

The Tower 34

Chapter 34: The Tenth Floor

Lee Shin arrived at the waiting area on the sixth floor. He looked around the quiet place. There were definitely far fewer people here compared to the fifth floor. That was because many people have already gone up. The sixth floor was not particularly difficult. At that time, Baek Hyun appeared in front of Lee Shin. He was just teleported to the waiting area.

"Huh?" Baek Hyun looked puzzled when he encountered Lee Shin.

"Master..." Baek Hyun said.

"Shhh, just follow me," Lee Shin said quietly.

Lee Shin cautioned Baek Hyun by putting his index finger to his mouth. He brought Baek Hyun to a quiet place because Lee Shin did not want to make a fuss or attract other people's attention.

"Tell me what happened," Lee Shin said.

"Well..." Baek Hyun explained what had happened at Lee Shin's interrogation.

As Lee Shin listened to Baek Hyun's story, he also briefly told him how he came to rescue Baek Hyun.

"Thanks to you, I'm alive." Baek Hyun thanked him.

Baek Hyun drooped his shoulders in despair. What Lee Shin had warned the challengers about was not to be so conceited that they wound up helpless and dead. However, Baek Hyun had nothing to say because he did exactly that, not long after he went up.

"I'm sorry..." Baek Hyun said quietly.

"Why would you do that then? And it's not that you don't have what it takes. It's just that you're being too reckless. If you had been a little more careful and strategized with other tribes, it would not have been something impossible for you to handle."

Lee Shin paused, then continued his explanation, "And if I had made a good strategy with the heterogeneous group of tribes, it wasn't impossible."

That was what Lee Shin really thought. In the first place, no other challenger had the overwhelming power he had, and thus would not be able to use the same strategy as he did. It was obvious that the other tribes were introduced so the challengers could persuade them to combine their power and defeat Gerpain together. However, the moment Lee Shin saw the altar, he could not make them his allies.

'A god who sucks the life out of creatures.'

The altar had a mark of that damn god. From the moment he saw it, Lee Shin did not trust those tribes.

"What did you get as your reward?" Lee Shin asked.

"Reward? Oh! I got a blueprint for building the Titans," Baek Hyun replied.

Baek Hyun showed Lee Shin the blueprint that he received.

"Hmm..." Lee Shin pondered.

This was not even comparable to the blueprint of the Destroyer, but the blueprint of these basic Titans was, in its own way, more useful than the blueprint of the Destroyer.

The Destroyer could not be made without the Mountain Vital Force, and even if the MVF were available, it would have been more of a pain, because he needed a hextech engineer. However, it was much easier to obtain materials and builders to build Titans than the Destroyer.

"Did you also acquire hextech skills?" Lee Shin asked.

"No? Did they give you that skill as well?" Baek Hyun asked.

"Hmm...Then I'll take this from you." Lee Shin took away the blueprint. "What? But why m-m-master?" Baek Hyun looked surprised.

Baek Hyun never thought that Lee Shin would take away his reward like this.

"Are you being serious...?" Baek Hyun asked.

To be honest, Baek Hyun was not entitled to claim this reward. Lee Shin was the one who defeated Gerpain and dealt with the Destroyer. And he even saved Baek Hyun. However, Baek Hyun, who experienced Titan's power, really wanted the blueprint. That was why Baek Hyun could not easily give up the blueprint.

"You can't even use it anyway," Lee Shin said.

"I mean... I can sell...." Baek Hyun muttered.

"How much were you going to sell it for?" Lee Shin asked.

Baek Hyun's eyes widened when he thought Lee Shin was trying to buy it with his points.

"Well, since you're my master, I'll give you a discount—" Baek Hyun was interrupted.

"No, the price for your life," Lee Shin said.

"What?" Baek Hyun asked.

"I paid for it by saving your life. Is this more expensive than your life?" Lee Shin asked.

Baek Hyun was speechless at Lee Shin's words.

"Take it..." Baek Hyun muttered.

"I'll use it well," Lee Shin replied.

Baek Hyun's shoulders dropped again as he saw the blueprint disappearing into Lee Shin's arms.

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The news about the two people's ranking update became a hot topic in the community and naturally reached the ears of Kim Kang-Chun and his group.

Kang Ji-Hoon - Hey! What happened? Did you really clear the Hell level?

Baek Hyun - Yeah... that's what happened.

Kang Ji-Hoon - That's awesome! Did you really clear the Hell level? I heard that your ranking was updated at the same time as the master. How did that happen?

Baek Hyun - Master saved me.

Kang Ji Hoon - What do you mean he saved you? The fifth floor is a solo stage.

Baek Hyun - Well...

Park Hye-Won - Hey, you idiot! I was so worried! Did you really challenge the Hell level?

Baek Hyun - Yes! Well I mean...

Ji Eun-Ju - Oppaaa, I thought something happened to you... sob

Baek Hyun - Ah, I'm sorry Eun-Ju. Don't cry...

Baek Hyun was not able to keep up with the flood of messages from his friends. Others were already in the process of climbing the tower, so they could not send him a message. And since Lee Shin did not usually check his messages, Baek Hyun had to deliver his news to them as well.

"Ha..." Baek Hyun, who had been struggling with the messages for a long time, slumped to his seat.

Lee Shin had already gone up to the next floor.

"But I've gained a lot this time," Baek Hyun muttered.

Aside from the blueprint of Titan, the rest of the rewards that he received were good enough. Lee Shin had said that it did not matter even if a challenger took more time to clear a floor. Baek Hyun clenched his fist and went into the community to check the date.

11/03 03:20

They had less than a month before the Dimension Gate opened. He had to climb as many floors as he could before that date.

"I shall get going," Baek Hyun muttered.

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[You have entered the tenth floor.]

[Advance to the top 32 at Gret Ciel to be qualified to go to the next world.]

The Gret Ciel was a tower so tall that it seemed to have no end, penetrating the clouds. There was also a huge stadium complex that was built around the tower. Gret Ciel was both the name of the tower and the name of the entire stadium. Additionally, the competition that was held in this location was also called Gret Ciel.

It was a gateway that a challenger had to pass through to move on to the next world. Thousands of people gathered to watch this competition.

- Hello! My name is Felix, the host of this episode of Gret Ciel. Now that the finals are finally underway, we can see a lot of really great contestants this time! The audience can look forward to a great spectacle!

With the circular tower in the center, there were four stadiums located facing four directions: north, south, east, and west. Felix appeared on the screen inside each stadium and began the process.

- So, we had many talented people participate in this episode. Do you know how many participants we had? We had 5,327 participants! It was much more than...

Before the game started, Felix tried to warm the audience up. The audience already knew that this episode was different from the previous episodes.

"I heard Bex, the dragon knight, will be coming out this time."

"Who cares if there's a dragon knight this time? Zarqan, the descendant of Dragon Slayer, is coming out this time. Aren't they natural enemies?"

"Hey, kid. Who did you come to cheer for this time?"

"I'm cheering for Damon, the Flame Wizard! It's so cool when the fire explodes!"

"Hmm...I see. Damon is pretty strong, too. Isn't Damon the best wizard out of all the ones who have participated this time?"

"Tsk tsk, you don't know anything man. There's a rumor that there's a wizard who saved the Dark Frost Troll tribe."

"Really? The wizard who deals with death?"

"Yes! There is a rumor that he is the apostle of the God of Death."

"What? He's an apostle? Why is such a great person still here?"

"Well, we don't know yet. It could just be a rumor."

Only 64 out of more than 5,000 participants progressed to the finals. Many of the finalists already had quite a reputation. Or they had gained fame by catching the audience's eyes with their outstanding performance in the preliminary round.

- The reason why so many outstanding participants have participated in this Gret Ciel, and the reason why 5,327 participants gathered this time, will be revealed now!

On the screen, Felix was presenting a long wooden case. Felix lifted the wooden case and brought it close to the camera.

- This contains the prize that the winner of this episode of Gret Ciel will receive. And that is...!

When Felix, who seemed ready to open it at any moment, hesitated; the audience booed him.

"What are you doing? Here we go again!"

"I'm sick of that trick! Just open it already! Are you kidding me?"

"I can't wait to see that brilliant figure!"

Despite the boos of the audience, Felix seemed to be already used to it. Therefore he seemed very relaxed, having no care for their reactions. Felix opened the wooden case very slowly.

As the lid of the wooden case opened, people could see a pure, beautiful white sword. Its elegance was palpable, capturing the attention of everyone who saw it. Most of the audience wondered how much more amazing it would be if they saw it in person.

- You're all dumbfounded! That's right! This sword is the holy sword of a saintess! This sword is not used to kill people, but a life-giving sword that saves the dead. This is Martyr!

Whoaaa—

With Felix's introduction, the cheers of the audience rang throughout the entire huge Gret Ciel stadium. It was a sword made by a saintess at the cost of her whole life.

Martyr was a bow sword that got its name from the saintess's sacrifice. This sword could not cut or stab any living creature. Only the dead could be brought back to life with this sword.

- Now! We are presenting the greatest prize ever won at Gret Ciel! And that's how competitive this round will be. However, there will be only one contestant who can take the Martyr! Who will it be? Soon, the long-awaited competition will begin!

Whoaaa—!

There were loud shouts, and countless people gathered. It was a brilliant opening ceremony and the crowd was fired up. The best prize. The most number of contestants recorded in history. This time, Gret Ciel drew people's attention more than ever.

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Clomp— Clomp— Clomp— Clomp—

The sound of footsteps filled the quiet corridor.

Squeak—

The door opened, and a person wearing a black robe came in and sat down in the waiting room for the contestants. The man gave off a dull aura, and the cold atmosphere in the room became even colder.

"Hey there, Mister Wizard." A man with sharp eyes, lightly dressed, suddenly stood up, and approached the man who was wearing the black robe.

"What's that?" A cold voice came. A man in the robe pulled out his wand and pointed.

"You're so sensitive. Why don't you put down that wand? Are you confident you can handle it?" the man with sharp eyes asked.

"You must want to die already," the man in the robe replied.

"Whoa, I'm finally in the finals, but I don't want to die yet. Let's stop," the voice answered.

Despite the man's willingness to surrender, the wand of the man in the robe remained the same.

"You're He Who Knows Death, aren't you?" asked the sharp-eyed man, Dexter.

At Dexter's words, everyone else in the room stared at the two. Small quarrels were commonly seen here, but the quarrels between those two were different. Dexter was one of the contestants with a high

chance of winning this competition, and He Who Knows Death was in no way inferior. These two were heavyweights. Dexter smirked with a confident look.

The man in the robe did not answer, but Dexter nodded as if that alone had been an answer.

Dexter laughed. "I guess I'm right."

"If you say one more word, you'll die," the man in the robe replied.

The black mana that gathered to the tip of the man in the robe's wand seemed to match death well. The other contestants glanced sharply at the two. There seemed to be a competition between the wizard who was said to deal with death and Dexter who did not look discouraged at all. It was beneficial for others to know even a little of their abilities in advance.

"One... wo—" Dexter opened his mouth.

Whoong—

As soon as Dexter's mouth opened, the black mana spun violently and sprang from the tip of the wand.

Kwang!

"...rd!" Dexter, who was smiling and talking with a playful face, disappeared from his seat with a frightened face.

As a result, the mana fired by the man in the robe flew toward another participant. However, the contestants' attention was turned to Dexter, who had disappeared and now popped out. He disappeared into the shadows as if he went underground, and appeared among other participants a little farther from where he was originally.

"No one knows death as well as I do," the man in the robe spoke to Dexter who had just fled.

"I see that death is attached to your shadow," the man in the robe said.

"Oh really? That's so scary," Dexter replied.

The wand of the man in the robe was filled with deadlier mana than before. An energy of pure determination to kill the enemy gathered in the air. The other participants who saw that were convinced that the man in the robe was He Who Knows Death.

"Die," the man in the robe muttered.

Beep— Beep— Beep— Beep—?

Suddenly, a warning sound came from the waiting room.

- Both contestants should stop fighting immediately. The competition will start soon. Please refrain from battling outside of the stadium. You may be eliminated at the referee's discretion.

At Felix's words, the bloodthirst in the man in the robe's wand disappeared in an instant. Dexter shrugged, as he breathed an exaggerated sigh of relief.

"I guess I'm not dead yet?" Dexter laughed at the man in the robe.

"You will die out there," the man in the robe replied, pointing to the stadium on the screen.

"Oh, I'm so scared. Ah, and I'm the first one. Let's see if I'm going to die. Later!" Dexter left the waiting room.

Dexter continued to speak playfully. The man in the robe, who was perhaps angry, moved away from the waiting room to another place. And the once-tense waiting room eased in an instant.

The man who got hit by the black mana a while back looked at his blackened palm and muttered.

“This is interesting.”