

The Tower 208

Chapter 208

From the blazing inferno engulfing the building, three individuals emerged, their bodies charred black and their faces contorted in grimaces.

"This damn bastard, what has he gotten us into?" Vuela said, irritated.

"Get a grip! Handle this situation properly, will you?" Ethan shouted, repeatedly slapping Tang Zihao's cheek to snap him out of it, but Tang Zihao seemingly couldn't move.

"My mana... it's not coming back," Tang Zihao revealed, his face pale and full of disappointment.

Ethan and Vuela frowned after hearing that.

"So, he wasn't just drunk, huh?" Ethan said.

"Tsk, when we return to Korea, we should demand double—no, triple the payment from Lee Shin," Vuela said.

"I agree," Ethan replied.

Ethan briefly glanced back, only to see the entire building collapsing. Fortunately, Tang Zihao owned the entire building; since he treated it as his home, no one else was inside to get hurt.

"Damn it, we need to get out of here quickly..."

Thump, thump, thump!

Countless footsteps echoed from the surroundings, causing Vuela and Ethan's expressions to harden. They swiftly positioned themselves on either side of Tang Zihao, forming a protective barrier, and activated their mana.

"You managed to survive from that explosion? Quite impressive!" said a man dressed in black from head to toe, sneering at the three.

The ugly sneer made Ethan's eyebrows twitch, and he recalled the explosion from a moment ago.

"No way... Were we also your targets?" Ethan muttered.

It was a hunch, but his instincts had never lied to him. And the man's mocking smile and relaxed demeanor made it seem all the more likely.

"Oh, you are more clever than I thought," the man taunted them.

"Man, do you have any idea what will happen if you challenge us both?!" Ethan shouted at the man.

"Well... I don't even know what you're talking about. Ethan? Vuela? Who?" the man replied.

The man laughed at the two. Realizing that the opponent was deliberately provoking them, Ethan and Vuela charged forward. They had to fight against twenty opponents. Despite their formidable skills, the odds were stacked against them due to the injuries sustained in the earlier explosion while rescuing Tang Zihao.

"They are no ordinary opponents. So be careful." Ethan warned Vuela.

"Don't worry. The more I fight, the stronger I will become," Vuela replied.

Vuela's eyes turned sharper with each injury he suffered.

"What's going on? Why is he... argh!"

"Everyone, watch out for the Elf!"

Lee Shin had tried to take Vuela with him by any means necessary because of his incredible Berserker ability. With every battle, Vuela grew stronger, and his opponents struggled to showcase their full potential, leading to their defeat.

"Keugh!"

"Damn it! Stand back, I'll handle this guy."

Blue mana crackled along the opponent's sword, imbuing it with an ominous power. The government assassins' leader lunged at Vuela with fierce determination. Swiftly, Vuela parried the leader's attack and grabbed his blade with his bare hand.

"What the hell? Is he out of his mind...?" The leader could not believe his eyes.

Vuela knew that regardless of how much mana he poured into his hand, if the opponent applied an equal amount of mana in return, his hand would be severed. As Vuela felt his palm being sliced, he released a chilling laugh and thrust his sword into the leader's throat.

"Keugh...! Argh!" The leader groaned in pain.

Splurt!

Their leader's sudden death shocked the assassins. Vuela, drenched in blood, appeared almost maniacal, his breath hot and ragged. The assassins started trembling when they watched the blood dripping from Vuela. Suddenly, their surroundings transformed. Instead of the city center, they were now on a ship's deck.

"Nice to meet you, you government dogs," said a man.

Seated at the ship's bow, a man unfolded his fan and turned around. Bewildered by the situation and the man with the fan, the assassins wore expressions of utter dismay.

"My name is Zhuge Yun. Hmm... It seems like we've met before. Am I right?" Zhuge Yun said, looking at Ethan

"Zhuge Yun?" Ethan muttered.

Ethan breathed a sigh of relief upon seeing Zhuge Yun; he couldn't have come at a more perfect time. He had been at his limits, feeling like he was a step away from death.

"Thanks to the two of you, we managed to capture them all. Thank you," Zhuge Yun said.

Zhuge Yun bowed his head toward Ethan and Vuela in acknowledgment.

"I don't know who ordered it, but our troubles will be resolved neatly thanks to you. Hahaha." Zhuge Yun smirked at the government agents.

While checking the gate device, Lee Shin, Sevrino, and Vian received the news about China. Lee Shin was taken aback by the development, as the situation had taken an unexpected twist. He hadn't anticipated that the two would uncover the government corruption and atrocities, causing public opinion to plummet overnight.

[China's National Security Agency's failed assassination attempt had a butterfly effect.]

[Chinese National Security Agency attacked numerous civilian facilities! Death toll is in the hundreds!]

["It's a conspiracy! The US and South Korea are behind this." The Chinese government official's controversial statement continues...]

Articles flooded in relentlessly, depicting the dramatic shift within China. The nation, once evenly divided, had undergone a drastic change. South Korea and the United States, in particular, seethed with fury over the brazen attack on Vuela and Ethan.

* The Chinese government gotta be kidding me. Trying to assassinate Tang Zihao and blowing up buildings? They must be insane, right?

↳ I know! I'm still in shock. Were they always this trashy?

↳ I hope the South Korean government doesn't do something like this.

↳ Vuela and Ethan are back in the spotlight, especially Vuela. He used to look pretty brazen.

↳ But... why is Vuela dressed like a woman, and why the heck does he seem prettier than most Korean celebs?

↳ Hahaha, I agree. How can a man look that beautiful?

* Aphzal Tashi says, "Ethan is on a trip to China with another woman? He's dead when he returns."

↳ Hahahaha

↳ To be honest, Vuela is really pretty, indeed.

↳ Honestly, Aphzal Tashi doesn't stand a chance against Vuela.

↳ This is hilarious. Hahaha.

"Thanks to Zhuge Yun, we've solved our biggest headache," Lee Shin muttered.

China's national power was crucial to Earth. With South Korea, the United States, and China possessing extraordinary combat capabilities, the downfall of any one of them would create an unfavorable situation.

'The demon invasion... It's not too far away now.'

Lee Shin knew that he couldn't focus on his tasks if he didn't delegate this matter to Chairman Samuel and Zhuge Yun.

"Mr. Sevrino, how's the gate maintenance device coming along?" Lee Shin asked Sevrino.

"We're in the final stages now. The verification process is almost complete, so we should be able to use it this time," Sevrino replied.

"Ah, my entire body is aching. How much longer will they pester me to make this damn device?" Vian complained, massaging his shoulders.

"You guys can take a long break after the invasion ends," Lee Shin said.

"Damn it! You say that all the time, but you'll still find ways to keep us busy, won't you?" Vian shouted at Lee Shin.

"Hey, Vian, do you think Mr. Lee Shin is doing that to make you suffer?" Sevrino said.

"His actions sure suggest that. Seriously," Vian replied.

Vian had learned a lot more curses, which he threw around like confetti.

The day of the invasion was imminent. The first invasion targeted Fukushima, Tokyo, and Osaka in Japan. Additionally, there were two in the United States, two in China, three in Europe, three in Africa, and one in South Korea simultaneously. The challengers waiting in South Korea all boarded planes to help Japan.

"Wow... why are there so many people?"

"Can we even get out of here?"

Upon arrival at the Japanese airport, the South Korean challengers were greeted by a crowd of people holding placards, eagerly waiting for the South Korean challengers.

"Cha Yu-Min! Cha Yu-Min!"

"Mr. Joo-Hyuk, please look over here!"

"Oh my goodness! Look over there! It's Ms. Hye-Won! Isn't she adorable?"

Japanese citizens were deeply moved by the sacrifice of challengers from other countries to protect their nation. They began to praise the South Korean challengers. Lee Shin, who had stayed in South Korea, witnessed this scene on the screen and soon switched off the TV.

"When will the gate appear in South Korea?"

"It will appear tomorrow afternoon," Lee Shin replied.

The Japanese public was especially impressed with South Korean challengers because they had left their country to protect Japan, even though gates would appear in Korea, too. Lee Shin was a remarkable challenger, but these challengers had trusted their entire country to him.

Some South Koreans criticized these challengers for neglecting their own country, but it was a complaint that would disappear as long as Lee Shin effectively defended the country against the gate.

Woong— Woong— Woong—

Soon, dimension energy gathered in the sky above Gapyeong. Everyone there was evacuated, and the military forces encompassed a five-kilometer radius. The tension and nervousness were visible on everyone's faces.

"The dimension energy level is a whopping 9. Are we really going to be okay, Commander?" One of the sergeants guarding the place asked in a worried tone.

"I'm not sure. We'll find out. And Mr. Lee Shin also assured us that he can handle it alone," said the Commander.

"But, the moment even one gets through, it will be a disaster," the sergeant anxiously.

"That's why we're here! Don't worry," the Commander replied.

Lee Shin understood the people's concerns. Despite repeatedly showcasing his abilities and proving himself, he recognized that caution was only natural when it came to risking their lives.

"This is getting a bit boring," Lee Shin said.

"Sorry, we don't have the technology to pinpoint the exact minute and second..."

"No, that's all right," Lee Shin replied.

He did not expect it to be that precise. In a moment of boredom, he glanced at his smartphone to check the situation in Japan. The gate in Tokyo had just opened, and the challengers were locked in a fierce battle with the demons.

"It seems more intense than I thought," Lee Shin muttered.

The demons were determined and aggressive.

Gates in South Korea, Fukushima, and Osaka also opened one after another, leading to battles. Despite the challengers' efforts to provide support, the sudden influx of demons resulted in casualties. A few demons escaped military encirclement and attacked civilians, leading to casualties. This raised concerns among the South Korean population.

- Hello! I'm the host of the 'Gate Show,' Choi Woo-Min.

- Nice to meet you. I'm Professor Kim Jung-Han from Seo In University.

- I'm Professor Lee Yu-Jin from Yeon Ha University.

Before the gate opened in South Korea, experts gathered on the 'Gate Show' popular show to discuss the events that would unfold.

- Professor Kim, what are your thoughts on the Gapyeong gate?

- This gate looks a bit dangerous. The gate's significant characteristic lies in its 100-meter diameter, suggesting a higher likelihood of weaker beings in larger quantities than a few strong individuals in smaller numbers.

- I see. And what are your thoughts, Professor Lee?

- I agree with Professor Kim. If we look at the Osaka gate that is currently open, it is similar to ours. Numerous demons are pouring out there instead of a single large one. Therefore, I think there is a risk of letting demons slip.

- Thank you for your opinions. The viewers' reactions don't seem to be very different from yours either. If you look at the live feed now, the military is standing back while Lee Shin is guarding the gate alone.

- It's a level 9 gate this time. The gate during the previous Mayotte incident was measured to be about level 7 in terms of how we measure the dimension energy this time. It's two levels higher now, making it the highest-level gate on Earth. We can't be certain if even Mr. Lee Shin can defend people against it completely.

- Thanks for your words, Professor Kim. Now, let's move on to Professor Lee... Oh! Wait a second! The gate has started to react!

- The gate is opening!

- And Mr. Lee Shin is starting to operate his mana!

The tension among the viewers heightened as the large gate opened. On the screen, Lee Shin gradually gathered his mana and released it into the air. Simultaneously, an enormous demon emerged from the gate, its size capable of taking the entire 100-meter diameter of the gate.

Thud! Thud! Thud!

The ground shook vigorously with the demon's every step. It was a muscular monster with two large horns on its head, and its ferocious teeth jutted out from its lips.

"Krooooo!" the demon roared.

The enormous roar, capable of rupturing eardrums, made even the soldiers standing far away cover their ears.

'Behemoth...'

Behemoth, the colossal demon that reigned over the Demon World, stood on a level far surpassing that of ordinary demons. Even commanding-class demons would flee in fear if Behemoth were to appear.

'It's coming...!'

Behemoth swung its fist into the air.

Whooong—

Baaam—!

The shockwave from the fist blew away all the trees in its way. A helicopter far away suddenly crashed due to the unexpected gust of wind.

- What the...! This is incredible power! With just the aftermath of a fist, helicopters are crashing one after another!

- What about the people on board the helicopters? Are they all right? What happened to them?

The panelists on the Gate Show watched the screen with worried expressions.

Click, sizzle—

As trees soared through the air, a thick white smoke filled the area. With a hand casually tucked in his pocket, Laurent retrieved a cigarette and ignited it. He proceeded to readjust his sunglasses.

"I never knew there were such creatures in the Demon World," Laurent murmured.

Next to him, the helicopter lay in scattered pieces, disassembled. The pilots and passengers, their faces pale, struggled to catch their breath after the ordeal.

"Ductility," Laurent said.

Laurent took another puff of his cigarette and gathered the helicopter parts to create a massive cannonball.

"They're coming again," Laurent muttered.

In the distance, two creatures identical to Behemoth could be seen inside the gate.