

## **The Tower 28**

### Chapter 28

Arriving at the Dark Forest, Lee Shin could sense that the atmosphere of the forest had changed a little.

Eughhh—

Keuahhh—

The cry of pain could still be heard. However, it was slightly different from what he had heard earlier.

‘Loneliness... Chagrin...’

The trolls, who had lost their intelligence, howled. Through intuition, they noticed that their hero had woken up, and they roared even louder.

[Hidden Stage - Shakhan, the Great Warrior of the Dark Frost Troll]

[The Great Warrior of the Dark Frost Troll, Shakhan, who had been sealed for a long time, woke up from a long sleep. The chagrin and rage that he had been holding back exploded all at once. Help him control his anger.]

Lee Shin was not told to kill Shakhan.

Keughaaa!!

The roar from deep inside the Dark Forest reverberated through the entire forest. Lee Shin could feel his rage through the sound of his cries.

Although the cry was unsteady, the ferocity within suggested that greater danger was to come. The souls of the Dark Frost Trolls were spread throughout the Dark Forest. These irritated souls that were hiding in different places began to wake up.

"Your hero has woken up," Lee Shin muttered.

'You shouldn't be angry or upset anymore.'

# You can communicate with demons.

The souls of the Dark Frost Trolls, which already had become demons, appealed to Lee Shin for justice.

The power behind Lee Shin's words were bolstered by his Dominance stat. The demons flinched because they were influenced by Lee Shin's Necromancy command.

'My commands would not last very long, because I am not skilled yet. Plus, I don't have the best Dominance stat.'

However, his commands were good enough to buy him a little time. It was Lee Shin who had to struggle when the demons became active, because he had to sense the emotions of the demons, who were everywhere. The lack of control over such demons greatly hindered his concentration on the battle.

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Shakhan was placed deep in the Dark Forest where the large tombstone was. The stone wall behind it had collapsed. His dark eyes stared at Lee Shin. He was seized with anger and hostility that he could not think straight. In Shakhan's eyes, Lee Shin was just an enemy.

"How dare you... do that to... my tribe...!" Shakhan's raspy voice came out with difficulty because he had not talked for so long.

Shakhan's ferocious skill, Fear, made the atmosphere heavy in an instant. Shakhan swung a huge curved sword that was the size of Lee Shin.

Kaaang!

Lee Shin avoided Shakhan's curved sword with a move that could not have come from a wizard of the lower floors. The curved sword struck the ground, causing it to tremble.

"Collapse!" With Lee Shin's call, the land that was underneath him collapsed. Shakhan momentarily lost his balance. Nevertheless, he quickly gained back his balance and tried to get out of the area. However, he was thrown back onto the ground by an explosion.

Kaboom!

As soon as the battle began, the mana circle engraved on the ground was activated, and it tied Shakhan's feet together when he fell to the ground. And the series of explosions blasted at his head.

"Keughhaaa!" Shakhan cried out.

There was no way that this level of attack would explode Shakhan's head, but it made Shakhan lose his sense of balance.

"Keuahhh...!" Shakhan shouted.

As the vibrations kept coming at his head, Shakhan struggled to escape from the sunken ground. Lee Shin did not give him a break. Despite the constant attacks made by Lee Shin, Shakhan's body was recovering at the same time.

It was time to put an end to Lee Shin's relentless attacks.

[Dark Thunder]

A black lightning bolt struck Shakhan's head, which was unable to move properly as he was stuck in the ground.

"Keughhaaa!" Shakhan cried out.

The screechy roar resonated throughout the Dark Forest for a while, and then it faded.

"I... I am... Why do I..." Shakhan's eyes, which had earlier seemed black and unfocused, turned blue.

[The spirit of the Great Warrior of the Dark Frost Troll has awakened.]

[You have cleared the hidden stage.]

"Shakhan, are you alright?" Lee Shin asked.

"Sha... Khan... Who... are you? How do you know that my name is..." Shakhan's voice became clearer, as if his consciousness was gradually restored.

"My name is Lee Shin, and I'm here to wake you up," Lee Shin answered.

"To wake me up? Oh, I see. Are you the apostle of the God of Death? The smell of death is strong on you," Shakhan said.

"..." Lee Shin did not respond to that.

The word apostle was disgusting to hear, but he decided to let it go this time.

"Is the God of Death finally paying attention to us?" Shakhan asked.

The Dark Frost Troll was a tribe that believed in the God of Death. However, it was highly likely that the God of Death, who was not very interested in its believers, was not aware of their existence.

"What happened?" Lee Shin asked.

"Kreuk... One day, an apostle came to us... And he was the apostle of the God of Blessings," Shakhan explained.

Shakhan was moving his body with great difficulty. His body had been torn apart by Lee Shin. He shoved the curved sword into the ground and sat. He looked at Lee Shin and talked continuously.

"Spray this all over the Dark Forest..." With Shakhan's words, the background had changed.

Shakhan's former appearance was overlaid with his current appearance. And the apostle of the God of Blessings who was standing in front of him opened his mouth.

"... then your tribe will also be looked after by the God of Death," said the apostle.

The Dark Forest used to be a forest with fresh greenery. That forest had changed completely in an instant after the apostle of the God of Blessings came.

Shakhan began to spray the liquid brought by the apostle of the God of Blessings throughout the forest to receive favor from the God of Death, which he had wanted for so long.

Shakhan had no doubt because he was an apostle of the same god. However, the forest became increasingly polluted, and the Dark Frost Trolls who lived there became plagued with infections. When Shakhan had realized something was wrong, it was already too late. The sickness had already infected his body.

It was also too late to leave this forest and go elsewhere. The trolls would not last long if they went anywhere else. They could not survive without eating the fruit, even if it was stained with plague. Meanwhile, the apostle of the God of Blessings reappeared.

"This is the work of the God of Plague. The holy water of the God of Blessings would not have done that," said Shakhan.

"How dare you doubt the God of Blessings!" The apostle was brazen and Shakhan was enraged.

The apostle scolded Shakhan and began to attack him. Shakhan, who was already devastated, was unable to handle the apostle's attack and simply collapsed.

"Kreuk!" Shakhan thought that he would not have lost so helplessly if he had been in good shape, but it was all useless.

"Believe in the God of Blessings. If you do so, your tribe's sins will be forgiven and he will bless your tribe," the apostle explained.

Shakhan was angry and resentful of his situation. How could this happen? Why should his tribe abandon the God of Death and believe in the God of Blessings?

"We are... the believers of the God of Death..." Shakhan refused.

"Then go to sleep. He will not be killing you, because blessed is the God of Blessings." The apostle sealed Shakhan in a stone wall.

"Your tribe will suffer forever, because of your stupid stubbornness." After the apostle's declaration, the scene changed.

"This is all I can remember... I can't remember anything from this point on because I was sealed," Shakhan explained.

"Oh, really?" Lee Shin asked.

Lee Shin thought it was ridiculous. God of Blessings did not kill Shakhan because he was merciful? Did God of Blessings really leave the Dark Frost Tribe alone? What kind of nonsense was that? They were just suffering from the plague and the God of Blessings would have left the Dark Frost Troll tribe unattended until they eventually pleaded for him to accept them.

And the reason why the power of He Who Knows Death had been invoked was that 'that was how Shakhan had ended up.'?Lee Shin thought.

This place was inside the tower. It was a world created by the gods. No, wait, was it really made by the gods? If so, who would have created these stages? Was it the God of Blessings? God of Death? Or was it another third party? Nothing was clear yet.

[God of Death has intervened in this world.]

In the Dark Forest, the black curtain lifted. Past the blackened trees, and a red sky appeared. There was a black light falling from the sky. A blurry black mist loomed in the dark forest. There was an interesting figure. Lee Shin could not make out whether it had a shape or not. Confused, Lee Shin frowned at this strange feeling.

- Whoa...

It was a cold, gloomy, yet elegant voice. It felt like the voice itself was created in Lee Shin's head, rather than it coming from the fog. There was no eye on the astral body of the God of Death, but Lee Shin felt as if the God was staring at him.

- Are you the one who caused all the uproar in the world these days?

The God of Death spoke to Lee Shin first. Shakhan was on the floor, kneeling. He could not face the astral body of the God of Death, even though it was not even the actual God—just his astral body, which was only an avatar.

- I see that you have Divine Status... And you're taking care of a vampire? That's interesting.

"..." Lilian dared not answer in front of the God of Death who spoke of her as if she was a pet.

Her body trembled before a God of such a tremendous class. It was best to just calm her down.

"Where were you and what were you doing while your believer became like this?" Lee Shin asked.

Each god was different in the way they sought things, thought about things, and reacted to things. To the God of Death, the death of a believer was inevitable and natural.

Therefore, the God of Death neglected his believers. If they died, they died. And if they lived, they lived. The God of Death thought that he was too great to care about the one low-class tribe of trolls. Nevertheless, Lee Shin still asked why he decided to do that. The God of Death did not bother to answer Lee Shin's questions, as if it was not worth answering.

- Dear believer of mine!

"Y-y-yes, my Lord..." Shakhan stuttered.

- A believer is not that great of a thing to me.

The reason why he could intervene on stage like this, and talk to the challengers was all because he was the God of Death. All living things eventually died, therefore, the God of Death did not need a believer.

- It is not because of you guys that I present myself here.

Shakhan did not seem to care, even though what God had said was very cold. It was a natural thing for him.

- Still, I see it as a challenge if you bother my apostle.

The energy that stretched from the hazy figure covered Shakhan.

"Keughhh!" Shakhan cried out.

- You are my apostle from now on.



A black energy started to flow through Shakhan's body. And Shakhan's eyes had turned even darker than when he was inflicted by the plague. A black door, symbolizing the God of Death, was drawn on his body. Shakhan's weak muscles had swelled again and his faltering class was revived.

[A new apostle is created by the God of Death!]

[A huge force, which will affect the world, is involved!]

"I, Shakhan, the Great Warrior of the Dark Frost Tribe, swear that I am subordinate to you by giving my soul to the God of Death," said Shakhan.

- I will give you your first mission. Find the apostle who made you like that and kill him.

"I will do that, even at the cost of my life," Shakhan replied.

[A new timeline has been created.]

[The world line on the fourth floor has changed.]

Shakhan got up by shoving the curved sword that lingered with black mana into the ground.

Keuaaahhh—!

He was completely different from when he first woke up from the seal. The sound he made was a majestic high-pitched voice that was completely different from the roar that was only ferocious, angry, and hostile. Shakhan's Fear echoed throughout the Black Forest.

- I declare this place my territory.

[The Black Forest is now declared to be the territory of the God of Death.]

[Some gods are complaining about the excessive intervention by the God of Death.]

- Nothing in my territory can choose to die without my permission.

[All the Dark Frost Troll tribe has been delivered from the plague.]

Keughhhaaa—!

A sense of liberation from pain could be heard from the cries of the trolls echoing throughout the place. The existence of the Death God, which was clearly felt when he first appeared in the Black Forest, began to fade out.

The God of Death made a sudden expansion of the world line and accomplished things that consumed a great deal of causality without much effort and thought. Lee Shin looked at the God of Death, who was about to disappear.

"Are you leaving?" Lee Shin asked.

- It was a pleasure to meet you, who knows death.

With that word, the existence of the God of Death had disappeared completely.

[You have made a great achievement!]

[With the expansion of the world line, the stage on the fourth floor has changed!]

[Many gods are requesting to have a conversation with you.]

[Your achievements are being tallied, so please wait a moment.]

The tally of achievements was done when one had achieved such enormous achievements that it was impossible for the system to determine it at once. Lee Shin ignored the system messages as if he had expected it.

Once again, there were thousands of requests from gods who wanted to have a conversation with him, but Lee Shin did not bother to communicate with them. There was one exception though.

"Is the God of Death among them?" Lee Shin asked.

[The God of Death has requested to have a conversation with you. Do you want to accept it?]

There was a big difference in communication when the God forcibly presented himself in front of a challenger and when there was a mutual agreement between them using the system. The gods preferred a mutual agreement system because they did not have to consume causality with the permission of the challenger.

[You are now connecting to the God of Death.]

[This is unexpected.]

God's voice was the same cold voice that Lee Shin had heard before.

"I have a way of signing a contract with a low-rank spirit."

[So... I'm assuming you want a Spirit of Death... This is getting interesting.]

The best option he had ever hoped for was now in front of his eyes. It was the spirit that no one could deal with unless it was the current Lee Shin.

[I wish you the best of luck.]

The air began to darken as if it was sucked into space, and a breathtaking energy appeared.

"I think I said I wanted a low rank... Keugh!" Lee Shin had lost the connection with God.

[The connection with the God of Death has been lost.]

How could he ask for a conversation first, and then disappear like this? He was given a spirit that was beyond his control at the moment. It was an intermediate rank spirit, Harpness. Harpness, the spirit that sculpted the fear of death, had appeared before Lee Shin.