

The Tower 79

Chapter 79

Clang—!

The two swords collided—the greatsword thrust downward and the other sword upward—and caused a loud noise and explosive force.

‘Damn it.’

Kim Kang-Chun knew that he had made an overly aggressive and obvious attack. As a result, the rival challengers intervened in Kim Kang-Chun’s path so as to protect the wave wizard.

Kim Kang-Chun was aware that if he continued on with this offense, he might have to risk his own life. Making use of the explosion to split his rivals up, Kim Kang-Chun quickly turned around and ran towards Ji Eun-Ju.

Even if Kim Kang-Chun had accomplished outstanding achievements so far while climbing the tower, he knew that it was impossible to handle this many enemies alone. However, the explosion that was created every time his greatsword swung prevented other challengers from easily approaching Kim Kang-Chun.

“Ji Eun-Ju!” Kim Kang-Chun shouted, looking at her.

Kim Kang-Chun who appeared through the black smoke and dust approached Ji Eun-Ju.

“How dare you!” A Golem that appeared in front of the two challengers shouted.

Thud! Thud!

Both Kim Kang-Chun and Ji Eun-Ju felt the ground shaking beneath their feet. A huge Golem emerged as the ground shook, and the Golem blocked their path. The next moment, the Golem’s blunt fist came toward them.

Woong—! Bam!

Despite its massive size, the fist was as fast as lightning. As the first strike upon the two challengers, the ground rose like waves, sending vibrations and loud noises reverberating through the area.

Crunch—

Kim Kang-Chun gritted his teeth, as he looked around at the challengers who surrounded him. He knew he should have escaped after his first attempt had failed. The series of failures had led to a great predicament.

‘We’re surrounded.’

There were several times more people surrounding them this time. Kim Kang-Chun knew that it was impossible to escape now. With just the two of them, they knew there was nothing they could do.

‘What would our master do...’

Suddenly, the face of his master came to Kim Kang-Chun’s mind. Would he have been smiling calmly even in this situation?

“I never thought you guys would come all the way here to kill the wave wizard,” said the man who had just parried Kim Kang-Chun’s sword away from the wave wizard.

The man spoke and made exaggerated hand gestures, as if he was showing off his catch of the day.

“Wow, I guess you are just coming into the net on your own. Why don’t you just leave your home and join us?” the man asked.

“If you can beat me one-on-one, then I’ll consider it,” Kim Kang-Chun replied.

Kim Kang-Chun was a total mess and he looked completely beaten up. Kim Kang-Chun did not really think that this kind of provocation would work, but if possible, he wanted to defeat at least one more person.

“Haha,?with that body?” the man asked Kim Kang-Chun as he was laughing at him.

Swoosh!

The man who sneered at Kim Kang-Chun swung his sword at Ji Eun-Ju and made a sudden attack. Kim Kang-Chun desperately tried to block the sword, but a hand made of rock emerged from the ground and grabbed his sword, stopping him from moving.

‘Damn it!’

Ji Eun-Ju was so shocked that she froze on the spot and could not react properly. Considering the opponent's skill, she was aware that it was impossible to avoid his attack completely even if she could move.

Knowing this, Kim Kang-Chun let go of his greatsword and turned his body to defend her.

Swoosh—!

“Kek... ugh...” Kim Kang-Chun groaned in pain.

Ji Eun-Ju saw the sword pierce through Kim Kang-Chun’s body from the back and emerge from his abdomen.

Cough!

Blood spurted from Kim Kang-Chun’s throat.

“Oppa! No!” Ji Eun-Ju cried out, her voice quivering.

“You guys are full of comradeship,” said the man.

“No, Oppa! This can’t be happening!” Ji Eun-Ju cried out.

With a loud sound, the sword came out of Kim Kang-Chun’s body and blood started gushing out. Kneeling on the ground and holding the wound with his hand, Kim Kang-Chun put his head on the ground as he spilled blood all over.

“I’m sorry, Oppa. Please, tell me what to do. I’ll do anything! Just tell me, please!” Ji Eun-Ju started crying.

Ji Eun-Ju covered the massive wound on Kim Kang-Chun’s body and cried out in agony.

“That’s right. This is how you have to act in this situation, because that’s the position you are at right now,” said the man laughing at the two.

The dead body of the Pope was getting colder and colder. Once again, with his ability as He Who Knows Death, Lee Shin saw the Pope’s past. As expected, the Pope had not succumbed to corruption, and the gods had pressured him and ultimately killed him.

All of the sudden, Lee Shin wondered what the reason was behind gaining this ability to see the past. As Lee Shin observed the past of those who had lived in the world of the tower, being manipulated like puppets on a stage, Lee Shin gradually learned more about the legend of the tower’s creation.

At first, when he had climbed to the 100th floor and confronted the gods, Lee Shin believed that all gods were the same. Even when Lee Shin had returned to the starting point and regained his memories, he had thought the same. However, upon deeper reflection, he could see that he had been mistaken.

As He Who Knows Death, Lee Shin could uncover the misdeeds of the gods by seeing the past of the residents of the tower. Even if it was a power given under the tower's system, couldn't the God of Death have prevented this advantageous title from being granted to Lee Shin?

Lee Shin had been contemplating about the system of the tower even in his past life. It seemed like it was intimately connected to the gods, but independent. Yet, the gods could also intervene depending on their power.

It was certain that the gods were involved in the construction of the tower. However, did all the gods agree to build this tower? What did the gods truly want from it? Did all the gods have the same purpose? Were they all on the same side? Or were they just all in the same boat?

At this point, Lee Shin could not be sure of anything. As he climbed the tower, a question would be answered, but another would arise. It was like a program on a computer, where many things were intertwined and connected in a complex way. However, Lee Shin knew that these things would naturally be resolved once he reached the top of the tower.

Lee Shin had a strong feeling that by the time he cleared the 19th and 20th floors, he would be able to learn something. After completing the stage on the 18th floor, Lee Shin started to climb to the 19th floor.

When he got there, the first thing Lee Shin checked was the messages and the community. The majority of the content in the community was about Isocia and Lee Shin.

* Mr. Lee Shin had cleared the 18th floor.

↳ What the hell? Did you see the score that he achieved? The second place is Park Ju-Hyuk, and their score difference is over 200,000 points.

↳ Was there no one who challenged the stage with Lee Shin? Tell us some stories about Lee Shin.

↳ I saw Lee Shin on the 17th floor, and he swept everything with just one summoned creature. Any ordinary challenger will never be able to keep up with his speed. They will get their legs torn just from trying to keep up with Lee Shin.

↳ Yeah, that's right. I've cleared a stage with Lee Shin in the same team before, and if you're with Lee Shin, most challengers will just do nothing. Also, the level of difficulty of the stage increases dramatically.

↳ Has no one cleared this floor yet? Tell me about it quickly!

↳ Yeah right, I'm waiting for Lee Shin on the 20th floor right now, and I'm bored to death.

↳ Hurry up, Mr. Lee Shin! I don't even know how many people are waiting for you right now.

↳ Only Koreans are stuck on the 20th floor, when challengers from other countries are going up no problem.

↳ But still, we have only two floors left. My heart is beating crazy at the thought of going up with Mr. Lee Shin.

As the days went by, more and more posts were appearing in the Korean community. That meant that many people could not climb the tower and were just using the community to communicate. Many challengers were waiting for Lee Shin, unable to climb to the 21st floor.

'I really need to speed up.'

Lee Shin arrived at the stage on the 19th floor. It was a world in a forest full of the scent of green trees and grass. Other challengers, including Vuela, were teleported next to Lee Shin.

[You have entered the 19th floor.]

[Defeat the Guardian of the Forest.]

Before Lee Shin had time to think about what the message meant, there was a loud noise.

Swish—!

A short spear fell from a tree and raced through the air.

“Keaugh!” A Goblin and a human gasped and died.

Without even a little time to make sense of the new world, one human and one Goblin were skewered by a spear and died.

“What the heck?”

“Where did that even come from?”

“Was this stage always like this?”

The challengers started to panic and wander around in confusion. The space was covered with trees that were at least 10 meters tall, and light barely filtered through the towering trees.

The glowing eyes of the Elves flickered in the darkness, staring down at the challengers. Arrows started to fall down from all sides, and after seeing the challengers die one after another in helplessness, others hastily got into their defensive stances.

“Damn, are those even Elves?” Vuela muttered.

Vuela could not believe they were getting ambushed as soon as they entered the stage. To be honest, Vuela had been excited to meet the Elves after hearing about this world, but that fantasy had been shattered.

“Back off, if you don’t want to die,” said one of the Elves.

“What did you say?” Lee Shin asked.

Lee Shin quickly pulled out his wand from his waist and made a shield. One of the Elves, with silver hair, aimed at Lee Shin with his black bow and arrow.

Swoosh—!

With a sonic wave, a beam of light shot through the air toward Lee Shin’s head.

Baaam!

Dozens of layers of shield had overlapped to form a single one, and the arrow that hit it spun with insane speed and exploded, breaking a few layers of the shield.

After seeing the surrounding trees and grass swept away in flames, Vuela grimaced, his face distorted like a demon—because those who caused that destruction seemed indifferent to the destruction.

“Those are supposed to be Elves?” Vuela glared at them.

Elves were a species that hated to harm nature and shed blood in the forest, and yet characters like these called themselves Elves?

The next moment, Vuela leapt forward, drew his sword and activated his mana. The mana that formed at the tip of his sword produced a screeching sound of wind and Vuela aimed at the haughty Elf that was pulling the bowstring of the black bow.

“Keuaahha!

” Vuela screamed.

At that moment, an Elf swordsman riding on a wolf leaped into the air and knocked Vuela down from above. Vuela tumbled down.

“Keugh!” Vuela groaned in pain.

Vuela calmed himself down and exchanged blows with the Elf swordsman again.

In the midst of deafening screams, Lee Shin scattered his mana in all directions. In an instant, the forest had turned into a battlefield, as challengers and Elves were tangled together fighting, staining the forest with blood.

It was not the time to investigate the cause of the change in this stage.

As Lee Shin’s wand rose, black mana shot up into the sky and started to absorb the negative emotions that had been covering the space.

[Due to the effect of divinity, your abilities have increased by 20%.]

The powerful mana wave floated in the air like mist, expanding in size and making the power of thunderbolt even stronger.

Rumble! Crack!

The Elf with silver hair, who had felt the power of thunderbolt surging through the air, pulled her bowstring as she frowned. The wind around her swirled at high speed, maximizing the penetrating power of her arrow and minimizing the air resistance.

Paaang—!

A green arrow pierced through the air. It was not simply an arrow, but an explosive device that could instantly kill an enemy upon contact.

Screeech—!

The screech that hit the ears raised everyone's alertness.

"How dare you!" said the Red-Eyed swordsman.

A Red-Eyed Skeleton that popped out of the shadow deflected the green arrow with its sword. It was a kind of swordsmanship that would be impossible without grasping the flow of the attack.

The Elf, who realized that her arrow had bounced away, pulled the bowstring of the black bow once again. However, at the same time, she felt a strong mana wave incoming, and she looked up.

[Dark Thunder]

Rumble—! Crack! Kwaaa!

The Elf's face turned pale. Thick black lightning struck the Elf, and the remnants of lightning spread in all directions, terrifying the Elves.

"There you are," said Lee Shin with a cold voice as he smirked.

In the place where the Dark Thunder had disappeared, silver-haired Elf stood. She was the guardian of the forest named Ardeheit Seik. She was the leader of the Elven tribe and the final boss of this stage.

Looking quite bewildered and beaten, Ardeheit Seik looked at Lee Shin. It was understandable that she had that look on, because she had just endured the full force of the Dark Thunder. She could have perceived the overwhelming gap in their abilities.

Lee Shin's abilities and mana senses, honed by climbing the tower at extreme difficulty and particularly his recent battles, allowed him to have an extraordinary level of skills compared to the ordinary bosses in lower levels.

What kind of trap awaited at this stage? And what would be introduced at this stage?

However, Lee Shin's questions quickly vanished.

“Cough...!” Ardeheit Seik coughed up blood.

She could not hold it in any longer and vomited up the red blood that had been coming up. Her eyes had trembled with disbelief, and at the same time, she turned to the sky with a look of resentment.

Who was she pouring out her emotions to? Her regretful gaze soon turned back to Lee Shin.

“Impressive...” Ardeheit Seik muttered.

Lee Shin was bewildered. The boss of this stage was undoubtedly the Elf and it was clear that the stage had changed. During his past life, the 19th floor did not start like this. Lee Shin was aware that if that Elf just stood there like that, the Elf would die soon.

There was no miracle, because Lee Shin’s title as He Who Knows Death was already foretelling her death.

“Was I... just a discarded pawn?” Ardeheit Seik muttered.

“What happened to you?” Lee Shin asked Ardeheit Seik.

The Elf with silver hair, who had become exhausted after blocking the Dark Thunder, pulled the bowstring of her black bow and aimed at Lee Shin who was standing in front of her.

“If you don’t want to die, it would be better to put that down right now.” Vuela glared at Ardeheit Seik.

During the short time Vuela spent with Lee Shin, his speech had become quite rough. Vuela held his sword against her neck and glared at her.

The Elf swordsman who was riding the wolf earlier and was being pushed back by Vuela had been affected by Lee Shin's Dark Thunder quite some time ago, and then later died by Vuela's sword. Vuela, who did not feel particularly good after killing an Elf, wanted to finish this stage as soon as possible.

"I have nothing to say... but I have one piece of advice," said Ardeheit Seik.

"What is it?" Lee Shin asked.

"The spirits... They are telling me that you should be careful of the next one," Ardeheit Seik said.

With those words, Ardeheit Seik killed herself hoping that no more Elves would suffer.

[You have cleared the 19th floor.]

[Your achievements will be recorded.]

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

[You have achieved 137,000 points.]

[You have received 137,000 points.]

[Your Health Point has increased by 3,800.]

[Your Mana has increased by 9,900.]

[Your Strength has increased by 3.]

[Your Agility has increased by 4.]

[Your Intelligence has increased by 10.]

[Your Dominance has increased by 3.]

[You have acquired the Necklace of the Forest Guardian.]