

The Tower 230

Chapter 230

- Yes! That is it!

Gene Ebrium exclaimed with satisfaction upon seeing Seiku's strike. Lee Shin watched the spectacle that Seiku had created and also chuckled. Not only did the guy with the goggles change, but the surroundings had also completely changed. An immense cold divided spring and winter along a certain boundary.

- Seiku is the legendary monster that wields the power of both ice and fire. This monster is even more powerful than some of the high-ranking gods, but he became my subordinate after he was subjugated by me.

"Did he retain his physical form?" Lee Shin asked.

- Yes, unlike ordinary gods, he did not discard his physical form.

"I see," Lee Shin replied.

Lee Shin's lingering doubts, the things he had predicted but lacked certainty about, were now cleared up, thanks to Gene Ebrium. He keenly felt how much of an impact a wise adviser could have on one person through this brief journey with Gene Ebrium.

"So then, what about those guys?" Lee Shin asked, looking at the Apostles.

In response, Gene, who was deep in thought, shook his head.

- They are receiving significant divine power from the gods. The stronger the connection, the less their bodies belong to them.

"So, you're saying that in the end, they're useless," Lee Shin muttered.

Lee Shin's concise summary made Gene Ebrium smirk. Then, he pointed to the frozen Apostle. The ice created by Seiku was cracking now. After noticing this, Lee Shin promptly put Seiku back into the Shadow Space, and picked up the nearby bamboo to sharpen their edges.

Swoosh—!

He thrust the sharp end of the bamboo stick through the fissure in the ice.

Woosh—!

Other individuals who were standing around wondered if the Apostle would die from being pierced by a bamboo spear. Earlier, as Lee Shin was carving the bamboo shoots, he had layered magic over them. As a result, it was greenish blood that flowed through the fissure.

The ice shattered, and the Apostle's body fell limply to the ground.

[You have defeated an opponent with a divinity class of 5 or higher.]

[You have partially fulfilled the conditions of The Path to Become an Adversary.]

- See, they're not entirely useless, are they?

Gene was all smiles, as if he found amusement in the Apostle's futile struggle and demise as he succumbed to Lee Shin's power.

Bababam—!

Loud roars of explosions reverberated as the bamboo forest turned into chaos. The once vast, open fields with its swaying bamboo trees were now burning fiercely, sending dense billows of smoke into the air. Before anyone could realize, the evening twilight had set in, the sky blending into the blazing flames.

While Lee Shin had managed to deal a clearly fatal blow to an Apostle, the others were still in action. Facing Bamak, Sikaël was struggling even with the help of his comrades. Moreover, Luca, who had turned into a white demon soul, was wildly rampaging through the bamboo forest.

"Tsk." Lee Shin clicked his tongue.

Although all of Earth's combat power had not been assembled yet, and he still had plenty of energy left, Lee Shin was not feeling great about the current state of the bamboo forest because it reminded him of Earth's past.

- Hey, come on! You look terrible. Are you feeling a bit down?

"I have to admit that I am," Lee Shin replied.

- In that case, how about you try exerting a bit more of your combat power? I'm aware that the gods have not shown up yet, but it seems like you can afford to display that level of strength.

In response to Gene Ebrium's words, Lee Shin slowly activated his black mana.

"Yeah, I was going to do that," Lee Shin replied.

Dark and ominous shadows spread here and there across the ground. These shadows, which belonged to Lee Shin, sent the Apostles into high alert, and they started to retreat cautiously.

The next moment, the Undead emerged from the shadows. As soon as they revealed themselves, they were struck down by the relentless attacks of the Apostles. However, this resistance was only temporary.

As the Undead broke through the Apostles' offense and clung stubbornly to them, the advantage the Apostles had when they made the first move was quickly nullified.

One of the Undead, wielding a twisted staff, released a purple-colored mist forward. It was a curse spell that reduced one's physical abilities upon inhalation of the mist or contact with the skin.

At the same time, an Undead with a large hammer launched a surprise attack and slammed Bamak's head while he was engaged in combat with Sikael and Baek Hyun.

Baaam—!

However, Bamak seemed completely unfazed by such a direct blow. He took a step back but otherwise did not seem to be bothered at all.

"It seems we have more pests to deal with," Bamak muttered, looking at Lee Shin's contingent of the Undead.

Some time had passed since the battle began, but only one of the Apostles, the one Lee Shin had dealt with earlier, had fallen so far. On the other hand, the challengers from Earth were starting to struggle as they faced the relentless assaults of the Apostles.

Splash—!

Bamak, whose body could stretch and shrink like slime, suddenly expanded his form across the battlefield, attacking the United Earth from various directions. Screams echoed in all directions, as muscle and flesh were torn apart and ripped to shreds by the merciless strikes of Bamak.

"Hahaha!" Bamak, drenched in blood, seemed to revel in the madness.

Amidst the chaos and Bamak's laughter, a luminous sphere rose into the sky, emitting sharp beams of light down to the ground. It was a precise attack of light aimed solely at the Apostles. Thousands of these brilliant streaks of light went on its own trajectories and swept across the sky, piercing the air.

Crack— Crack— Swoosh—!

In an instant, Bamak's clones, which had earlier dominated the battlefield, turned into insubstantial liquids and disappeared.

Baaam—!

The next moment, the sphere of light exploded, blinding the eyes of everyone on the battlefield.

Clank!

And just as if waiting for that moment, there came a sound of reloading.

Bang! Bang! Bang! Baaang—!

With the sudden gunfire were bullets raining down, taking down two of the Apostles; Luca, who quickly recovered his vision, transformed into a semi-transparent phantom and charged toward the sniper. In response, Lee Shin extended the field of his mana detection, sweeping across the battlefield.

After grasping the situation, he sent his Corps of Immortality into action.

"It seems like this consumes more mental energy than I thought," Lee Shin said to Gene Ebrum.

- Yes, that's right. Nevertheless, you're adapting quite quickly because most others would not even dare to try.

In the shadow, Lee Shin reconstructed and restored the fallen Undead soldiers who broke apart multiple times and sent them back into the battlefield. There were more variables and things to worry about than Lee Shin had anticipated.

Granted Lee Shin's high adaptability, the Immortal Sphere was still crucial to give Lee Shin a much-needed boost in his speed to adapt.

- The combat power of Earth is quite substantial too.

Ever since Lee Shin had explained to Gene what Earth was like, Gene had not really expected much combat power from Earth. Besides, it was not in his nature to rely on others in the first place. However, the combat power displayed by Earth at the moment was beyond his expectations.

‘Wow, Para McMatain’s mastery of mana control has become more refined.’

Just a little while ago, Lee Shin was impressed by the precision of that light magic. Now, it seemed that Para's abilities were almost on par with Laurent’s.

- The performance of the first-floor heroes is remarkable.

"Yes, it seems so because they are against the ones who made them that way in the first place," Lee Shin replied.

The souls in a state of slumber on the first floor were those that had resisted the gods and were subsequently cast down to the first floor.

Based on the information Lee Shin had gathered so far, it seemed like those who had committed grave sins in the eyes of the gods were abandoned to the first floor, instead of being used for other stages. Alternatively, the worlds those individuals belonged to might not have been suitable for them to be used on other stages.

- It will be over soon.

The odds on the battlefield had completely shifted in favor of Earth. The combat power of the United Earth was stronger than expected, but above all, Lee Shin and the Corps of Immortality were too formidable.

Confusion, anger, and desire filled the Apostles, and murderous intent was apparent in their eyes; yet they had no choice but to retreat. It was obvious to Lee Shin that their movements were changing little by little.

- It seems like they are trying to escape.

"No way. I'm not going to let that happen," Lee Shin muttered, looking at the Apostles.

With a cold smile, Lee Shin gathered his mana and sent a brilliant burst of blue mana light into the sky.

Rumble— Rumble—!

Thunderclouds gathered in an instant, and within them, lightning energy crackled. As always, he was planning to use his thunderbolt. While it was effective in dealing damage, it was not a foolproof method.

‘That was the case until I met Gene Ebrium.’

However, it was going to be different this time.

[True Thunderbolt]

The thunder roared loudly, assaulting the Apostles' eardrums.

Bababam—!

A single bolt of white lightning struck down, annihilating one of the Apostles who was frowning, fixed to his spot, to signal the start of the attacks.

[You have defeated an opponent with a divinity class of 5 or higher.]

[You have partially fulfilled the conditions of The Path to Become an Adversary.]

Once again, the message appeared. Meanwhile, the ground where the lightning had struck burst into flames, rapidly spreading into a massive conflagration.

Babababam—!

The second bolt of lightning struck, pushing back the spreading flames and melting another Apostle's armor, turning them into charred meat. The Apostles' fear at the sight of the power of the True Thunderbolt spread rapidly.

Amidst this chaos, the Corps of Immortality continued to fight relentlessly, turning two other Apostles into cripples as the Corps went into the shadows.

In the next moment, the power of the enemies' offense went up a few notches. Was it due to the pressure of imminent danger, or was it a desperate attempt to escape Earth before the next True Thunderbolt strike? Some of the Apostles' attitudes had suddenly changed.

- Now, they finally appear.

Gene Ebrium muttered as if his expectations had been met, while Lee Shin watched the enemies with a calm gaze.

The Apostles took on a physical form as an embodiment of the gods. Those who received a greater share of the gods' strength exhibited reduced resistance to their control.

"Keaughhh...!" a challenger of the Earth groaned.

"What is this! W-What's happening all of a sudden?" Another challenger of the Earth started to panic.

The sudden change in the Apostles' attitude caused chaos among the challengers of the United Earth. Jonathan, who had been pierced in the side by an Apostle's sword, was leaning against a tree, bleeding profusely. Laurent, with his hair disheveled, was barely holding off Luca's onslaught.

Park Joo-Hyuk and his team, who had arrived late to the battlefield, managed to take down one of the Apostles, but the injuries they sustained made it difficult to continue fighting. The rest were struggling to withstand the Apostles' attacks. In the midst of this, the third lightning bolt struck down.

Bababam—!

The shockwave of the white thunderbolt was directly heading toward the gelatinous, writhing form of Bamak. The next moment, Bamak's body expanded and began to rotate in a circular motion, engulfing the strike of the thunderbolt.

Pizz—

Bamak, who had absorbed the True Thunderbolt head on, gradually shrank down to a tiny figure. His body, tightly pressed against the ground, wriggled thinly, with sparks leaping over him.

"This... This... can't... be..." Bamak groaned in pain.

As Bamak slowly continued his soliloquy, Lee Shin ignored him and continued to prepare for the fourth thunderbolt.

At that moment, a golden-eyed Apostle scattered golden energy toward the fallen Bamak through the spaces in the clouds of black smoke that covered the forest.

'That... is...'

Lee Shin felt a sense of familiarity toward the source of that power and smirked.

"So you've finally revealed yourself?" Lee Shin muttered, looking at the Apostle.

The yellow-haired Apostle, her skin as pale as snow and the hair reaching down to her waist, swayed lightly. As the sparkling golden dust enveloped Bamak just before he was about to die, Bamak's body began to rapidly grow and expand.

"You arrogant human, we finally meet like this," said the Apostle.

This Apostle, who was wearing a deadly smile, served the God of Blessings. From the early stages of climbing the Tower, Lee Shin and this god had kept an adversarial relationship. The god who had been constantly suppressing and tormenting Lee Shin had finally revealed her form.

"Haha." Watching this sight, Lee Shin could not help but chuckle. "All this time, you seemed so frightened and helpless. But didn't you decide to show up just because you thought the Apostle was about to die?"

"... Ugh! Your arrogance hasn't changed a bit," said the Apostle of the God of Blessings.

"Well, it is not arrogance if I have the skills to get things done on my own," Lee Shin replied.

"Very well, let's see just how much your puny strength has grown in the meantime," said the Apostle of the God of Blessings with a smirk.