

The Tower 136

Chapter 136

The tension was so great that it felt like blood could be spilled at any moment. The gazes of everyone in the pub converged on one spot.

"Huh...? Isn't that Elf... Vuela?"

"That lunatic?"

"That Elf is the one who people refer to as a mad dog? That's unbelievable..."

Some individuals recognized Vuela. As people started whispering among themselves, from the tip of the wand of the wizard who was wearing a red robe, there was a burst of red flame.

"Huh? That magic is..."

"That's the Red Flame, the Red Flame!"

"What? Is that wizard...the wizard of the Red Flame?"

"Is that Cigarate?"

Several others recognized Cigarate and exclaimed. Others started to murmur, claiming that they had heard the name before, and the two names quickly spread throughout the entire pub.

"If you don't extinguish that flame immediately, you can say goodbye to those limbs of yours," Vuela said, trying to threaten Cigarate.

"But before that, your body will be engulfed in flames." Cigarate laughed at Vuela.

"I don't understand where your confidence is coming from," said Vuela in a mocking tone.

"There were rumors about you being a companion of Lee Shin, but shall we test how remarkable you really are?" Cigarate smirked.

"Ha! Everyone has plans until they get beaten up. We'll see how things turn out," said Vuela.

Vuela's pupils started to turn red, and his sword moved like a flash of light; and in response, Cigarate's Red Flame shot forth.

Clang! Whoosh—!

However, before Vuela's sword strike could fully land, it was blocked by another sword, and Cigarate's flame split in half and disappeared. Both Vuela and Cigarate furrowed their eyebrows at the same time. A Giant had unexpectedly stepped in between them.

"And you are..." Cigarate recognized the figure who blocked his path and trailed off.

The figure had a thick, long tail with muscular arms and long pupils. The surface of his skin was covered in thick scales.

"The Tune of the Drunkard forbids any further disturbances. If you want to fight, go outside and fight."

"Tsk, are you Jack?" Vuela asked.

Vuela withdrew his sword with an annoyed look and put it back around his waist.

"Yes, and if you cause any more trouble here, you'll have to face me," said Jack, glaring at Vuela.

"Well, that's not a bad idea," Cigarate pushed away the sword that was pointing at him with his wand and spoke.

"Foolish bravado is a fast track to an early grave. It becomes a lot more different starting from the 30th floor," Jack said with a mocking tone, looking at the two.

"You're funny. Do you think you're the strongest one here?" Vuela asked Jack.

"No, that would be an overestimation. However, I can defeat those who consider themselves bigshots just based on the little bit of fame they have gained," Jack replied.

"Ugh,?you little..." Cigarate scowled and glared at Jack.

"Tsk. I have no intention of dealing with you, so take that brat with you or drive him away yourself," said Vuela, waving his hand dismissively as if he was uninterested, signaling them to go away.

"Tsk." Seeing his reaction, Cigarate clicked his tongue and returned to his seat.

Jack glanced at Cigarate and Vuela before vanishing into the background. At such a sight, sighs of disappointment came out from several tables in the pub, because the opportunity for quite an entertaining spectacle seemed to have vanished with Vuela taking a step back.

"That Vuela guy was referred to as a mad dog and all, but I guess it was just a baseless rumor, wasn't it?"

"Yeah, once you get to know him, there's nothing special about him."

"Tsk, I figured that out a while ago. Among those who suddenly gain fame as mad dogs or whatever... there isn't a single decent one."

"Did you see that earlier? He swung his sword first, but then when Jack extended his sword, it just got blocked. How poor must his swordsmanship be..."

"If you look closely, even his appearance is nothing more than a..."

Baaam—!

"Eek!"

"Mr. Swordsman?"

Hearing the murmurs from the surroundings, Vuela smashed his own table this time. Alcohol and food scattered around the table.

"Ugh these bastards! How much do I have to keep this in!" Vuela shouted in anger.

Those who had been whispering about Vuela flinched and fell silent for a moment. However, not long later, some individuals started muttering again.

"Tsk, now he is trying to pretend to be a mad dog again? No one is going to be fooled by that."

"Yeah, you're right. He could not do anything to Jack earlier and just fled, so how dare he act all high and mighty now?"

"Kukukuk... Isn't that brat panicking because his showboating isn't working anymore?"

Crowd psychology was susceptible to incitement. Although these few individuals did not intend to, the words of those few, combined with the recent event, caused most of the challengers present to start mocking and pointing at Vuela.

"Hahaha... I guess I've been behaving too nice lately, focusing on developing my character," said Vuela.

As Vuela said that, his expression became distorted abruptly. As if the mask that concealed his true expression had shattered, his face transformed just like a demon.

"No! Please keep it together, Mr. Swordsman!"

"Yes, please restrain yourself! It would be a big problem if you continue on like this!"

Vuela's companions knew his temperament to some extent so they desperately tried to calm him down. However, with their power alone, they could not stop Vuela, who had reached his tipping point.

"Let me show you what your beloved mad dog is capable of. I'll kill you all," Vuela said, glaring at the ones who were mocking him earlier.

Vuela drew his sword and an ominous aura began to emanate from his blade. Some sensed the danger and their faces became pale, but it wasn't the same for most. They continued to laugh at Vuela because they knew that Jack would stop Vuela.

"Wave Cutting Sw—" Vuela tried to cast his spell, but he was interrupted.

"Stop!" Jack intervened.

Baaang—!

A thunderous voice filled the pub and the large central table shattered into pieces. The laughter of the challengers ceased in an instant.

"Any further disturbance will result in expulsion from this place," said Jack with a threatening voice.

However, his gaze turned toward everyone else, not Vuela.

"Why... Why are you doing this to us? It was that guy who drew his sword first!"

"Yeah, that's right! It wasn't us who caused the disturbance. It was him!"

However, Jack, who was standing in place, swung his sword in the air. In the next moment, the table of those who had raised their objections split in half.

"If you have any complaints about my judgment, come at me, or else get out of here right now," Jack said with a serious expression.

They had no idea what had just happened. They only thought that if the sword had been pointing at them, they would already be dead.

"I-I'll leave."

"Move quickly!" Jack shouted.

"Stop pushing! I'm going to leave!"

"Don't forget to pay for the drinks!" Jack shouted again.

Hastily gathering their belongings, they rushed out of the pub and left one of their money pockets behind.

"Are there any more people who are dissatisfied with me?" Jack asked, glaring at the remaining patrons in the pub.

No one dared answer his question.

"The atmosphere in the pub has become a bit dull. Drink up. I'll give everyone a free beer," Jack said.

"Wow!"

"Yes, this is Jack we love!"

"His generosity matches his skills!"

The grim atmosphere skyrocketed into life in an instant, because for the bar-goers, a free drink was way better than finding free points on the street. Amidst the noisy chatter, Vuela sat down as if all the energy had drained out of him. The broken table was quickly replaced by the staff.

"Do you know anything about that guy named Jack?" Vuela asked.

"Well, surely if you are here, you must know who Jack is; otherwise, that's kind of suspicious, isn't it?"

"That's right. Jack even has followers now."

"Is that so? Hmm... tell me more about him." Vuela crossed his arms and asked as if this topic was interesting.

"Well, as you all know, Jack is from the Dile tribe, naturally endowed with strength, stamina, and superior vision. But he's like a mutant."

"A mutant?" Vuela clarified.

"Yes, ordinarily, the Dile tribe lacks agility and isn't skilled at mana control, but he has exceptional agility and almost wizard-level mana control."

"In other words, he's exceptionally talented," said Vuela.

"Hahaha, and as you know, Mr. Vuela, he's not a challenger but a resident. He was born and raised on the 30th floor here."

"Yes, I am aware of that," Vuela replied.

Besides, that was why Vuela could not understand him even more. How could Jack become so strong without the help of the Tower? If he had not clashed swords with Jack, Vuela would have doubted his power.

"I think I had enough for the day. The excitement has already died down," Vuela said, sounding disappointed.

"All right sir."

"Start packing up."

Vuela's group left the pub. The group led by Cigarette, who had secretly been watching Vuela and his group, slowly got up from their seats.

In fact, two more individuals were observing these two groups—Jack and the owner of this pub. They were monitoring what was happening in the pub from the upper floor and were having a conversation.

"Why did you let Vuela go so easily?" the owner asked, looking at Jack.

"Well, as you know, if we have a fight, this shop will suffer damage," Jack replied.

"The shop will suffer damage?" the owner clarified.

The owner tilted his head and then exclaimed as he clapped his hands.

"Well, although he is quite famous, he's still a rookie who recently reached the 30th floor. So, killing him won't bring fame, and we'll just end up damaging the furniture in the shop for no reason. It will be more of a loss for us I guess," the owner muttered.

When Jack heard that, he shook his head in response to his words.

"No, it's not just that. The shop would have collapsed," Jack replied.

"What? You think the shop would have collapsed even if you fought him?" the owner asked.

"...Honestly, I can't guarantee it. Although it was for a short second, I saw something hidden within him. If what I saw was right, I would not be able to defeat him easily," said Jack.

It was rare for Jack to speak this way. The owner looked at him with an impressed expression and pondered for a moment.

"Ha

, so I guess he was more impressive than I thought. Maybe, I'll have to change my plan—" the owner muttered.

"Your plan?" Jack asked.

"Oh, hahaha! I was just thinking it might be interesting to hire him for our shop," said the owner and he laughed.

"...I don't think he will accept that," Jack replied.

Jack turned his head and looked out the window. He could see that familiar figures were coming out of the shop and heading somewhere.

As Vuela left the Tune of the Drunkard, he sent his companions off to their homes.

"Remember not to cause any trouble, alright?"

"Don't worry, I won't do that," Vuela replied, trying to reassure them.

After his companions left, Vuela headed to a deserted alley in the city.

"Come out." Vuela called out.

At Vuela's call, Cigarate revealed himself from behind the wall.

"Is secretly following people your hobby?" Vuela asked Cigarate in a mocking tone.

"Well, I did not hear your answer to my question earlier," Cigarate replied.

"What are you talking about?" Vuela asked.

"Well, I said I also want to meet Lee Shin," said Cigarate.

Vuela smirked.

"And you think you have the qualifications to meet him?" Vuela asked Cigarate in a mocking tone.

"...Well, won't I gain that qualification if I defeat you?" Cigarate said confidently, looking at Vuela.

"Ha! Do you think you can do that?" Vuela laughed.

"Of course! It will be easy," Cigarate replied.

"Then follow me."

Vuela immediately turned around and headed to the outside of the city. However, he had to stop moving forward because of a man who blocked his path.

"Are you here to fight?" asked a man, looking at Vuela and Cigarate.

"Who are you?" Vuela asked.

"Hahaha, sometimes, when the big shots come, I tend to be the one guiding them. Well, I guide only the bigshots," replied the man.

"But, this is the first time I'm hearing about a guide," Vuela replied.

"As I already mentioned, I only reveal myself to the big shots. This place may seem abandoned, but can't you see that this place is somewhat...managed?" the guide asked him.

"...Oh, is that so? Then guide me," Vuela said, looking at the guide.

"My pleasure."

Feeling pleased that he was finally recognized as a bigshot, Vuela followed the guide with a satisfied smile. Since Cigarate was unfamiliar with this place, he simply followed Vuela.

"We're here," said the guide when they arrived at the destination.

It was an ordinary-looking field, a plain with nothing notable. However, the surrounding trees and scattered trash formed a barrier on the edges, obscuring the surroundings.

"This place is good enough," said Vuela.

"Have a great time," said the guide.

Leaving those words, the man disappeared. Then, Vuela and Cigarate faced each other, gradually activating their mana.

"I think it will be good for me to warm up with you before I meet Lee Shin," said Vuela.

"So, among Lee Shin's comrades, how strong are you?" Cigarate asked Vuela in a mocking tone.

Vuela's eyebrows furrowed at Cigarate's question.

'Did I successfully provoke Vuela?'

Cigarate nodded subtly, seemingly satisfied with Vuela's reaction. He thought that Vuela was upset because he was just below Lee Shin in terms of strength. It was natural for Vuela to feel bothered, if he was the next after Lee Shin. Therefore, Cigarate thought that it would be most appropriate to gauge his own growth by fighting Vuela if he was the strongest out of Lee Shin's comrades.

'How close have I gotten to Lee Shin?'

He had not forgotten that moment he had been spared by Lee Shin on the 15th floor, not even for a single instant. Cigarate trained himself to the point of death every day, so that he could one day confront Lee Shin with dignity.

"Of course... I am the strongest," Vuela answered Cigarate's question this way.

'Because I am the only comrade he has...'

It did not matter to Vuela even if Lee Shin gained other comrades after the 20th floor, because he was confident in himself.

'I will be stronger than any of them.'

With such thoughts, Vuela drew his sword. Up to this day, he had been training tirelessly in his Herman cowl. As a result, he had become immensely stronger, nothing compared to when he was with Lee Shin. Now, he was confident he could defeat the dragonian, even if he were to encounter him.

"Bring it on," said Vuela.

The next moment, mana surged like flames above Vuela's sword.

"Let me show you what a real flame looks like," said Cigarate.

Cigarate's flame streaked across the ground, engulfing Vuela.

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In the dim night, even though the sun had set and darkness had covered the city, the city of Redcon still shone brightly as the busy nightlife illuminated the streets. However, hundreds of lights brighter than those of the city lights began to rise in the central square. A challenger emerged, brushing his deep violet hair back, and scanned the surroundings.

"Finally, I've arrived," said the challenger.

As numerous challengers flocked in, the guardians of the place started moving busily. Watching their movements, the challenger smirked and muttered.

"By the way, I wonder if they've already arrived here and are waiting."