

The Tower 58

Chapter 58

Lee Shin looked as the brutality of the battlefield unfolded before him. Hundreds of wizards fought in this battle and many of them lost their lives. The goal of this floor was to win at the Deleague, but Lee Shin did not have enough time to wait until the Deleague. Therefore, Lee Shin made the difficult choice of the shorter path which he had worked tirelessly for.

Unfortunately, the result was this. Most of the wizards in Seia died and the damage done was practically too great to recover from. Astor was lying unconscious, seemingly on the verge of death. Baron was killed by Warrie, his heart pierced by a sword. Cigarate had collapsed on the floor with a pool of blood that he coughed up.

"How... How can you use all these elemental spells at such a high level? How can a Dark Wizard do all that?" Cigarate asked.

"The world is big and there are many outstanding people. If you think you are already at world-class standard, you will not develop any further in your magic," Lee Shin explained.

Crunch-

Lee Shin could hear the sound of Cigarate grinding his teeth angrily.

Squeak-

Blood left traces where his fingers had scratched the floor, and drops of water fell on it.

"Sob sob..." Cigarate started crying.

"Why are you crying? Do you think something is unfair?" Lee Shin asked.

"No, it's not because something is unfair... It's just that I feel so stupid... People around me have always praised me since I was a child, and I've become arrogant. I thought I deserved all those praises, but now I feel so stupid; I've overestimated myself," Cigarate explained.

Thud! Thud! Thud! Thud! Thund!

As Lee Shin watched, Cigarate hit the floor like crazy, to the point that he crushed his own fist.

"Ahhhh!" Cigarate screamed and cried.

Seeing Cigarate cry with his head on the floor, Lee Shin was reminded of his past self. Lee Shin's expression hardened. Everyone experienced frustration at some point, and similarly, Lee Shin had also suffered many setbacks that led to frustration. Lee Shin could see his past self in Cigarate, who was screaming and trying to face up to his own fall.

"Tsk." Lee Shin clicked his tongue.

Lee Shin thought that killing this guy here might be good for the future, because this wizard might seek revenge on Lee Shin later. However, at that young age, Cigarate had the ability to use that level of flame spell and the boldness to challenge the Hell level difficulty. Besides, he had admitted his mistake and was regretting his actions. If Cigarate were not Lee Shin's enemy, Lee Shin thought he would be a great student to take in and teach. Lee Shin could not bear to kill this wizard.

'I guess not everyone can play the villain.'

Lee Shin shook his head and activated his mana. Besides Lakia, Astor was the only surviving master of the Magic Towers. Astor used to be Lee Shin's teacher, but it was too long ago. Besides, the Astor that he had encountered earlier, was not the same Astor who was lying here unconscious. Lee Shin pointed his wand at Astor who was unconscious, and the thunderbolt that extended out of his wand took Astor's last breath.

[All the masters of the Magic Towers are dead, except for the Black Magic Tower in Seia.]

[All the masters of the Magic Towers have lost their qualifications as Deleaguers, except for the Black Magic Tower.]

[The Black Magic Tower has won the Deleague.]

[Lakia has become the 17th Deleaguer.]

[You have cleared the fifteenth floor.]

[Your achievements will be recorded.]

[Amazing achievement! Many gods are paying attention to you!]

[You have achieved 250,300 points.]

[You have received 250,300 points.]

[Your Health Point has increased by 6,300.]

[Your Mana Power has increased by 19,000.]

[Your Strength has increased by 6.]

[Your Agility has increased by 7.]

[Your Intelligence has increased by 20.]

[Your Dominance has increased by 20.]

[You have acquired a 『Title - The Successor of the Seven Elements.』]

Lee Shin, who pushed back that endless stream of messages, sat in front of Cigarate and looked at him. Cigarate, who thought he would be dying here, could not hide his shock when he saw the system message saying that the stage had ended.

"Why...?" Cigarate asked.

Behind that one word 'why' were many questions, but there was only one answer for Lee Shin to give.

"It's up to me," said Lee Shin.

Cigarate looked at Lee Shin with a puzzled look for a while when he heard the unexpected words from Lee Shin. The next moment, Cigarate laughed and tried to get up, albeit with difficulty.

"Is it some kind of whim of the strong?" Cigarate asked.

"Maybe," Lee Shin replied.

"It will be different next time," said Cigarate.

"Sure," said Lee Shin.

Cigarate, who was shaking and covered with blood, hesitated but bowed at Lee Shin, and left the scene.

'Did he want to say thank you to me?'

Lee Shin had sent him away. He turned around to go to the wizards of the Black Magic Tower. They had won the war, but not many people would be happy about it. It was not a pleasant thing to receive the message that he had cleared the stage while looking at the wizards of the Black Magic Tower who had died. Reina had collapsed; one arm lost; Ethan's mana blood had been destroyed because he was

forcibly using his mana. Besides, Lakia was exhausted due to excessive use of mana. No wizard in the Black Magic Tower remained on the battlefield unscathed.

On the side, Lee Shin could see Raymond whom he had encountered on his first day at the Black Magic Tower. He was lying on the cold floor but his body was still warm.

Standing in front of Raymond's dead body, Lee Shin put his hand on the Martyr for a second and then took it off again.

- Master, these are...

"I know that," Lee Shin replied.

If Lee Shin were to save Raymond like this, he might feel a moment of satisfaction, but he would not feel any better about the futility that would follow. Lee Shin was aware that this world would be destroyed as soon as he left anyway. Getting attached to anything here would only wear Lee Shin's feelings down.

'I'm not a doll without emotions.'

As people ascended numerous floors of the tower, they were worn out emotionally and their sensitivity to one's life gradually eroded. Having climbed more floors than any other human on Earth, Lee Shin was aware of the fact better than anyone else.

"I am alive," Lee Shin muttered and repeated the phrase over and over again.

There were countless times that Lee Shin had almost died; in fact, he came into contact with death more times than that. However, Lee Shin tried to remember every moment that he was alive.

'I am...'

The throbbing head and his sore body told Lee Shin that he was alive.

[The Immortal Sphere]

Was it a coincidence that Lee Shin got this? Or was it inevitable? Suddenly, this question came into Lee Shin's mind.

"Clarte, Lee Shin," Lakia called out to Lee Shin and struggled to go closer.

He barely managed to get to Lee Shin, who was lost in his thoughts, and sat in front of him.

"Master," Lee Shin replied.

"Thank you," Lakia said.

Swoosh—

The background changed with Lakia's words and there was a man kneeling in a wide field, touching the grass, a breeze blowing.

"Thank you," said the man.

If anyone else there had seen this scene, they would have thought this man was talking to grass. In fact, he was talking to a black spirit that was among the blades of grass. This spirit, which only appeared at night, did not seem to go together with the green grass. However, the man did not care about that at all because this spirit did more good than harm for the world.

"There is light because there is darkness. Don't be disappointed," said the man.

People's perception of the Spirit of Darkness was not very good, but the man knew that the Spirit of Darkness was indispensable.

Wooong—

At that moment, the world began to shake as if there was an earthquake. The man could tell that something was about to happen; the moment he realized it, his whole body stiffened and he could not move. The Spirit of Darkness stabilized his body and calmed his pounding heart when his hands and feet were trembling with fear. The man's body was rigid and he could not run away. As if trying to get him to flee, the Spirit of Darkness pushed him away, but the man could not move.

"Come with me! I'm not going alo—" the man shouted.

The air, which seemed to be at the brink of being distorted any moment, split with a huge sound, and a monster that the man had never seen before in his life appeared from the gap. The Spirit of Darkness could only calm down this man for a moment. The man could not do anything because of his body that stiffened in fear. He had no choice but to look at the Spirit that was blocking the monster that was approaching.

As if assimilating with the darkness, a black fog arose and the man who was swallowed up in it watched the Spirit of Darkness get crushed by the monster in front of him and vanished. The monster also disappeared, as if it could not see the man, but the man still could not move for a long time after that happened.

The scene changed once again. This time, there were seven people surrounding a large round table and one of the spirits from the Underworld was standing next to them. Among them, there was also the man who had just lost the Spirit of Darkness. He was sobbing.

"Those who invaded this place are Demons, who are devils. You cannot defeat those devils with your own power, so we'll lend you our strength," said a spirit that was covered in white, on behalf of the spirits of the Underworld. The humans agreed.

The scene changed yet again. The peaceful land that was full of life from earlier was gone. The world seemed like it was about to collapse and disappear. A devil propping a huge book up with his several heads confronted the seven wizards.

"You seem afraid," said the devil in a relaxed tone.

The devil, Dantalion, could read people's minds.

"Do you think you beat me?" Dantalion asked.

The seven wizards attacked Dantalion with spells of different elements, but Dantalion completely destroyed all of their spells as if he could predict all of their moves. Still, there was one wizard among them whom Dantalion could not read, and it was the wizard of the dark elements who was wearing a black uniform.

"You're just all black!" Dantalion shouted.

Whenever Dantalion fought back against the wizards, the wizard of the dark elements intervened, and Dantalion, for the first time, seemed to panic because things were not working out the way he wanted. When Dantalion's signature ability to read the minds of others was sealed and one of his neck was chopped off, he threw himself into the air and vanished. The devastated land and polluted atmosphere began to be purified again, as time in this world went fast forward.

Months passed by as if they were only seconds. The city that had been ruined started to flourish again, and seven huge Magic Towers that represented the city emerged in each area. Humans continued to develop their magic and tried not to lose the power of the elements they received from the spirits to defend against the devils who might invade again. However, the complacency of peacetime ate away at their growth.

In order to resolve this situation, the humans created a competition among the Magic Towers. They temporarily created leaders who represented each Magic Tower, and they started a competition called Deleague in order to regain the glory of the past.

Right after the competition was launched, it seemed to work as intended. However, the Deleague became a stepping stone to distort their world, just like a single deviation could destroy everything. There were competitions and discord among wizards. There was contempt and jealousy. A hierarchy among Magic Towers emerged, and people started destroying each other's magic in order to rank higher. Eventually, hundreds of years of conflict were enough to cause the humans to lose all power that the spirits had left behind.

Humans no longer had the means to resist the invasion of the demons. Even the Underworld gave up on them, and Dantalion, who regained his power, completely devastated the world. The seven Magic Towers that represented Seia, the city of magic, were destroyed beyond recognition. They had to experience the humiliation of building a castle for Dantalion. Then, the recollection of the past ended.

The title as He Who Knows Death revealed the trajectory of life that led the opponent to its death. Lakia, Astor, Abel, Baron, Terian, and Helen and Shane, who were not here, were the successors of each Magic Tower and also the masters who represented each Magic Tower. The world that Lee Shin saw a second ago was not the trajectory of their lives. It was the original cause of death, which traced back to a time long before these wizards.

‘No way...’

Wasn’t death limited to living creatures? Did what I just see show the cause of the death of this city, this world?

[Your understanding of death has increased.]

A message appeared suddenly. It had been a while since he saw this phrase. Lee Shin had seen it when he first received the Immortal Sphere and remembered many deaths.

[The title, He Who Knows Death, is Enhanced.]

[He Who Knows Death]

Aren’t you actually the God of Death? If not, aren’t you an avatar made by the God of Death?

You can see through death.

You can see the dead.

You can feel the energy of the dead.

"Keugh!" Lee Shin gasped.

Suddenly, all his senses heightened and its range began to expand. It felt like something dark and cold was stimulating his senses one by one. Lee Shin started feeling nauseous and the world around him seemed to spin around.

'Death...'

Lee Shin took a deep breath and slowly opened his eyes. This was a battlefield and a place where countless wizards had died and disappeared. All those deaths seemed to penetrate his skin and slice through every single cell. There was a thick cloud of energy of the dead all over the place, and now, Lee Shin could clearly tell that countless people had died here before the city was built.

Lee Shin passed by Lakia and stopped. Unlike the numerous deaths that happened here, an energy of death, that was very different from the rest, could be felt.

"Terian," Lee Shin called out.

At Lee Shin's call, Terian poured his mana to the ground and dug a pit dozens of meters deep in front of Lee Shin at once. After digging the ground, the energy of death felt stronger. Lee Shin jumped in there without hesitation and broke the strong mana barrier with his strength and landed on it.

It was a powerful barrier that was almost the level of the barrier that Gene had built on the first floor. However, over the years, its power had been distorted and the barrier was now about to break. When Lee Shin broke the barrier, the demon power started to pour out like crazy.

[You have found Dantalion's ninth head (Replica).]

The eerie eyes on the head stared at Lee Shin and the demon power in his eyes penetrated Lee Shin's head.

[You have discovered Dantalion's ninth eye.]

[The ninth eye tries to manipulate your memories.]

[You have resisted.]

Memory manipulation was one of the powers of Dantalion. The demon attacked Lee Shin suddenly, but his power did not work on Lee Shin.

"What's going on?"