding around.

Buzz—

Casting a confusion spell to slip away from the students, Lee Shin headed to the rooftop of the academy, where Laurent was lounging with his sunglasses on, smoking a cigarette.

"What are you doing here?" Lee Shin asked.

"Huh? Is that you, Lee Shin?" Laurent replied.

Laurent reluctantly got up as if it was a bother to look at Lee Shin. Then, he took a cigarette from his pocket and threw it at Lee Shin.

"Have one," Laurent said.

"Nah, I'm good," Lee Shin replied.

Lee Shin handed him the cigarette back. He needed to return to the Tower now, so he needed a clear and alert mind.

"I've been waiting for Mr. Vian here because he's here," Laurent said.

"Oh," Lee Shin muttered.

Ha...

Laurent observed the cigarette smoke, thick and billowing, as it slowly dispersed from his parted lips.

"You know that guy named Ronaz? I shot him, but that wasn't the end," Laurent said with disappointment.

"What are you talking about?" Lee Shin asked to clarify.

"I think that guy is still alive," Laurent replied.

Laurent approached Lee Shin, flicking his cigarette ashes and smirking.

"What's the plan?" Laurent asked Lee Shin.

His heavy eyes, visible through the sunglasses, seemed irritated, an emotion that wasn't common for him. Lee Shin chuckled as he looked at Laurent.

"I suppose we need to get revenge," Lee Shin replied.



"How are you going to do that?" Laurent asked.

"I'm going to head to the demon world," Lee Shin replied.

If possible, Lee Shin wanted to go to the fourth realm where Astaroth resided.

"I will go with you," said Laurent.

Click.

Sizzle—

How many cigarettes had he lit up? Lighting up a cigarette one after another, he did not even wait for Lee Shin's response before turning and walking away.

"Feel free to do so," Lee Shin replied.

It was rather good for Lee Shin if someone like Laurent wanted to come along.

'All right then. No one will be able to beat us in terms of firepower.'

One more strong individual fighting with him at the front line would only do him good, so Lee Shin was happy with Laurent's choice.

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[You have cleared the 79th floor.]

[You are moving on to the 80th floor.]

Surrounded by a shimmering blue sea was a massive waterside city called Wayser. Dense rows of white, rectangular buildings adorned this city; it was the gathering spot of challengers who had cleared the 79th floor.

"All right, all right! We have Ranker Deyor, the 4,864th place on the Integrated Ranking! He stands here to pull out the Weeping Sword Scrap!" the bookie shouted to get people's attention.

Lee Shin strolled down the street, noticing a gathering of people in the bustling square. They were huddled together, captivated by some spectacle in the distance.

Pushing through the crowd, he saw that a participant, Deyor, was about to draw an old-looking sword stuck in the center of the square.

"Countless have come only to fail before this mighty sword. Will this challenger accomplish the seemingly impossible?!" the bookie shouted.

A robust bald man could be seen doing some basic stretches there; the bookie stood next to him, collecting bets from the crowd.

"All right! Place your points on whether Deyor can pull out that sword! Depending on the amount, you can win anywhere from two to five times your points!" the bookie shouted.

The bookie divulged Deyor's physical attributes, rank, and abilities, aiming to elicit an enthusiastic response from the crowd. Despite climbing to the 80th floor being regarded as a lofty achievement, anyone within the top 5,000 rankings was deemed exceptionally skilled. Even though challengers ranked even higher than Deyor had failed to extract the sword before, some still pondered the possibility and placed bets.

"Hey there, Sir, with the purple hair. You have just arrived in time. Why don't you give it a shot? You have a chance to multiply your points!" the bookie said.

The bookie specifically pointed Lee Shin out, making him chuckle and bet 10,000 points.

"Oh! Thank you! 10,000 points is quite a sum. Looks like we don't have any more bets, so let us start!" said the bookie.

Deyor activated his reddish mana and grabbed the hilt of the old, worn sword.

"Grrrraaaahhh!"

With a mighty roar, Deyor used all his strength to pull. The Sword Scrap trembled slightly, making the people gasp in admiration. Ultimately, the crowd couldn't help but be disappointed when the sword remained trapped despite Deyor's best efforts.

"Ha, I guess that's how it is."

"Do you remember the last challenger? He was in the 3,800th place or something, so if even he failed, how could someone weaker than him succeed?"

"Argh, I just wasted money."

"Tsk tsk, I feel so bad for that person. He basically wasted 10,000 points falling for the bookie's trap."

People shook their heads and laughed at Lee Shin. Deyor, his face red, clenched his teeth in frustration.

"What the hell! What kind of trick have you set up here?" Deyor shouted.

"Oh my, he's getting started again."

"Let's get out of here."

As Deyor threw a fit, people began to slip away from the scene. Suddenly, Deyor slammed himself onto the ground and began rolling around.

"Ahhh! What is this! This..." Deyor shouted.

Deyor contorted like a contortionist despite not being one and let out a painful scream before leaping into the seawater nearby.

Splash!

Many individuals on the scene burst into laughter as they watched Deyor in amusement. They seemed quite familiar with the sight.

"For those of you who are new, you should know that those who cause a ruckus in front of the Weeping Sword usually end up like that. So be cautious," the bookie explained.

The bookie looked delighted from having earned a substantial income.

"May I take the challenge?" Lee Shin asked, taking a step forward.

Amidst the resounding disappointment emanating from the crowd, Lee Shin stepped forward. Observing this, the bookie glanced suspiciously at Lee Shin before giving a subtle nod of approval.

"Are you upset about losing money?" the bookie asked Lee Shin.

"I paid 10,000 points, so can I try it?" Lee Shin asked.

"Sure! Typically, a set number of challengers are accepted daily, but this time, we will accept him as a special one!" shouted the bookie, trying to draw the crowd's attention again.

"Aren't you taking bets?" Lee Shin asked.

In response to Lee Shin's question, the bookie chuckled and shook his head.

"I will let you take this challenge as a special case, but who would want to bet on someone like you?" the bookie said mockingly.

Given the previous failures of those strong challengers, the odds of Lee Shin succeeding appeared slim. Lee Shin himself was well aware of this fact. As he surveyed the surroundings, he noticed people nodding in agreement with the bookie's remarks. However, the onlookers didn't have the sole right to place bets.

"I'll bet," Lee Shin said.

"Sorry? You want to bet?" The bookie looked confused.

"Yes. I guess I'll just bet about 500,000 points," Lee Shin replied.

"Oh, you want to bet 5,000 points? Isn't that too much though—" The bookie was interrupted.

"Not 5,000 points but 500,000. I want to bet 500,000 points." Lee Shin made it clear.

As Lee Shin corrected him, the bookie's eyes widened in surprise.

"Oh! Huh? Wait, did you say 500,000...?" The bookie could not believe what he had just heard.

Excitedly, Lee Shin pulled out five 100,000-point tickets from his pocket and handed them to the bookie.

"What? Is this not enough?" Lee Shin asked with a smirk.