

The Tower 45

Chapter 45: The Fifteenth Floor

There was a Beastman, a bear man, with a Navy Pattern. Baek Hyun pretended to be calm on the outside, but in fact, he had started to panic. His first sword attack was a well-thought one, but the Beastman blocked his attack, no problem. When Baek Hyun saw that, he could tell how great the Beastman's strength and mana power were.

'I could never beat him face-to-face, that means...'

After organizing his thoughts, Baek Hyun moved closer to Ethan, and in the meantime, other challengers who came with him rescued the four challengers who were captured.

"Madam?" Park Hye-Won looked surprised.

"Sorry, I'm late. Are you alright?" Kang Jung-Won asked.

"Whoa... I thought I was going to die. By the way, I still thought about your tteokbokki even when I was in such danger." Park Hye-Won smiled.

The nervous faces of the challengers who came to save them were a little relieved by Park Hye-Won's joke.

"I don't think Baek Hyun can manage on his own." Kim Kang-Chun tried to step forward.

"What can you do with a body like this? Just leave it to us," Kang Jung-Won replied.

Kim Kang-Chun tried to get up and step forward, but Kang Jung-Won pushed him back. The challengers surrounded the four people who looked devastated. They were all challengers from Undermost.

"I am relieved," Kim Kang-Chun replied.

Did Lee Shin tell them to stay behind for longer because he knew something like this would happen? The Korean challengers who got trained in the Undermost seemed more reliable than anyone else.

"Haha,?says the ones who don't even have a Pattern... Just kill them all!"

Challengers from other countries who formed Cartels in Isocia and the Korean challengers from the Undermost started a battle.

Thud—!

"Keugh!" Baek Hyun gasped.

Baek Hyun was in a fierce battle with Ethan, but soon, he was held by Ethan and thrown into the wall. Baek Hyun was helpless. He was losing because he could not overcome the Beastman's overwhelming physicality.

"Hahaha! Is that all you've got?" Ethan laughed at Baek Hyun.

Baek Hyun clicked his tongue and ran towards Ethan once again. As if walking on a blade, Baek Hyun could barely block Ethan's attacks. However, the next moment, a mana circle was shining bright under Baek Hyun's feet. When Ethan noticed that, he quickly retreated to avoid it.

However, contrary to Ethan's expectations, the strong mana that was felt in the mana circle disappeared the next moment, as if that was the true intention. There was no sign of attack from the mana circle; rather, Baek Hyun's sword emerged in a powerful stabbing motion.

[Wind Drill]

Baek Hyun's mana gathered in the sword, rotated at a high speed, and then fired at the opponent. The sword, now with maximum penetration power, came at Ethan's heart with precision. Even only a quick glance would reveal that it was a powerful technique that Baek Hyun had put in all his power.

While Ethan was pulling back, his body twisted strangely. His tail pressed against the ground and caused him to bounce up like a spring. Ethan smiled when he saw Baek Hyun's sword brush past his body by a slight gap. However, the next moment, Ethan's head hurriedly turned to the system message that appeared.

Boom!

[The Nucleus of Demon Realm has been broken.]

What Baek Hyun's technology had been aiming for a while ago was not Ethan, but the Nucleus of Demon Realm that was placed on top of the throne.

"Ugh! How dare you!" Ethan shouted.

Ethan, whose eyes were bloodshot, as if he was about to have another seizure, clenched his teeth as he watched the demon realm around him disappear.

"See you next time, kid," said Ethan.

Thump! Bang!

A crater was formed under Ethan's feet as he landed on the floor. And his body disappeared through the wall like a cannonball. Other challengers rushed out of the castle trying to follow him. Baek Hyun wanted to chase all of them, but he could not do that because of his fatigue.

[Merteng has been reclaimed.]

[Your merit points are being calculated.]

[The top three challengers will obtain the 『Red Pattern』.]

First. Kim Kang-Chun - 13,200 points.

Second. Park Joo-Hyuk - 10,800 points.

Third. Baek Hyun - 8,400 points.

[You have acquired the 『Red Pattern』.]

A Pattern symbolizing Merteng had been engraved on the back of Baek Hyun's hand and red mana power had filled it.

[Red Pattern]

You have received a qualification to go to the next stage.

The Health Point and Mana Power increases by 3%.

The overall stats increase by 5%.

The effects of the Pattern raised stats by percentages. The power from the Pattern gave wings to the three people who had collected more stats than anyone else on the lower floors.

"Wait! What happened to Joo-Hyuk! Is he okay?" Kim Kang-Chun remembered his comrade when he saw the merit point ranking.

"He will be okay. People have gone over there, too."

Only then did Kim Kang-Chun, Park Hye-Won, and Ji Eun-Ju seem relieved. After the Nucleus of the Demon Realm had been broken, the demon realm that covered the entire Merteng slowly began to disappear. The collapsed buildings were restored to their original state, and the owner of the empty throne came back.

"Dear Qualified, was it you guys who reclaimed Merteng?" the King asked.

When the challengers heard the graceful and dignified voice, everyone turned to the throne. The king was sitting on the throne, and the royal knights lined up on both sides. The magnificent appearance of the king made the challengers feel small somehow.

"Let them all out, except those people who are qualified as Red Patterns," the king demanded.

All of them worked hard together to defeat the enemies and destroy the demon realm, but the only ones who were recognized were those with the Pattern. Some people thought of protesting, but they were dragged out by the majestic knights, not able to shout a word.

The king introduced himself.

"Nice to meet you all! My name is Adolf Gin de Merteis, the King of Merteng."

.

"My name is Baek Hyun."

"I'm Park Joo-Hyuk."

Since Baek Hyun and Park Joo-Hyuk did not know any royal etiquette, they just bowed to him like they would normally do in Korea. And the king nodded.

"Is this how you greet people in your hometown?" King Merteis asked.

"That's right."

"There's no need to make that face. It's not the first day that people from other dimensions have come. By the way, are there only two Qualified with red patterns?" King Merteis looked at one of the royal knights.

"There's one more person down there," the royal knight replied.

"Go and get that person," King Merteis demanded.

"Yes sir!" the royal knight replied.

The royal knight responded to the king's order and left the Throne Room. Unlike the two challengers who were very nervous, the king seemed very relaxed.

"There's nothing to be nervous about. You are the distinguished guests of our country." King Merteis smiled.

* * *

[You have entered the 15th floor.]

[Please select the city you want to begin with.]

The names of various cities appeared in the air. Among them, Lee Shin already knew which city he wanted to choose.

[You have selected Seia, the city of magic.]

[Now, please select the Magic Tower.]

The names of various Magic Towers had appeared in the air. There was a Red Magic Tower, a Blue Magic Tower, and a Yellow Magic Tower... Although Lee Shin was somewhat struggling to make a decision, Lee Shin eventually decided to go with his initial choice.

[You have selected the Black Magic Tower.]

[The Black Magic Tower is a Magic Tower that has never produced a 'Deleaguer' in the Deleague for the past 300 years. Win the Deleague and produce a Deleaguer.]

[Or, kill all the masters of the Magic Towers, except the master of the Black Magic Tower.]

There were a total of seven Magic Towers in Seia, the city of magic. And these Magic Towers held a competition called Deleague, every seven years. This competition was done to elect a Deleaguer, the leader representing all seven Magic Towers. Lee Shin had to make the Black Magic Tower win at that competition.

'I remember from before that when I selected the Extreme level, I was told to knock down four Magic Towers in Deleague.'

This time, Lee Shin had to knock down all six Magic Towers and become the winner of the Deleague. Or else, he had to kill all the masters of the Magic Towers.

"I had expected it to be hard... but this is giving me a headache," Lee Shin mumbled.

The only Magic Tower that had never produced a Deleaguer in 300 years was the Black Magic Tower. Before starting anything, it was necessary for Lee Shin to understand why that happened.

"What are you doing here? Aren't you going to take the test?" a man in the robe with a black sheep pattern yelled at Lee Shin angrily.

The black sheep was a pattern that symbolized the Black Magic Tower.

"If you're not going to take the test, get lost. Don't mess around here!" the man shouted.

The way they greeted new wizards was completely contrary to other Magic Towers. Others would have been annoyed by this attitude of the wizard and went to another tower, but Lee Shin did not.

"I'll take the test," Lee Shin said.

"Really?" the man asked.

A moment's curiosity was just about the amount of attention the man gave to Lee Shin when he signed up for the test. The wizard of the Black Magic Tower only flicked his fingers and signaled Lee Shin to follow him, but he did not even bother to turn his head to look at Lee Shin.

"Here it is. Shoot a Dark Arrow on this dummy. If you manage to put a curse on him, you'll pass," the wizard explained.

Dark Arrow was the most basic mana of black mana. However, it was also a mana that could show a huge difference in the wizards' skills. Dark Arrow was characterized by not simply hitting the enemy, but being able to put a curse on the enemy.

The wizard, who had vaguely explained the rules to Lee Shin, did not even take a few steps back and started picking his ears. He frowned as if he wanted Lee Shin to finish the test quickly. He then pointed to the dummy with his chin. It was obvious from his expression that he was thinking of Lee Shin as no different from the others.

Lee Shin slowly warmed up his mana. Since becoming the boss of the first floor, Lee Shin had used the Dark Arrow hundreds and thousands of times. This skill, Dark Arrow, was poor and undeveloped so it seemed like a meaningless repetition. However, those experiences were no longer meaningless to Lee Shin who regained his memory.

A black arrow appeared at the tip of Lee Shin's index finger. Such a simple Dark Arrow that was not outstanding in any way struck the dummy's heart. Only the area where the Dark Arrow had touched was blackened, and the dummy did not even shake.

"Oh, that's not bad." The wizard, who did not expect much from Lee Shin, had a surprised look for the first time, seeing Lee Shin's clean shot of Dark Arrow.

The look he had thrown at Lee Shin as if he was a troublesome leech now disappeared. However, his annoyance did not turn into favor.

"You're lucky, it's a pass," said the wizard.

"Thank you," Lee Shin replied.

"You can bring this certificate of acceptance to the staff on the first floor," the wizard explained.

"Okay," Lee Shin replied.

Even though Lee Shin had passed the test, the wizard did not look excited. The wizard just slightly nodded as if it was a natural thing to pass the test.

"What's your name?" the wizard asked.

"It's Lee Shin," Lee Shin replied.

Lee Shin saw the wizard's facial expression harden when the wizard heard his name.

‘Has my name spread here as well?’

Unlike what Lee Shin had expected, the wizard did not ask more questions about him.

The wizard introduced himself.

"I am Raymond, first-class wizard of the Black Magic Tower."

"Okay," Lee Shin replied.

"Huh, are you not surprised? Anyway, do your best. I think your skills aren't too bad," said Raymond.

After saying that, Raymond left the test room without a moment of hesitation, as if he had no interest in giving more attention to Lee Shin. And Lee Shin went to the lobby on the first floor as Raymond had told him.

"I see that you have a certificate of acceptance. Please wait a moment," said the employee.

The employee who received the certificate of acceptance went inside for a while and came out with a piece of clothing.

"This is what third-class wizards wear. This is given to the learners who passed the test."

It was a gray costume with a black sheep pattern on it. It was a piece of clothing the Black Magic Tower used to symbolize the third-class wizard.

"Here's a brochure about the Black Magic Tower. The third-class wizards can use the public training room, and you can find out the schedule for mana classes by looking at the timetable written there. It's optional to attend the classes," the employee explained.

"When can I take the test for the second class?" Lee Shin asked.

"The test for second-class happens once a week and the next one is... Oh, it's happening in three days," the employee replied.

"All right, thank you," Lee Shin replied.

"The accommodation for the third-class wizards is located on the second floor. And Lee Shin... you are in room 215," said the employee.

"Thank you," Lee Shin replied.

After thanking the employee, Lee Shin exited the Black Magic Tower, but did not head to the accommodation.

* * *

"Ha... why did they put preservatives in the test room for the runners?" A woman, looking very annoyed, opened the test room door with anger.

There was a dummy placed in the middle of the field. And behind it were the things that she was trying to take back, but her eyes were on the dummy.

"What's going on?" The woman looked surprised.

Two hours ago, the woman heard that a learner had finally taken a test in this test room after a very long time. And that was why she came to pick up the stuff that she had left in the test room, which had been left unused for a while.

"This is..." the woman muttered.

There were black traces on the dummy's heart. It showed that the Dark Arrow had hit the mark, and the curse had been put on it.

Normally, the traces that were left behind after being in contact with the Dark Arrow had spread. That was because there was no need to have so much control over the curse that was applied with the Dark Arrow.

For them, the skill, Dark Arrow, was nothing more than a quick skill that was used to keep their enemy in check in the first place. However, the traces left on the dummy remained exactly as a round shape and did not spread around.

These traces revealed a kind of curse that amplified the penetration damage that the victim received. It was one of the more difficult curses to master, but the important thing here was not the fact that a penetration curse had been applied to the arrow.

"Dark Arrow." The woman casted a spell.

A faint black arrow that extended from the tip of her finger hit exactly the traces of the curse left in the dummy.

Crunch—!

The heart of the dummy had been pierced. And when she saw that, her expression stiffened immediately.

"Who exactly is this bastard?"