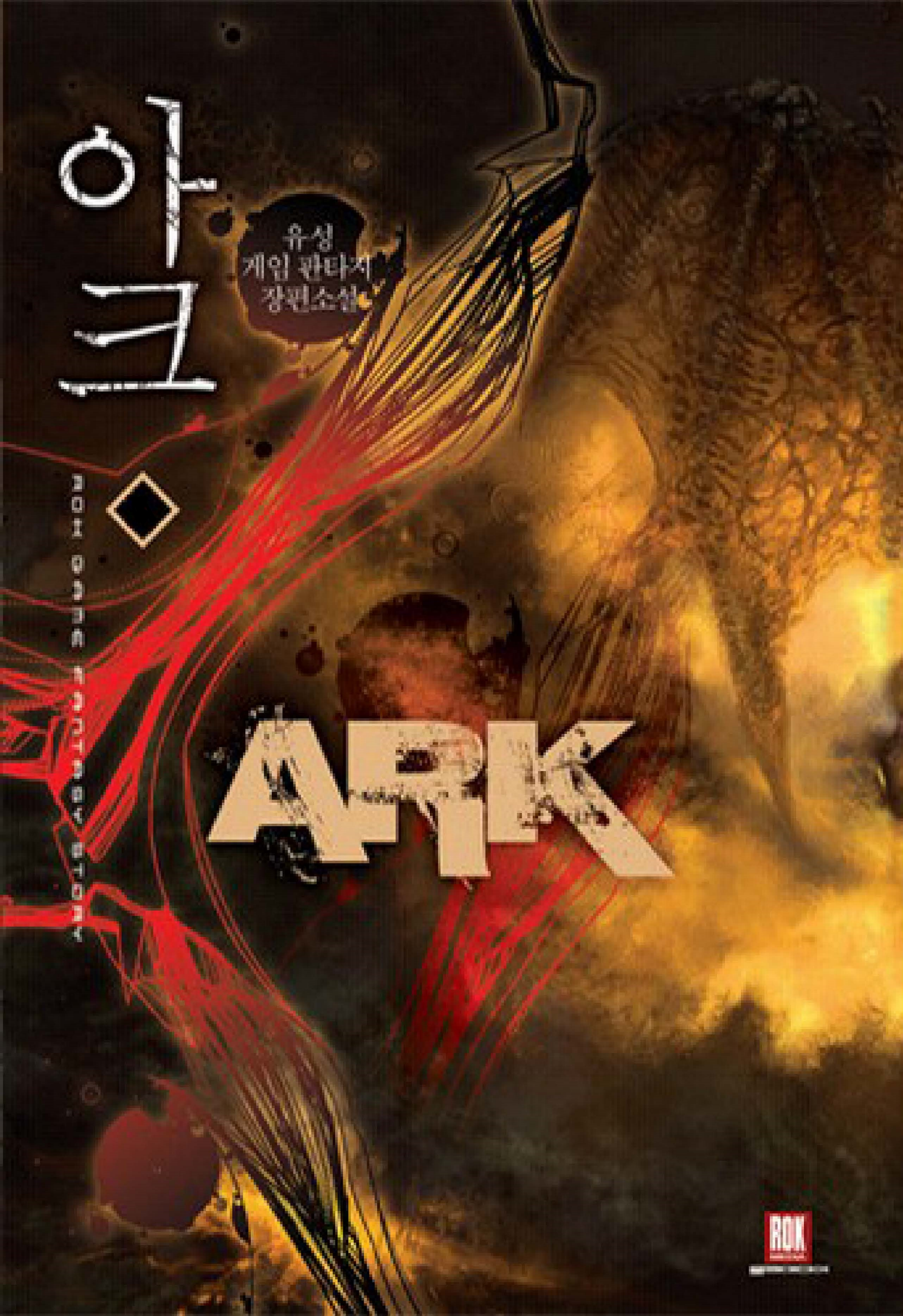
아크
유성
게임 판타지
장편소설
ARK
ROK

Underground World

-Summon Warwick from the Magic Sword.

The sword which was formed from a person's spine began to vibrate and hum. After a moment, the sword fell from his hand.

"Eh?"What, what the?"

The sword was stuck vertically into the ground and rotating in thin air.

Oduduk, Odududuk, Crunch!

An eerie sound rang out and the sword started to change.

Bones like a saw tooth started to extend out from both sides of the sword. The extended bones started swelling up and move from side to side, top to bottom until they joined together like a complicated cubic puzzle. It was similar to the robot transformation scenes frequently seen in animated cartoons.

The result was the same as well.

The sword formed a black torso with wild hair, and decorated with armour made from the metal parts of the saw blade and an old sword. After seeing the transformation scene with his own eyes, he couldn't understand how the blade could transform itself into that figure. Well, the transformed robots on cartoons were also the same but ……..

Anyway, the Saw Blade transformed into a level 60 Skeleton Knight.

'The explanation for the Saw Blade said that the spine came from someone abandoned in hell.'

He had seen many things travelling in New World.

The marvellous special effects weren't amazing anymore. But to transform with such a method. He felt caught off guard.

Ark stared with dumb surprise.

When the skeleton knight Warwick raised his body, a deep blue flame burned in his hollow eye sockets. The flames moved as he turned his head and gazed at Ark.

'Is this guy also someone with no manners?'

Ark recalled the first time he met the owner of the Magic Sword, Dunphil. However, Warwick was a completely different type from Dunphil.

Warwick opened his jawbone and began to talk.

"Foreigner……..You kraken ……..defeated it?"

"So?"

Warwick abruptly knelt down and bowed.

"To you……I express my thanks and respect."

"What?"

"My name is Warwick … ….At one time I respectfully swore my allegiance to the

monarch …….I fought with barbarians and became an Honourable Knight. However, after I unintentionally died ……an evil spirit captured my soul on the Hills of Dawn and sealed me to this sword so that I was unable to leave.”

“Hills of Dawn?”

Ark was puzzled as he belatedly noticed the meaning.

It was a name that he had occasionally seen in the history books of New World.

”Is it the Hills of Dawn in Valhalla?’

It was common sense! Valhalla was the palace of the dead in Norse Mythology. A warrior who died honourably in battle would receive an invitation to the Holy Land by the supreme god Odin. They would train their skills and wait there until the Final Battle, Ragnarok.

New World was a fantasy game with different myths applied in each region from all over the world. And in the Northern continent, a lot of the myths applied were about the Nordic World.

Getting back to the back, Warwick had wanted to get directly to the afterlife but had been captured by the Kraken.

Warwick showed regret in his eyes as he continued talking.

“From then on, for hundreds of years…….my spirit was corrupted and I became a devil…….my honour had been disgraced. It was a nightmarish time. To end the nightmare…….you have delivered the light of salvation. You naturally have my thanks.”

Unlike the other guy, Warwick was unexpectedly polite.

Ark’s face became elated as he scratched his head.

“Well, since you’ve told me your thanks……..”

“I know”

Warwick nodded and produced a body.

“You’ve released the curse from the magic sword……..Now you have the power to summon me……The reason why you summoned me is easily understood……And I too…….I was waiting for this!”

“You were waiting?”

“I’ve already been to the Hills of Dawn ……..that invitation was also corrupted. ……..However, meeting a truly honourable opponent has fired up my soul like in the past ……..If you can duel ……..My soul can be saved … … …And my strength and experience can be a foundation for you……..It would be delightful! Now ……..who will be my opponent……..Who are you? Of course, if your summon defeated the Kraken……His abilities must be better than expected! Oooh ……..my fighting spirit is kindled!”

Warwick couldn’t hide his excitement and shouted, shaking his sword.

His bones came alive at the subject.

“Now, I’m ready …….my fighting spirit …….call them before I disappear!”

“It has already been summoned?”

“What?”

Warwick scanned the place with baffled eyes. His burning gaze found Dedric standing to one side.

“Certainly……..I can feel the spirit of the Netherworld on this child……..but…….it is difficult! Even though I am corrupted……this body is an honourable knight! How can I against a young child……wield my sword?”

“What the? A child? Hey, dude! How old are you?”

Dedric who had changed into the form of a young child said angrily.

At that time, Ark pointed to Skull rolling along the floor.

“Do not worry about it, Warwick. Your opponent is here”

Warwick’s gaze followed Ark’s fingertips. And witnessed Skull looking proud at receiving Ark’s nomination.

Seems like ……..an embarrassing and awkward silence flowed.

Warwick looked stunned as he peeked at Skull and then looked at Ark.

A joke? His glowing eyes seemed to ask.

When Ark shook his head, the normally polite Warwick shouted.

“I’ve been polite to you. But now you’re insulting me!”

“I’m sorry but this is the situation. So can’t you try and fight?”

“I can’t endure it anymore, not matter how much you’ve saved me!”

Warwick threatened with his sword as he approached Ark. At that moment, Skull jumped and crashed into Warwick.

Warwick flinched and retreated. Skull had roughly interrupted him. He had a rarely seen angry countenance.

Warwick looked at Skull with surprised eyes.

He did this for a while as some form of dialogue seemed to pass between the both of them, before Warwick sighed and nodded.

“Right…….that was what happened? I’m sorry …….although only the skull remained…….you are also a warrior who knows honour…….I only looked at the surface and ignored you……I apologize.”

Clack clack clack!

After he was told that, Skull naturally held up his chin.

However, Warwick shook his head.

“Your fighting spirit and courage ……..is fully realized…….but I still can’t accept

the duel……..after looking at me you will notice…….for now, you're still lacking too much…….unless the difference is filled up…….I will never accept a duel with you."

Clack clack clack!

"You can say it as many times as you like, the answer is still the same……..my heart won't burn against a weak opponent……..it isn't possible to go to the Hills of Dawn with such a duel……..summon me again…….if you improve your skills enough to fight me."

Skull seemed shocked as he closed his mouth.

Warwick sighed and looked at Ark.

"I am indebted to you…….However, no matter how many times you summon me……..I cannot fight an opponent that doesn't stir me ……..your pet also……..and you wouldn't want to win in a dishonourable way."

"No, I suppose not?"

Ark quickly replied.

Dishonour? Are you joking?

After all if Skull wins then he can evolve.

Also if the fight against Warwick wasn't difficult, then he would be thankful. However, Warwick was more rigid than he imagined.

“I wish? Fu……..For a while I thought you were going to insinuate the idea ……..however, I was excessive……..that the guy who beat the Kraken would have such thoughts……..I apologize …….after all…….that is why I cannot accept this duel ……then……..”

“No, there seemed to be some misunderstanding……..I’m not someone as out of touch as you think. Good, that’s good? Hey, Hey! Are you listening? Ya! I said wait.”

However, before Ark could speak Warwick had already transformed back into a blade.

Dedric snorted and muttered.

“He isn’t a funny guy”

Ditto.

He never imagined that the owner of the magic sword would refuse to duel.

The owners of the magic sword really come in different types.

Ark sighed and picked up the Saw Blade.

Anyway, since he could only summon once in a 24 hour period, there was no way to resummon him. And even if he summoned Warwick again, the result would be the same with him refusing to duel.

‘Then again, the present Skull would have no chance of beating the level 60 opponent……’

Currently, the average level of his summons was around 45. However, the average

level was higher because of Dedric. In fact, Skull was still around level 40. Moreover, he has no offensive skills. He wasn't in a state where he could fight Warwick and win.

'Maybe it was better that he had refused the duel.'

In Skull had died, then he would also be unable to summon him for a 24 hour period. Therefore he would not be able to fight for 24 hours and would experience no growth. He summoned Warwick in order to see his stats, and he determined that there was no reason to duel.

'For the time being, I have to think a little bit more.'

Although it was disappointing, Ark soothed himself and snatched the sword.

The damage of the Saw Blade was higher than Lancel's Sword. However if he considered the attack bonus when fighting with Dedric the owner of the Magic Sword then Lancel's Sword was more useful.

"Eh? What the?" Skull, what's wrong?"

Ark had been about to move when Skull pulled at the hem of his clothes. Ark squatted down puzzled as Dedric muttered.

"Ooh, really? Really? Ha, those words? I'm good"

"What do you mean?"

“Ohehehe, Master. Skull asked when you would create a new dish to feed him that would unconditionally change him? Whatever you’re making would soothe him.”

“What? Skull, really?”

Skull nodded his head.

Ark also knew the feeling.

In fact, Ark was worried that Skull would be depressed after the duel wasn’t accepted. However in contrast to his worry, enthusiasm seemed to overflow from Skull. Although Skull had now lost all memories of the past as well as his body, he was also an honourable warrior.

Perhaps the conversation he had with Warwick was about that content. He must have felt the desire to win fairly after remembering his days as a warrior. In the past, Dedric would eat like crazy in order to get vengeance on Dunphil. However, Skull was a warrior who wanted to eat food for his and Ark’s honour. The magic sword played a motivating role in inspiring the growth of his summons. And that will make his pet grow several times stronger.

“Okay, Skull. Then you’ll need to be prepared for even harder training in the future.”

Once he outlined the situation, Ark crossed the bone room.

The room where the Kraken was located had a side blocked by a huge iron door.

The residents of the Underground World had carved this sentence on the iron doors.

But the lever to open the door was broken. However, just after Ark defeated the

Kraken. He figured out how to open the door.

“Snake, the ectoplasm glue!”

At Ark’s order, Snake opened its mouth and spat something out.

It was LPG gas cylinders with green slime twitching inside the transparent tubes. After the kraken disappeared, this was the item that Snake found among the piles of bones and items.

[Spirit Body Glue (Special)It was glue made out of ectoplasm capable of sticking body and spirit together.From a long time ago, numerous bodies had been abandoned in the hell. The souls of the dead bodies in the labyrinth were collected by the evil spirit, which mixed the impurities together to form the ectoplasm. The instinct to stick to the ectoplasm was very strong. Also, once the ectoplasm was touched it recognises the body and you would be unable to get away.

The ectoplasm would stick to each other and form a huge lump, which would spread into its surroundings and corrupt everything. That was the result of the corruption from the Kraken. However, now that the nucleus of the Kraken had disappeared, the souls of the people have become simple ectoplasm again.

When the ectoplasm is used, any object would be able to stick to it. In essence there is no limit on the size and length of the spiritual body. In addition, once an object is joined it won’t fall off unless it is destroyed. Using it as a joke was prohibited! Someone might have to live their whole lives with the hands or feet attached.

{The number of uses: 5 times}]

That is to say mixing fallen souls together would create an adhesive like glue.

-I’m lonely and bored.Isn’t there anything to be attached to?

-Woo-ssi, what are you looking at? Sometime to stick to?

-Hahaha, I’m glue. Put me on everything!

After shaking the tubes, voices mumbling could be heard.

Ark looked at the tube with a strange expression. Even if it was a fantasy game, using ectoplasm as a glue was like a horror movie……..

Furthermore, if the adhesive was shaken even a little bit then it would endlessly complain. It is an item which your common sense wasn’t sure if it should laugh or be afraid.

‘Where on earth would such a thing be used?’

When he first checked the item, he wasn’t able to think of a use for it. Jeez, even though glue could be used everywhere, why did he find such a strange item at this time.

But after a while, Ark could quickly see why.

The exit of the bone room was the broken lever.

‘Aha, so if I hadn’t defeated the Kraken then I wouldn’t have been able to open the door.’

Ark approached the level with a bone of a suitable size. And he opened the tube containing some murmuring voices and let it flow out.

-Uoooh, It’s outside!

-Awesome. Stick! Let’s stick!

After the bone was applied to the lever, the viscous liquid flowed over and stuck it together.

It was one performance. Once stuck together, the bone and lever looked like it had originally been like that. The ectoplasm was also satisfied and didn’t mutter anymore.

‘Now I finally ……..’

Ark glanced nervously at the iron door.

Only one thing left to do now!

Just open the iron doors to the Underground World. It was a new world no one had seen yet, just like the Undersea world!

He wondered if there was a mountain of treasure beyond the iron doors. Or a legendary unknown monster. Ark checked his equipment before pulling the lever.

He organized the items in his bag and repaired the equipment whose durability fell beforehand. And last but not least, he scrupulously checked his character information window.

“Stat window”

Character Name	Ark	Race	Human
Alignment		Good+200	
Fame	1695	Level	95

Profession		Dark Walker	
Title		Cat Knight, Caretaker of All, Jackson’s Hero	
Health	1925	Mana	1520 (+100)
Spiritual Power	100	Strength	232 (+ 5)
Agility	282 (+ 15)	Stamina	362
Wisdom	31	Intelligence	275
Luck	42	Flexibility	27
Art of Communication	23	Affection	55 (+ 10)
Special stat: Knowledge of Ancient Relics		83	

Equipment item effects

Guardian Armour of the Merpeople: Water Attribute Resistance +100%, Penalty based on water is nullified.Cat Paws: Attack Speed +10%, Agility +15, Critical Hit +10%Crystal Golem’s Head: Mana + 100

Norad Boots: movement speed + 10%, avoidance rate + 5%

Adelaine’s Necklace: Def + 40, Affection + 10

Resurrecting Spirit: Strength + 5, Mana Recovery + 5%

* All abilities will increase by 30% in the dark* You have the ability to hide in the darkness (15 minutes duration. Cancelled when you get into combat)* Resistance Fear, Darkness, Blind, and Seduction spells is increased by 50%.

* You can bring out the true abilities from all types of tools.

After hunting the Kraken, his level increase by 2 to 95!

“Okay!”

Ark took a deep breath and pulled the lever.

Kkurururu, with a ponderous sound, the iron doors were pushed out and rose up.

At the same time, Ark's mouth opened absent-mindedly.

"What, what the?" This is the subterranean world? "

An incredible spectacle unfolded in front of him.

The place where Ark had entered was on top of a mountain of great height.

Mountain, yes, it was a mountain.

In Cairo, he had fallen through thousands of metres before hitting the ground. From there, he had descended tens of metres through the underground labyrinth until he had reached the iron doors……..yet there was a huge mountain of extravagant height.

"What on earth is going on?"

Ark looked around with a perplexed gaze.

At the base of the mountain, a dense forest and deep ravine stretched to the

horizon. There was nothing different about the landscape compared to the Brandt Mountains.

“Jeez, did I make a mistake? Even the stars in the sky……..Ara? The stars are close……..? ”

Ark looked up at the sky puzzled.

The dark night sky was clear and there were numerous stars floating like jewels. But strangely, he felt as if he could stretch out his hands and catch the stars at any minute. No, it was not just a feeling. The stars were really not far away.

“Strange? Dedric, check it out”

“Ah, okay.”

Dedric flapped his wings and flew away. And after a few minutes, he grabbed a star.

“This is……it’s not a star? Stones, shiny stones!”

“Shining stone? Then the shine from the ceiling was because of ores?”

“Yes, everywhere else is also covered with these stones.”

Ark’s mouth widened. There was no longer any room for doubt.

The ceiling was so thick that an ore mine had developed. It was clear that Ark had

correctly found the Underground World. But there was another reason Ark was surprised. Ark had misunderstood the extravagant amount of ore as stars!

Low-grade ore could be used to produce various kinds of jewellery.

One finger-sized ore was worth approximately 20-40 silver.

‘But when it is a big ore like that…….! ‘

Ark swallowed his saliva and asked.

“De-Dedric. Is it possible to take it out?”

“Ugh, no. It is unbelievably hard. I can’t even move it.”

Of course, it doesn’t matter how hidden the area is if he couldn’t deplete it for jewellery. Even if Ark could fly with a pickaxe, he wouldn’t be able to remove the ore. It was a one of-a-kind jewellery, but stuck to the landscape.

‘I have to walk past it even though it is such a huge chunk of money……’

Ark stared at the ore with bloodshot eyes before eventually turning away. Walking away from the sight in the sky felt like digestive juices causing a sore stomach.

‘Anyway, this place is apparently the Underground World. If so, a fragment of the Three Marvels is hidden somewhere here. And there would also be the residents of the underground world, the beastmen. Guess I have to find them first.’

Ark checked his equipment again before heading down the slope. The area was underground and dark, but the ores embedded in the ceiling made it brighter than general dungeons. He continued heading down the steep slope to where the forest stretched out. When he entered, the forest immediately captured Ark's gaze. In the forest, the trees and plants were something that he had never even seen outside. It was probably isolated from the world for a long time so a unique ecosystem developed. That is why fruits that couldn't even be imagined were scattered around the rivers.

"Whoa! Look, master! The fruit thrown around!"

Dedric curiously tackled the strange fruit attached structure.

After he finished exploring the underground labyrinth, his stores of ingredients was running low. In addition, seeing an ingredient for the first time means that new dishes could be prepared.

Ark rushed to gather the fruit. However, as soon as it fell from the tree, a sound was heard and the fruit broke.

-Harvesting failed.

After many failed attempts, he had only managed to pick one fruit. And after ingredient identification failed twice, he finally managed to obtain information about the food.

[Bao Fruit (Food)The Bao Fruit is a special plant that only grows in the Underground World. Because the size is different and it is a very sensitive plant, advanced foraging skill is required. When picked, it can be used in a dish or as a magic ingredient and if it is dried and powdered then it can be used as a spice.]

His foraging and ingredient identification skills were intermediate level.

Even so, the fact that it was so difficult to pick meant that it was a high level ingredient. Indeed, after he managed to pick one, his skills rose by 1. Of course, some of his ingredients couldn't be used anymore because it became stale, to the extent that if he left ingredients lying around it would spoil.

The ingredient level would also mean higher food effects? Such ingredients were scattered around the area. Ouhahaha. It is a paradise for Survival Cooking!'

The fruit as a fruit, herb as an herb, poisonous plant as poisonous…….

Even if it was poisonous, Ark's style of cooking was to not throw any ingredients away. Ark slowly gazed at the ingredients and crazily collected it. It was to the extent that he forgot the reason why he came to the Underground World in the first place. How far did he walk?

By the time his empty bags were filled with ingredients……..

A bush to the side began to shake and the sound of a person was audible.

Ark reflexively held his breath.

He had been in the underground world for 30 minutes. He would've been relieved at the sight of a common wolf. But there was no monster. Soon two monsters appeared in the bush behind him. It was the first time he had seen such a monster.

It was a cricket like monster with 2 legs that smashed the branches as it walked. And the monster was wound around its body like a plant was riding the cricket monster.

"Enemy? Eyes of the Cat"

After checking the information with Eyes of the Cat, Ark took a deep breath.

‘Kanggeul? Level…….Huk, 150?’

“Aid! Kara! By the nose!”

When the monster riding it shouted, the Kanggeul attacked Ark. When a thorny branch hit him, he instantly lost 300 health. There was also a strong bleeding effect which made him lose more health.

‘Oh my god, the first monster I encountered here was a level 150 monster!’

Ark’s current level was 94. With his dark attribute bonus he reached level 120. However, no matter his ability or level Ark was a strong opponent. Especially if he used a pre-emptive strike.

Ark quickly judged the situation.

‘The risk in this fight is too big.’

Even more than usual, Ark could not die here.

He hadn’t updated the resurrection place yet. If he died, he would have no choice but to resurrect in the place where Andel was waiting.

Is such a risk worth fighting against a level 150 monster?

“Dedric, Skull. Emergency plan D. Buy some time while I run away!”

“Sheesh, master. Should I let it hit once?”

“Shut up! There is no time to be playing around.”

Ark shouted and turned his body.

Then Dedric and Skull stood on both sides, blocking the Kanggeul. If there were two opponents, the use of plan D in this case meant at least an 80% chance of escaping. This was because monsters usually looked to the front to attack. But……!

“Chic! Chic! Woo-ramba!”

The one riding Kanggeul had noticed him and grabbed wildly at the reins while shouting. And the cricket’s body flew into the sky. And it flew 10 metres until it was in front of Ark.

A sharp spear rushed in front of him.

“Pant, what is this …!”

Ark rolled to the floor to avoid damage from the spear.

“Master, this isn’t our fault!”

“Shut up and move! The C-3! Do everything you can to stop this guy!”

Ark raised his voice angrily.

The mobility of the cricket Kanggeul was unthinkable.

He knew that crickets could jump up several times their height. With the trees and bushes in the way, it wouldn't be easy to escape this guy. But he still had his summons to even the odds.

'Yes, the pets should take care of one opponent. I have no choice but to see the game through.'

Quick decision! A rapid assessment of the situation led to an action.

"Ok, let's see where it is attached. That vine child will be begging! Snake, sword! No, the best cheap sword!"

Ark was looking for a cheap sword.

Due to Ark's training, Snake could now determine the value of items and pulled out a battered sword. As soon as he caught the sword in his hand, he prepared to unbeatable skill.

"Blade Storm!"

The battered sword shattered to pieces and struck Kanggeul. However, Ark's habit of thinking about profit or loss in a crisis only worsened the situation. The sword shattered into dozens of pieces at best. Each fragment only did 5 damage. The damage dealt by dozens of pieces could have been done with one Dark Blade. Blade storm used flashy special effects and took out a little bit of nature and struck Kanggeul for no reason.

-Critical Hit 500 damage!You are Bleeding and will receive 10 damage every 10

seconds for 1 minute.

For a short time after he used the skill, he was defenceless.

Ark received a critical hit and was in a bleeding state. Thanks to that, his health was quickly reduced by 40%.

“Eat this!

Profanities once again emerged from his chest after a long time. He swallowed tears of blood and pulled out a pretty decent sword. It was worth a surprising 1 gold!

“Batarat! The offensive of ten thousand won!”

It was like a stretched out scene where he realised that money was just as important in the game as it was in society.

Once money was involved, the special effects were different. When the sword shattered, it was with a loud boom and violent crack that spread out.

And a tornado like storm was raised and attacked Kanggeul.

A little while ago, Kanggeul had laughed at the same attack. But right now, it couldn’t be compared. The power of a 1~2 thousand won attack and a ten thousand won attack couldn’t be the same.

It was the power of cash!

A roaring sound was heard as Kanggeul’s vitality was reduced by 40%. And there was a double critical chance as the cricket fell down and Ark moved quickly.

“Damn, what kind of money do you think I’m made of? Snakes, deadly poison!”

The sword glowed green from the poisonous effects as he used Dark Blade. The deadly poison damage was also added to the damage that occurred from ignoring the defense. Kanggeul stumbled back and hurriedly lifted a spear.

However, Ark's fury was terrifying. When he ran up with bloody tears, Kanggeul was astonished. And in his madness, he laid down a flurry of continuous attacks.

"Ma-Master! You're alive!"

Dedric and Skull were struggling behind him.

It was a daunting opponent for two summons that were only level 45. In addition to the cricket's mobility, if it wasn't for the combination with the enemy opponent then it might have defeated already.

Ark's eyes burned red.

"I'm going to get as much experience as I can!"

His ten thousand won anger was indeed terrifying.

Ark shrieked and ran at Kanggeul who was on the defensive. And using the A-2 plan, which was a concentrated wave of attacks with his summons, the opponent was eventually in a critical condition.

"The grudge of money is scary!"

Ark swung his sword and made a finishing attack.

At the moment, Kanggeul shrieked and tried to escape into the sky by jumping

over the trees.

“There! Dedric, stop it!”

“Okay!”

Dedric opened his wings and flew into the sky. But unlike what he thought, Kanggeul did not run away. Been on a thick branch River is an abrupt and say pause began bustling atmosphere. Kanggeul perched on a thick branch and started talking.

“Eric, I, Noraness!”

“Pant, Master!”

Dedric was astonished and stumbled back.

Crunch, wadeudeuk! Kwajak!

The forest moved. No, to be precise it was the wood.

A big tree several metres in diameter slowly rose up and was it approaching Ark? And in the darkness, a few strands of ivy whipped out.

He reflexively stopped it with his sword but his health was still decreased. At the same time, Ark’s face lost colour.

He stuck up his chin breathlessly. The monster that appeared before Ark was a giant tree. It was like the ancient spirits of the tree that occasionally appeared in fantasy movies.

But this monster appeared many times more terrible and threatening. Dozens of

vines hung from the old tree trunk and swayed in every direction as it threatened Ark.

Plant Golem……..It was a monster that was a whopping level 250.

“It’s a fraud!”

It wasn’t even a boss monster but a general monster that was level 250?

‘Was it a mistake to come?’

Ark began to wonder if something was wrong.

It was a situation that anyone who played online games would have experienced. The experience where you adventure all over the place and then accidently enter a high level area.

In that case, if the user meets an enemy with ridiculously high level and stats, they would be forced to turn tail and run or lie down and die. Of course, Ark often experienced this in other games. This was such a situation. Before he entered the Underground World, he had fought the level 100 skeletons in the underground labyrinth.

The slime was level 130 which suggests that it was an intermediate boss. But as soon as he entered the Underground World, he met a level 250 monster?

It was not an ordinary monster. It was the same degree of difficulty as a tentacle wielding monster!

“What the hell! I only came through the iron gates yet what is with this absurd level difference?”

Ark swore as he attacked the vines flying everywhere.

Even while he did this, his health which was at 20% declined and he fell into critical condition.

‘No! Even when my health was 100%, I wouldn’t be able to beat the Plant Golem!’

“Skull, Dedric. D-4 plan!”

“Damn you,Iunderstand!”

At Ark’s order, his summons scattered in different directions. Dedric and Skull would attract the monster’s attention until Ark was out of the combat zone ……..If possible, he had not wanted to use this strategy.

After Skull and Dedric overcame danger and attacked like in the plan, he turned tail and ran away. Then the Plant Golem shrieked and chased after the skull and bat.

Meanwhile under the adrenaline effect activated by his critical condition, Ark did his best to run away.

How much time had passed? Suddenly red light flashed and he received damage.

-Skull has been forcefully recalled to the Netherworld. You have received 50% of the Familiar’s Health as damage.

Skull who wasn’t agile was the first to be killed by the Plant Golem. And not even 1 minute later, Dedric was forcefully recalled as well. If he hadn’t run away and drank a potion, he would have died from the damage. However, the situation was still worse. Because his pets had died faster than expected, his battle state still

hadn’t gone away.

‘I can’t afford to die so I just have to run away as much as possible.’

It was a mistake to pay attention to the money.

Fortunately, Kanggeul and the Golem still hadn’t discovered Ark. However, with the cricket’s mobility it was only a matter of time. There was no way to escape once he was noticed.

‘Did I come here just to die?’

Ark was desperate as he heard Kanggeul behind him. As he turned his head to check, something tugged at his feet. At the same time, his body was pulled through the ground and it was dark.

“What, what the?”

“Shhh!”

Ark turned perplexed, when something stepped in front of him.

At the same time, he heard the voice of the cricket right above him. The footsteps of Kanggeul and the Plant Golem passed over his head a few times before eventually disappearing when they couldn’t find Ark.

Ark let out a breath as the battle state disappeared. Then he heard a voice from behind him.

“You are a foreigner?”

“I…….eh? Your appearance…….perhaps are you……..”

“Heheh, that’s right. I’m a Beast”

In the dark, the chubby boy replied with a grin.

Yes, the boy was not an ordinary person.

He was a NPC that resembled a beast. However, his appearance was different from the Mermaid or Meow clan he had met previously.

The boy had dark circles around the eyes with a ringed belly that popped out. And swaying from his hips was a short round tail with stripes along it.

As soon as he saw it an animal popped into his head.

“Raccoon?”

Secure the Raccoons

“Right? Right? Foreigner?”

Ark gave an awkward smile and nodded. The raccoon boy excitedly beat the ground with his tail.

“I see! Wow I’ve never seen a foreigner before.”

Ark had also never seen a talking raccoon.

“But you……?”

“I’m from a raccoon warrior clan, Popo”

Popo proudly replied. Well he looked more like a big, warm friendly mascot than a warrior, but Ark nodded anyway.

Raccoon clan…….Ark realised that they were the residents of the Underground World.

Needless to say, he had been very tense and imagined them as a violent group of Beasts. However, what he ultimately found was a chubby raccoon. He felt vaguely disappointed, even though one of his objectives was to find the Beast residents.

“I am Ark.”

“Eung, you’re called Ark.”

Popo nodded with an excited look.

“In fact, I really like the foreigners.”

“What? You’ve seen foreigners other than me?”

“No, never. But I speak to a lot of adults. The foreigners are not content to live in one place and travel around the continent fighting against a large number of monsters. It is really great! It sounds like a manly life! One day I want to live just like that. Unlike the other adults in this place, I’m not going to hide down here my entire life.”

Popo sounded like a countryman who wanted to visit Seoul.

“Arc-hyung too? Did you enter the Underground world to track down that tree monster?”

“……That could be a possibility.”

“I knew it.”

Ark roughly nodded. Of course, Ark’s purpose was not only to fight monsters. The most important thing was to find the Three Marvels as well as a way outside. However, even if he told such an important thing to Popo, the little raccoon was

unlikely to be much help.

‘I must find the village of raccoons in order to collect information.’

So Ark thought that he would ask Popo to guide him to the village.

Popo struggled for a short time before nodding his head.

“Ok, I’ll show you. But if other people catch you it could be dangerous.”

“What? Why?”

“That…….I’ll gradually tell you. Once you wear this.”

Popo passed him clothes made of woven twigs.

It was a cloak with a hood and other similar forms of clothing.

When Ark wore the woven clothes, Popo immediately shoved grass into his lower back. With his face hidden by a hood and a plump stomach, at first glance he could be mistaken for a raccoon.

The disguised Ark followed Popo out of the cave. After 10 minutes had passed, Popo pointed in front of him and said.

“Here’s our town”

It was a large underground space.

Enormous torches were placed in many areas around the cavern with NPCs

crowded around it.

They were all beasts, with their appearance resembling a raccoon, therefore a raccoon clan.

The village of raccoons was rustic, unlike the mermaids who preferred flashy splendour.

Scattered around the rock walls were raccoon houses nestled in caves. Most of the caves were of considerable size however there were no colourful decorations.

On the other hand, the market was large enough to account for more than half of the village. There was a large range of workshops and shops line up on both sides of the market.

Ark remembered what he heard from the Meow Elder Hassan.

‘Which reminds me, didn’t the beasts of the Underground World have good craftsmanship? Where would he see the rest of it?’

Ark curiously glanced at items displayed in front of workshops.

Just like in Nodelesse, the items crafted by the raccoon clan were made of materials he had never seen before. The high performance design and craftsmanship was worthy of its name.

[Rainbow Rings (Magic)Item type: RingUser restriction: Level 70The ring with 7 of the most beautiful gems in the world inlaid.It’s even more special with the powers of the seven gems are amplified.{Rock, Light, Flower, Water, Earth, Wind, Mind. Resistance to these 7 properties +10}Price: 2,400L]

[Sarita’s Boomerang (Magic)Weapon type: Throwing weaponDurability: 50/50Attack: 15~25Weight: 10User restriction: Level 100A giant bird that only

lives in the underground world. The Sarita Boomerang was made from its bones. It is a throwing weapon that will return to the owner's hand after dealing a blow against the enemy.A precise processing technique was used to hollow Sarita's bones. When it flies through the wind, a sharp high frequency occurs. If you have low resistance, then there is a high probability that the high frequency would cause Fear.

{If the level is lower than the users, there is 20% probability of causing Fear}

Price: 3,500L]

'As expected, the prices are horrible.'

If you look at the experience of selling items in the hidden village, their performance was amazing. Just like the mermaid tribes, the village was also true to the raccoon family.

All of the properties of resistance in the ornaments were hard to even find in items outside. The same goes for throwing weapons. It was mainly warriors who used throwing weapons, but the supplies would eventually run out. However, Sarita's Boomerang was a throwing weapon that you could infinitely use.

There were items that a magician or warrior would freak out about if they saw.

However, the price was far above the performance of the item. Just like the mermaid tribes, the raccoon clan who was cut off from the outside had their own form of currency. Right, L ……..For the first time, Ark spoke about the ores that he saw when he entered the Underground World.

"The raccoon clan would occasionally use ore that fell from the sky to obtain more money. The ore debris is a material that is used in many craftsmanship, so it is a necessity for the raccoon clan."

It was Popo’s explanation.

‘3,500L……..Because it was between 20 ~40 silver for one ore. In terms of gold it was worth 700 to 1,400 gold!’

When converted to gold, it was a colossal price.

Even if Ark used all the money in his bag, it would only be possible to buy one of the expensive items. The shops selling food and ingredients were also the same thing, with high prices.

‘Damn, it is just like a pie in the sky.’

At that time, an idea came to Ark’s head.

‘That’s right. The mermaid tribe and raccoon clan were all Beast races that were cut off from the outside world. Then just like the mermaids, the raccoons won’t understand outside items either!’

Couldn’t he sell his japtem to the raccoons at an expensive price just like he did with the mermaids? To confirm his idea, Ark quickly pulled out some items from his bag and showed them to Popo. However, Popo’s reaction was not impressed.

“The efficiency of that item is zero. The raccoons will not take things like this. I have sharp eyes because we are the race of craftsmen after all. And we can go outside to obtain these things.”

A disappointing answer was returned.

Then Ark noticed something weird in Popo's answer.

"Go outside? So there is a method to go outside from here?"

"Of course. The raccoon family has continued to live by trading with humans. However, when we go outside we obviously have to hide our identities before engaging in trade. So gold is also used, but the L currency is the only one that satisfies the raccoon clan so get rid of any idea of using gold. Or your true identity would be discovered.'

"No, no. It's not that ……I just want to ask if trade with the outside world is not hostile then why all the trouble. Why am I not allowed to be discovered as a foreigner?"

"That……in the past, a problem occurred in Subarutalp."

Popo hesitated for a while before he sighed and replied.

The raccoon clan said that Subarutalp was in the depths of the Underground World. The original Norse mythology states that the black elves live in the underground world.

Subarutalp was as big as the outside world. The raccoon world in Norse mythology contained the holy water, with Yggdrasil in the centre dividing the the world into 10 villages, with each living peacefully.

"But then 'he' came and Yggdrasil changed."

“He?”

Popo ground his teeth together and nodded.

“Yes, a human with red hair came here ten days ago.”

“A redheaded man!”

At the moment, Ark felt as though cold water had been poured on him.

The man with red hair. Using a group of thieves, he had stolen the Heartsoul Bead from Giran before heading to Cairo. Ark never imagined that he would head to the Underground World one step ahead. He couldn’t understand how he came to the Underground World and ran into a quest related NPC.

Ark had been the first person to discover the underground labyrinth and its contents. If the opponent was a NPC, then coming to the Underground World without leaving a trace wouldn’t be difficult.

‘Then the Heartsoul Bead is related to the Underground World?’

Everything was complicated and entwined.

If so, what is the purpose of the red man……?

Popo’s following words were even more shocking.

“He said he was the Truthseeker.”

“What? Truthseeker?”

“Eung, the raccoon clan is not human but the Truthseeker was our friend. Any raccoon family would happily meet him. And according to an ancient vow, we guided the Truthseeker to Yggdrasil.”

“An ancient vow?”

“A long time ago, the adults of the raccoon clan made a vow with the Hero Maban that when the hero returned to the Underground World, we would guide him to Yggdrasil to receive a test.”

“So? He got the test?”

Ark asked Popo who hastily shook his head.

“I don’t know. But not long after he left something terrible happened. A red light rose from where Yggdrasil was and our wooden statue of Yggdrasil started attacking us. And every raccoon clan was attacked by Yggdrasil…… It changed them into monsters that would attack their own people.”

“Monster?”

“Originally, there were no monsters living in Subarutalp.”

What does that means?

Ark looked doubtful before asking again.

“Then…….what about the monster that attacked me?”

At Ark’s question, Pope angrily snapped.

“That’s right, Yggdrasil caught a raccoon clan. The raccoon clan caught by Yggdrasil changed into a Kanggeul or a Plant Golem. And it started to attack villages at random. I also lived in the village with those guys…….”

‘Oh my god, was this the disaster Shannon was worried about?’

Now pieces of information were connected.

The man who stole the Heartsoul Bead from the Magic Institute of Giran would no doubt be the same red man. In other words, the Red man’s destination was not Cairo but the Underground World.

Shannon had warned that the Heartsoul Bead had an ominous power that could cause disasters. That’s right. The fact that Ark met monsters with such absurd levels was because of that.

Ark confirmed his idea with the quest information window.

[Quest has been updated.Find the Heartsoul Bead II= Find the Heartsoul Bead III**You have** tracked the trail of the Red Man to the Underground World.And you have obtained a clue about the Red Man from the inhabitants of the Underground World.Not long after the Red Man came to the Underground World, its patron Yggdrasil went on a crazy rampage. The Underground World which was once peaceful had become a dangerous place filled with monsters, with everyone in the Underground World suffering.No doubt this would be related to the Red Man who stole the Heartsoul Bead.You have to combine these clues and find the Heartsoul Bead.{Difficulty level: C+}]

Ark’s jaw dropped after checking the information window.

The combination of all the clues for the Heartsoul Bead seemed to lead to Yggdrasil. And Yggdrasil was the culprit that threatened the Underground World by changing raccoon clans into monsters. Of course, there would be Kanggeul around level 150 and Plant Golems around level 250 roaming the place.

With Ark’s current power he couldn’t even head to Yggdrasil while taking them out.

Degree of difficulty C+! The difficulty for the Event Quest was C++, which was the highest level of difficulty that Ark had ever gotten.

Even if he could organize an attack, he didn’t know if it would be possible with that level of difficulty.

‘And besides this quest I also have to find the Three Marvels.’

He couldn’t think. The raccoons had a vow with the Hero Maban that when the Truthseeker came, they would escort him to Yggdrasil to receive a test.

It is likely that Yggdrasil’s test would give a fragment of the Three Marvels to the Truthseeker. Eventually the piece of the Three Marvels in the subterranean world should enter his hands.

‘Damn, do I have to be an alternative to the Red Man?’

Anger welled up in Ark.

If it hadn’t been for that fellow, it might have been easier for Ark to receive the Three Marvels. However, because the turned up with the Heartsoul Bead the difficulty level dramatically increased? Of course, he wouldn’t have found the

Underground World if it wasn’t for that guy……..

‘Anyway, now I can’t complete the quest at this level.’

Ark sighed before he remembered something and asked.

“You said that you traded with humans? So, that’s to say you can go outside? When this place became so dangerous, didn’t you think to flee outside or ask for help from the humans?”

“The only path to the outside world is inside Yggdrasil.”

Popo’s answer made Ark despair.

For or the time being he knew the location of the Underground World. And he had hoped for a lucky way to go outside. Ark had thought that he could go outside and raise his levels before coming back in.

However, if the path was associated with Yggdrasil didn’t that mean he couldn’t leave?

“The adults are all cowards!”

Then, all of a sudden Popo spoke in an incensed voice.

“The other villages have already been swallowed up by Yggdrasil. Together with thousands of kin. The raccoon village where I lived had also been abandoned. This is the only place left. Nevertheless, the adults are not willing to fight anyone.

They blocked the entrance but I was able to stealthily dig a tunnel. Knowing this situation, it would eventually reach here too!”

The village that Popo had lived in was close to Yggdrasil. Because it was only a step away from Yggdrasil, Popo was the only racoon remaining.

“But I’m different from the adults. I’m going to fight even if alone. Will Hyung as well? Because Hyung is different from the cowardly racoon adults and a brave foreigner! Will Hyung fight with me? Just like when you fought the Kanggeul earlier?”

Ark began to realise why Popo tried to show a good impression since they first met.

“Of course I have to fight. But…….”

Ark took a moment to answer.

Excitement showed in Popo as a raccoon was pushed to the left.

The raccoon clan suddenly staggered back as he grabbed his chest.

“Eh? What’s up with that? Ajusshi, are you okay?”

“Yuck, keuuuuk, kueaaaa!”

Popo stared with surprised as the other raccoon’s body starting spasming. After a

while, vines sprang out from the body and completely covered it.

“Kanggeul!”

In an instant, a raccoon had changed into a monster.

The raccoon clans that had gathered in the market screamed and fled everywhere. Popo also stepped back with a scream. However, Kanggeul’s body wound dozens of stems around Popo and hoisted him up.

“Ah, Ark-hyung!”

“Holy shit!”

Ark pulled out his sword.

Boooom, Ark swung his sword like lightning at the vines. Then Ark changed his target to Kanggeul.

The vines poured out continuously. Ark quickly rotated his body for continuous kicks and damaged the vines.

“Grrrr, Kkago, Namiru!”

Kanggeul was stunned and retreated.

Kanggeul’s level was 150, but it was only one opponent.

In addition, there were no crickets and no weapons. And unlike the vines of the Plant Golem, the attack and speed of Kanggeul was not intimidating.

‘This opponent is not that difficult!’

Ark damaged a vine using Dark Blade before running forward and cornering it with kicks. After 5 minutes. Kanggeul fell into a critical condition and tried to retreat. However, Ark’s movements were several times faster.

“Don’t miss!”

Ark ran and threw his body forward.

And quickly followed with a double sidekick! He hit the back of the head with his foot and Kanggeul fell to the ground. At the same time, Ark swung his sword down to get a double critical chance, causing Kanggeul to lose all its health.

“Am-amazing!”

“He defeated Kanggeul all by himself!”

After he defeated Kanggeul, the raccoon clans gathered and buzzed around Ark who had shown incredible skill. However, the raccoon clan quickly withdrew, surprised.

“Foreigner!”

“How did a foreigner get here?”

In the wake of the shouting voices, Ark’s oops was covered.

As a result of his fight with Kanggeul, the clothes made of twigs that Popo had given him were torn.

Ark didn’t know what to do and wore an embarrassed expression as he was surrounded by a group of raccoons clad in leather armour.

They looked between Kanggeul and Ark with surprised eyes.

“That……”

Without saying anything, the raccoon soldiers lifted up their spears.

“Don’t move! You’re under arrest!”

“Damn, let me go!”

“Do not move!”

“What did Ark-hyung do wrong?”

Popo swore and struggled.

At that time, an old raccoon on the opposite side angrily shouted.

“Be quiet!”

Pop flinched and looked down dejected.

‘I guess that old raccoon is the elder of this village.’

Ark looked around in silence.

Ark and Popo were dragged by the raccoon soldiers from the market to a large cave.

It seemed to be the Town Hall. Around 10 elderly raccoons were gathered inside the cave. Among them the oldest racoon stared at Popo with angry eyes.

“I specifically told you that you weren’t to go out there……..not only did you disobey me but you also brought a human along? Do you know what you’ve done? This town could be in danger because of you!”

“Haeng!”

“Do you still not understand? Why Subarutalp changed? It is because they believed the human. That human brought disaster her! This guy will also do the same! ”

“Ark-hyung is different. He defeated Kanggeul!”

“Stupid! He is probably a friend of the Truthseeker called to betray us further. How can you believe everything this guy says? He managed to come here after it

had been hidden for hundreds of years. It is clear that he has some other purpose. Everyone, immediately confine Popo and the human while we decide their punishment!”

“Yes, they need to be punished!”

The other raccoons shouted with their tails beating the ground.

“He is not the Truthseeker.”

It was then that Ark opened his mouth.

The eyes of the elders widened.

“What? What are you saying?”

“I’ll say it again. The red haired man isn’t the Truthseeker. He tricked all of you.”

“What do you know…….”

“How did you recognise the Truthseeker?”

Ark interrupted the elders.

“To become the Truthseeker, you must first kill the Black Bear Mouse and be acknowledged by the Meow, the descendants of Hero Maban. However, in the

past hundreds of years only one person has been recognised as the Truthseeker by the Meow. And, of course the Truthseeker was not the man with red hair.”

“How do you happen to know this?”

“Of course I would know. For the past hundreds of year, I was the only Truthseeker recognised by the Meow.”

“Wha-What!”

The elders burst out with a surprised expression.

“Ah, Ark-hyung?”

Popo couldn’t believe it and looked stupidly at Ark. He was not the only one. The raccoons gathered in the Town Hall looked at his other and muttered. However, it seemed that the elders couldn’t believe as they shook their head.

“Unbelievable! Even if he isn’t the Truthseeker you might be lying as well, how can we tell? Where is the evidence that you are the Truthseeker?”

“This is the evidence. Elders, could you examine this?”

Ark pulled out a small carved stone from his bag.

Elder narrowed their eyes and sat down while staring at the stone.

“St……..Star Fragment …….”

Yes. Ark had found one of the Three Marvels in the underwater world. It was a Star Fragment.

It was an item that was nearly impossible to get in his hands.

“Do you acknowledge it?”

Ark was confirmed as the elders nodded.

Then Popo pushed the soldiers as he shouted.

“Hyung! Ark-hyung is really the Truthseeker! Elder grandfather, see? Ark-hyung is the Truthseeker! A friend of the Beasts, he is the hero that inherited Hero Maban’s will!”

“Is that so?”

The elders touched their foreheads with their hands as they blew out a sigh of relief. And looked at Ark with weary eyes as they muttered.

“We recognise that you are the Truthseeker. But that doesn’t change anything. Obviously in the past we made a vow with Hero Maban. However, it is too late. Yggdrasil is already corrupted and we don’t know if we can even survive, let alone fulfil the vow. Therefore we won’t charge you with the crime of infiltrating the village without permission. But with Yggdrasil corrupted, you can’t leave here. Nothing has changed.”

“What are you saying? Don’t you understand? Ark-hyung is the Truthseeker! Now is the time that we must stand up and fight for Subarutalp to be peaceful again!”

“Shut up! We’re not children!”

The elders shouted at Popo who flinched and stepped back.

He wasn’t easily scared.

Popo couldn’t believe the elders and kept on shooting them looks as he said.

“The other villages are already gone. And no matter how much you hide, eventually you’ll be noticed. Elder grandfather knows it as well! Kanggeul showed up at the market. That means they’ve learnt how to come here.”

“Umm……..”

A heavy silence filled the Town Hall at Popo’s words.

So far, the raccoon clans in the surroundings muttered with low voices.

“But ……..This situation started from Yggdrasil. Yggdrasil……is our patron. If we fight Yggdrasil it would be impossible to win.”

“Besides Kanggeul and Plant Golem are also our own people……we would be killing them too……”

“Lies!”

Popo yelled wildly.

“Tell me honestly. You’re just too scared to fight. Cowards! So go ahead! Just continue hiding until Kanggeul and Plant Golem finds the town! But I’m different! I will fight even if I die!”

Popo pushed the raccoon soldiers and left the Town Hall.

“Why are you just standing there? What are you doing? Catch him!”

Two raccoon soldiers hurriedly chased after Popo.

Ark silently looked at the sight in front of him. He had wanted to intervene but had no idea how. But thanks to Popo he was able to understand the general situation. At the same time, he now knew what he had to do.

‘That’s right, it’s not only my problem!’

Ark realised that he had taken something for granted.

It was common sense that a quest was a structure only for the user.

However, there was no reason to think that.

‘New World is not an old RPG game.’

When considering the games in the olden days, it was really astonishing.

Those games often used the scenario of the Devil being resurrected at the end. If the Devil was resurrected then the world would end. Even so, he had met a

number of NPCs in the game, even the NPCs that were formerly heroes couldn't participate in the game directly.

'What if?'

'Please help me.'

But they would do absolutely nothing and just talk.

And it was natural for them to leave the fate of the world in the hero's hands.

The NPC could actively move but not through artificial intelligence, instead the NPC's behaviour was computed using a CPU that calculated its performance.

However, New World was the perfect game of the future. The game allowed infinite degrees of freedom for the user. And that degree of freedom was also relevant to the NPCs.

Of course, although it is not a user, the NPC could also think for itself and have the freedom to act. Just like when Jackson's Lord gave privileges to the ex-convicts on Ark's advice.

'This is the key to solve this quest.'

If the Underground World is destroyed, then that would also be bad for Ark. He would lose the three marvels and also the way to solve the quest.

But anyway, Ark was a user.

It was possible to look for other ways. But not for the raccoon clan. The raccoons think of the game as reality where they either live or die because of the destruction of the Underground World. It dampened their will to fight.

‘If I try to do it alone, I won’t be able to handle Yggdrasil. But it might be possible to win if I can incite the raccoon clans to fight together.”

Ark came to that conclusion.

He had already identified in Jackson that users could fight together with NPCs.

‘Yes, for sure. This is the only solution.’

Ark looked at the atmosphere and slowly opened his mouth.

“To be honest I agree with Popo.”

“What?”

“I’ve listened to Popo talk. The other towns in the Underground World have already been attacked and annihilated. And even if the subterranean world is wide, it is limited. No matter how much you hide you will eventually be found and when that happens, you’ll be involved just like Popo said. ”

“We know that. We also know there’s no chance.”

An elder said a nervous voice.

“Since we were born, we are a species that hasn’t had to fight. Do you know why we live in the Underground World? In order to avoid conflicts. We’re just a race that knows how to make things.”

“But ……”

“It is done. I don’t want to talk about the problem.”

No matter how many times Ark tried to talk to them, the elders did not want to hear it.

After all Ark had just entered the village of raccoons. In addition, their relations had been hostile until just now. Fortunately, the misunderstanding was resolved and the relationship wasn’t hostile anymore however their intimacy was still low.

It would be impossible to incite the raccoons to fight with a few words. There was also the risk that intimacy would fall instead.

‘Let’s withdraw and find another method.’

“Ark-hyung……”

Popo approached from the side as he exited the Town Hall.

He had made a gesture to run away and hide around here.

“You see? Wasn’t it like I said? The adults are all cowards. They make excuses but in the end they don’t have the courage to fight the monsters, unlike a foreigner. But Hyung is different? The Truthseeker is the one that receives Hero Maban’s will. Will you fight against the monsters?”

Tears were heard in Popo’s suddenly young voice.

Ark looked at him in surprise as Popo wiped his eyes with his sleeve and said.

“They’re dead. Dad, Mum……..everything…….I……..cannot remember anything…….I know. The village where I lived was the first to be attacked. Obviously my mum and dad are dead or they have become a Kanggeul. But I will never die like that. I will find the exact cause of the corruption and regain my village. Hyung…….will you help me?”

A feeble ache revived in Ark’s chest.

He had forgotten.

Popo had lost his parents merely 10 days ago.

Why hadn’t he noticed? NPCs are also alive.

At least that’s what Ark thought. And who doesn’t understand the grief of losing a parent?

Ark was like that as well. When he lost his father and his mother was hospitalized, Ark couldn’t cry. He had forced down his grief but going on a nightlife spree. He was grieving, but he was so sad that he couldn’t feel the grief at all.

Ark kneeled down beside Popo and stroked his head.

“Yes, I will help. But no matter how I try, it is impossible for with my strength alone. You actually know that don’t you?”

Popo swallowed his tears and nodded.

“So I’ll have to convince any raccoon clan. The adults will understand if I talk calmly. If that doesn’t help……..then you and I will join forces and find a way. So just believe and trust in me for the time being.”

“Thank you, Hyung.”

Ark laughed and lightly patted Popo’s body.

He also felt like a brother.

” Now, that we’ve said that……’

Once Ark calmed Popo down, they organized the situation in a deserted alley.

He easily spoke to Popo, but he actually thought it was hopeless.

The raccoons were different from the other beast species that he had met. By default, the Meow and Mermaid species were warriors.

In the same situation, even if Ark tried to stop them the Meow and mermaids would raise their arms and go out.

However, the raccoons were craftsmen and were afraid to fight.

‘The most likely way to incite them is to raise my intimacy……..’

The problem was how to raise intimacy.

In the past, the mermaid species was completely isolated from the way so when he sold them some outside items, their intimacy quickly rose. However, even though the raccoons were isolated, there could secretly trade with humans on the outside world. He didn't look at his japtem.

He also used survival cooking with the mermaid clan.

Tasty food was somewhat effective but unlike the mermaids, the raccoon clans were used to fire and would not freak out about it.

When they ate something once or twice then they would quickly tire of it.

The other way to raise intimacy with to complete quests. But it was impossible to receive a bunch of quests from the raccoons in this situation.

'But what other methods could be used to raise intimacy……..'

Suddenly a brilliant idea popped into his head.

'Only? What about food? The food ……..perhaps……..No, it is the only way. I have no choice but to try it, even if it is a hit or miss.'

Ark quickly took out his pot and placed ingredients in.

And he mixed up the ingredients to create new dishes. As always, one dish was barely a success after dozens of failures. Ark put the successful dish in a pouch for the time and immediately made a new dish.

He spent the whole day cooking.

Although he was dozing halfway through, his hands mechanically combined new ingredients. Suddenly, a loud sound battered his eardrums.

Kwadang, delgureok, bugulbugul!

The half-asleep Ark quickly lifted his head. Inside the pot, a black liquid was bubbling like crazy.

“What, what the?” What’s up with that? Why is this?”

Ssak ssak ssak!

Then Snake flicked its tongue and licked the floor.

“Eek? Don’t tell me I just shoved in the pot……? ”

Ark quickly woke up as he turned his head.

Next to him was a pile of ingredients and japtem intertwined. He had laid out the ingredients to make a dish. Apparently…….he thought only ingredients had been taken out. However, he had mixed in a few japtem in his sleep. And while he was dreaming, he had unknowingly put a few japtem into the pot.

“What the? What on earth did I put?”

Ark hurriedly opened his bad and checked the list of japtem.

All of the five weapons are there……armour items as well…….other japtem also roughly correct but the number……what did I put in? Eh? Which reminds me …….Huck, don’t tell me?’

Ark rummaged around and belatedly found what items were missing. The ‘Essence of shining slime’ that he had obtained from the Polluted Slimes in the underground labyrinth.

[Essence of Shining Slime (Ingredient)The Polluted Slime only exists in very special environments. Although the slime ecology is still unknown, only one in a thousand would produce these special crystals in their body.These crystals have a unique magic that would make Magicians and artisans drool over the expensive material item. You can use the essence of slime as a magic reagent or you can use it to create magic items.]

Although you couldn’t tell from the explanation, but it would’ve been a large source of money for him.

Because he was unable to send it to Sid, he left if packed on one side of his bag…….only now he placed it in the pot while he was sleeping. It wasn’t an ingredient but a general item! The result was so unstable it seemed like the pot was having stomach trouble.

“I can’t believe I made this mistake while sleeping!”

‘No, I don’t know whether the essence of slime had completely melted yet.’

Ark picked up the pot. And just before he flipped it over! Suddenly there was a belch and thick smoke rings rose from the pot.

Ark flinched and looked down stupidly into the pot. The bubbling black liquid that was overflowing had just disappeared like a lie. And black lumps like jelly fell into the pot.

“Wha, What it this?”

Ark picked up the jello with a bewildered expression.

At the same time, a message window popped up.

[You have found a hidden Survival Cooking dish.In New World, there are monsters that have survived for a long time and built up a lot of experience. A monster with these attributes and experience sometimes forms an ‘essence.’ Essences are sometimes used as an advanced ingredient in the production of various general items, but it also has another hidden use.One of the uses if making a Survival Cooking dish with it.When combined with several herbs in survival cooking, the essence can be formed into a jelly dish. When mixing them with other unusual ingredients then jello with special properties can be made. An advanced survival cooking chef would be able to **instinctively** grab the materials required to make it.]

[‘Slime’s Immortality Pill’ RecipeEssence of Glowing Slime Jelly 1/1

Unicorn horns 0/1

Corrupted Fairy Wings 0/100

The roots of a Mandragora that has received moonlight 0/100

Tooth of a hook bat 0/100]

Ark looked at the information window with a stupid look. For a while he couldn’t understand what had happened.

‘A hidden survival cooking dish?’

It was a result from a mistake he made in his sleep.

The problem was that he hadn’t determined if the result was good or not. Until the result was complete, he wouldn’t have any information about the slime inner edge.

However, Ark’s advantage was his optimistic personality. After he contemplated, Ark determined that it was a good thing.

‘This means I can’t get rid of the slime essence for the time being. And I’m tied. From unwritten game rules, it should provide a huge benefit in the game! And because the materials required to complete it seem fairly difficult, the result should be beyond my expectation. Uhehehe, Yes, that’s right. It’s obviously an extravagant prize!’

Ark placed the slime jelly in his bag and smirked.

Survival cooking was involuntarily learnt in the novice town, and he had learnt the skill with the idea that he could save money by using it to cook rice and eat cheaply, however the skill had more uses than that. It was fun to think of what other methods there could be later on.

It was a mistake that happened while he was asleep, but if the result was this sort of thing then it was welcome at any time.

He had discovered information that other people didn’t know yet. It will soon be connected with huge profit.

‘I would love to see the complete recipe now, but because the materials aren’t things that you could just ask or look for, it can keep for the time being. Okay, it is a good atmosphere. Should I make an effort and cook more new dishes?’

Ark had an excited expression and immediately began to make a new dish. And finally 24 hours had passed and he could summon his pets again.

With a serious expression, Ark summoned Skull.

“Skull, are you prepared?”

Clack….Clack clack clack!

Skull moved back and forth as he made his resolution.

Then Ark started feeding Skull the dishes that he had made.

Skull fainted straight away with dark rings that looked like he struggled with over drinking on the docks. However, the food also had a positive effect and raised his ability. However, it wasn’t what Ark was hoping for.

‘It’s great to see, but this is not the effect that I wanted.’

Ark shook his head and made him eat another dish.

Eventually the food made of new combinations of ingredients had almost disappeared.

“This is it!”

Once again, the positive effect of the food raised Skull’s stats. Thanks to that, Skull’s stats were raised be 7 and he instantly reached level 47. However, that was not the reason that Ark had cheered at Skull. It was due to the additional effects of Skull eating cookies.

‘This is it! This one is the key to the quest!’

Ark created a bunch of cookies with delight. And he put it all in a leather pouch and headed towards the Town Hall.

“What is going on? If you have something to say about earlier.”

As soon as Ark entered, the elder welcomed him with a troubled expression. However, Ark had a friendly smile as he approached.

“No. I have a different request today. Sometimes I go out and come to think of it, I experienced a new situation when I was there. When I find a new place, the elders always offer me a glass of water. So today, I have prepared cookies to apologize for my previous mistakes.

“Cookie? There’s no need. Please leave.”

The elder said coldly. However, Ark didn’t listen and took out the leather pouch.

“Eh, why are you so shy? There’s no need between comrades. Just have a taste. I made elaborate cookies.”

Ark opened the leather pouch and a sweet scent drifted around the Town Hall.

The seductive scent was made using a large variety of different spices!

“If you think it is necessary? Hurry, and take it out!”

The elder made an effort to turn his head and look away. However, Ark was

convinced that he had caught the elders in a trap. His nose was twitching and his tail swinging up and down without stopping.

‘Huhuhu, in the end he is still just a raccoon.’

They can’t hide their beastly instincts.

“Come, come! Stop what you’re doing for the time being and just eat.”

“Heh, that’s true ……..nowhere else to be so yes …….”

The Elder couldn’t pretend and took one cookie.

Ark’s eyes flashed.

‘It took It took. A raccoon is snagged!’

That was Ark’s plan.

Once he ate one, the elder tried to shove as much as possible into his mouths. The other elderly raccoons in the Town Hall also did the same. Although they had no interest in the cookies at first, they wanted to eat it after seeing him cramming a bunch in his mouth with both hands.

An elder exclaimed as he was buried in cookie powder.

“Yes, the cooking skill is amazing. In my lifetime, this is the first time I’ve tasted such delicious cookies. More, anymore?”

“Of course there is enough.”

‘Game over.’

Ark handled the leather pouch with an evil smile. Within a few minutes the leather pouch had been emptied and the elders had satisfied looks on their faces.

“Okay, it’s really brilliant. Are you going to make it again?”

“It’s now!”

Ark then exposed his true colours.

“Of course. But before that……I’d like to talk about the earlier topic?”

“What we were talking about earlier?”

“Yes, I’ve been thinking about it. I also think that the elders’ idea is a bit wrong. Of course I understand your view. After a lifetime of making things, of course you’re going to be afraid to fight monsters.”

“I am afraid? You mean someone else!”

The elders shook the table and shouted.

“There’s nothing to be afraid of, it’s just a little monster. Our talent isn’t just making things. Instead, we can arm ourselves with excellent armour and weapons. When mobilized, we can deal with any number of creatures.”

“Yeah!”

The other elderly raccoons also beat their tails on the ground as they shouted in unison. He fixed an expression on his face that seemed like he couldn’t understand anything and muttered.

“Then why are we hiding in a place like this?”

“That’s right. Why the hell would we think that the monsters are scary.”

“Our patron Yggdrasil turned evil because of a curse. Isn’t now the time that we should get up?”

“Yes, the time has revealed itself. Arm the residents immediately, we must release Yggdrasil from its curse. It is not the time to be hiding.”

He noticed that the attitudes of the raccoons had undergone a 180 degree change.

‘The effect of the medicine was accepted.’

A satisfied smile appeared at the corners of Ark’s mouth.

The reason why they changed was because of the cookies Ark had fed them.

The raccoons couldn’t fight because they didn’t have enough courage. Because they knew that the monsters would eventually reach the village, they couldn’t bring themselves to fight. That’s when Ark thought about one of his ingredients.

The Nurunma leaves that he found in the thieves’ lair.

The Nurunma leaf was a drug, but a long time ago it was also used to stimulate warriors. Therefore, if he cooked the Nurunma leaves it might have the same effect. With that crazy thought, Ark combined a variety of ingredients with the Nurunma leaves to create new dishes. Then he used Skull to confirm that it was the food that he wanted.

[The Warrior’s CookiesThe Nurunma leaves are the main ingredients in this cookie. If a person without excitement eats the cookie, they will feel a desire to fight. Also they won’t lose their fighting spirit even if they are injured. The excitement gradually decreases with every battle the person enters.However, when the effect disappears, the subject will be in a weakened state for a long period of time due to withdrawal effects.{Fraud +100, In battle it decreases by 1 every 2 minutes}{However when the effect disappears, for 4 hours resistance -50%, which is recovered when eating a cookie.}]

Thanks to that, the elders’ morale was raised and once the taste goes away they would blame it on drugs.

“Come on, let’s quickly prepare the residents for action.”

“Then I’ll gather all the inhabitants.”

Ark left the town hall and conveyed the gathering orders to the residents. Of course, he didn’t forget to distribute a bag of cookies as a gift.

The raccoons took the cookies without any suspicion. And soon became racoons that were addicted to the stimulant.

Therefore, the situation was easily solved.

"……Therefore, we should take back Subarutalp with our own hands! Come on, get up. Kinsmen arise!"

"Ooh oh oh oh!"

The elder's speech delivered the taste to the crowd. The crowd of 300 raccoons gave a shout of joy and aligned themselves with the taste. And started war preparations at an absurd speed.

Popo looked at Ark with a strange expression.

"Ah, Ark-hyung. How on earth……."

"Sincerity is said to be a way to connect with people."

Ark grinned and stroked Popo's head.

Ark continued smiling wickedly at the steady progress. However, this degree of wickedness was only the tip of the iceberg. When they finished the war preparations, the elders and residents flocked to Ark.

"However you. Is it possible for you to make more cookies?

I feel like eating a cookie for some reason."

"Oh, you mean this? Well, there is still an excess……"

Ark shook the bag containing the cookies before taking one out. Then the raccoons forgot and followed the cookie with the eyes and mouth drooling. He shook it lightly for the poisonous effect to activate. Then Ark put it back in the bag and said.

“By the way. Before I do, isn’t there a problem to be addressed?”

“What, what is it?”

“Once the troops are gathered …….you’re not going to just randomly and recklessly attack the monsters are you? Doesn’t someone have to command the troops? I’d say I have the experience necessary to lead the troops.”

“Oh, that? Then I’ll leave commanding to you.”

As if it was troublesome, the Elder transferred the command immediately.

This is why drugs are horrible. Once you are addicted you could even sell your daughter for drugs. Of course, it wasn’t so much the cookies that were addictive. But anyway, the only person with combat experience was Ark. Even if he thought about it calmly, the right person to be commander was Ark.

Ark was satisfied as he grinned and nodded.

“I understand. Although I am insufficient, I will lead the raccoon clans.

“Yes, yes, so a cookie ……”

“It is 1L for a bag.”

“What? One bag costs money?”

“Oh, it’s because I don’t have that many ingredients. This means that I can’t make it indefinitely. And now I can only create one bag at a time. But if the elder doesn’t want to buy this then I will be forced to sell it to someone else.”

“Ah, no! 1L did you say? Here it is.”

The surprised elder pulled out an ore and calculated quickly.

The number of Nurunma leaves used to make a bag of Warrior’s cookies was one. He also used other ingredients and spices but those were readily available in the raccoon village. In the end, the actual cost of the ingredients was one Nurunma leaf. Ark calculated that it was approximately 10 silver for one leaf.

By selling the cookies for 1L, the ore was worth at least 20 silver which meant that his profits would double.

After all, it was a drug. No matter how lawless the city, he was worried about finding a proper place to sell it. But now additional money was received so it was a windfall!

All this because he mixed a drug’s effect into a cookie!

Of course, more addictive cookies would raise the price from now on. However, when it came to money it couldn’t be sold recklessly. Ark only prepared 1,600 Nurunma leaves. He had to steadily supply 300 raccoons while they were fighting.

Sort of……it was possible to call him a clever demon.

‘Huhuhu whenever I see Nurunma leaves, I can just smell money drifting off

them.

Ark smiled with satisfaction as a new information window showed up.

[You used excellent communication and clever tricks to discover the ‘Lore’ quest.

The Lore quest exists in several areas in New World.If it isn’t possible to receive a quest in the normal way, a Lore quest occurs when special conditions are satisfied. The quest rewards given for Lore quests are different from those given for general quests, as it is an important key to understanding the legends and history of New World. However, if unsuccessful you may be subject to a substantial penalty.

{Wisdom + 10, Art of Communication + 10}]

[Reclaim the peace in the Underground World!

After a lot of trouble you have finally entered Subarutalp, a world hidden in the depths of the earth. However, the Underground World wasn’t a peaceful place like you imagined. Currently, the Underground World and its residents the raccoons are on the verge of annihilation. As the Truthseeker, you are obliged to help the Beast residents. Fortunately, you managed to convince them to put in an effort and reclaim the peace of the Underground World together. You must lead a group of raccoons to Yggdrasil to get rid of its curse and bring back peace to the Underground World. You will also find the Three Marvels that you are searching for once you deal with the curse on Yggdrasil.

{Difficulty: ☆ ☆ ☆ Quest is limited to: Dark Walker}]

“As expected, the correct answer was to persuade the raccoons.’

Ark checked the quest information related to the Three Marvels and was convinced that his choice was right. In the end, the goal was the same but he had to look for the Heartsoul Bead as well as the Three Marvels.

Of course these two objectives were registered as different quests.

‘But a Lore Quest? Is the degree of difficulty special? What the hell does it mean?’

While Ark was thinking, an elder had studied his face and asked.

“So what should we do?”

“For the time being……”

Ark replied with a wide grin.

“It has to be training.”

In the afternoon of the same day, Ark gathered 300 raccoons together to commence training.

The Warrior’s cookie was limited. If he wanted them to battle without losing moral, there was no time to waste. However when he gathered the raccoons together, a sigh naturally flowed out.

The Kanggeul was level 150, but the average level for a raccoon was level 70. In addition, they had never been in battle before and didn’t even know how to hold their weapons properly. But Ark soon shook his head.

‘It’s not. The most important thing is not the individual’s level but group combat. How quickly and accurately the commander can lead them is the key.’

He had already experienced the importance of commanders in Jackson. First, he had to arrange the army regulations and then show that the ability of the commander was 100%.

Therefore, Ark dealt with them severely from the first day.

“There, the raccoon that was gossiping come out!”

Ark pointed to one of the foot soldier raccoons.

And after he made a horrible soup medley, fed him the awful food.

Ark who was in command also switched the cookies sold to a distribution system. Because there were limited resources, he must appropriately manage the quantity dispensed. Thanks to that the raccoons were always struggling with cookies. Ark was holding the cookies, so of course there wouldn’t be any raccoons that would disobey him. Also soldiers who performed well would have the right to buy more cookies. Ark introduced a reward and punishment system that a raccoon would feign death at Ark’s words.

A perfect dictatorship was born.

Ark seized the raccoons and separated them into branches of service based on their quality. The elders had said that the raccoon species didn’t understand battle at all but Ark soon shook off that notion. Of course, there was no battle related skill for the raccoons. However, he was able to take advantage of the NPCs by applying the characteristics of craftsmen to battle. When the father of all the races created the species, they had something in mind. It goes without saying that equipment plays an important role in battle. In particular, Ark paid attention to the portable artillery weapons. The cannon had a slow charging speed but its range and power far exceeded that of an arrow. An additional bonus was also applied when used against a large monster, which increased the offensive power by 10 times. The problem was the price of the bullet for the cannon as it was 1L or 20 silver. However, Ark didn’t care. Anyway, the military funding came from the pockets of

the raccoons.

‘Until now, I couldn’t have such weapons……”

If he thought about the outside then he wasn’t motivated.

Anyway, the raccoon clan that produced weapons and armour all boasted considerable abilities. Unfortunately, the ingredient supply wasn’t satisfactory because they had been hiding. Therefore, they couldn’t produce a significant number of equipment items.

‘I guess I have to divide the branches of service based on the equipment available.’

“OK, from now on I’m going to divide the branches of service. The first group will be lieutenants.”

Ark pointed towards the group of raccoons that had a higher level and stamina. And ordered them to be given the best armour and weapons. That number was approximately 120.

The 2nd group was chosen based on their high agility. They were given armour with high defense and artillery. And the 3rd and last group was the rear support engineers who took exclusive responsibility for cave destruction using the raccoon only racial skill.

‘Wasn’t it quite fascinating to equip NPCs with items?’

The elder raccoon NPC supplied a war chest that was quite generous. It was

public money that Ark couldn’t take because who knew when he would have to buy an item necessary for battle.

So the raccoons were clearly divided. Without sleeping, Ark began to train the raccoons in the different divisions. As practice gradually continued, the raccoons rushed back and forth as they followed the training system. After 6 days had passed in game time and it was the second day in reality, practice finally finished. Ark gathered the soldiers around him and began to speak.

“Everyone had suffered. Maybe there would be some who said bad things about me. However, the trouble hasn’t left. Hopefully you guys remember this as we head to Yggdrasil to rescue your kinsmen and regain peace. In addition, it is common sense that training harder would reduce casualties in battle. It is my duty to ensure that you are ready for it, even if I had to push you.”

It was sincere. There was no chance of doing this quest twice.

If the raccoon troops were wiped out then his quest for the Heartsoul Bead and the Three Marvels would fail. He had to achieve his goal even if it meant using the raccoon troops.

“Now, the serious training has ended. The only thing left is to reclaim the peace of Subarutalp with our own hands. For the sake of the raccoon clans!”

“Ah Ah Ah!”

For the sake of the raccoon clans!”

The simple raccoons fell for his scam and cheered hundreds of times.

Now that all the preparation was done. The only thing left was to march forward! Just as Ark was about to pass on the marching orders.

Dirириri. Dirириri.

A familiar sound was heard in the distance. He wasn't hearing it from New World. He heard his phone ring tone from outside the game unit.

'What the? Who would call me at this time?'

In reality, it was past 12 in the evening.

Among the people he knew, none would call at this time. Ark was going to ignore it but he needed to feel relaxed to play so he unplugged the connection.

"Wait a moment!"

The eager raccoon troops were left scratching their heads awkwardly as he left.

Rehabilitation Stage

“Hyun-Woo?”

A familiar voice was heard in the receiver.

“Eh? Uncle Gwon Hwa-rang?”

“Yes, it’s me.”

“Did something happen? Why are you calling at this hour?”

“I’m near Cairo……”

“Yes?”

For a while, Hyun-woo couldn’t understand Gwon Hwa-rang’s words.

He had been called just as he was about to fight alongside the raccoons and all his thoughts were focused on that.

Therefore he had forgotten about the appointment he made with Gwon Hwa-rang a couple of days ago.

“We were supposed to meet in Cairo.”

“Yes? Ah, ah ……..I did. I mean, I was there for a while.”

“Tsk, young fellow.”

“You didn’t get in touch with me for a while so I forgot.”

5 days had passed since Hyun-woo met the ex-convicts. 5 days was a fortnight in the game. Even if they travelled in a straight line from Jackson to Cairo, it would still take some time.

“Hey, you don’t say.”

Gwon Hwa-rang sighed and explained the situation.

In fact, when Hyun-woo had stopped by Gwon Hwa-rang’s house.

Gwon Hwa-rang and the other probationary members had already been heading towards the capital.

To time, only 4 of them went to meet Hyun-woo in Cairo.

However, there was a problem that they hadn’t considered.

At that time, the average level of the rehabilitation members was at best 35. However the stretch of forest before Cairo produced of lot of level 100 monsters.

They didn’t know anything and just entered the forest where they were smashed.

“Oh, Yes. I had not thought to warn you.

Of course, if you go the roundabout way, even for a level 35 there shouldn’t be that much difficulty.

Because a lot of low-level players also came to Cairo. However the ex-convicts

who had obtained the location of Cairo from Ark, just moved straight forward in ignorance.

“What do we do? The hyungs are sorry.”

“I’m sorry to ……..ok any dead?”

Gwon Hwa-rang chuckled. The rehabilitation members aren’t trying to live through the game like Ark was.

People were playing it purely to enjoy the game. But to Gwon Hwa-rang who was caught up in the game because it made him feel free, inwardly it was quite frustrating.

All of a sudden monsters had appeared in the jungle and it was so dense it seemed like a new world.

They were high level monsters but the rehabilitation members just cheered.

‘I also wanted to see the Amazon so this is like my dream being achieved.

‘No, this is Jurassic Park.’

‘I never thought I could see dinosaurs directly. This is a hundred times more fun!’

But although the cheered, their abilities were not enough to get through the jungle.

In the end, at Gwon Hwa-rang’s request, the rest of the ex-convicts joined them. And invaded the jungle while attacking like crazy.

If it was any other party, they would have quickly given up on hunting in the

jungle early on.

But the rehabilitation members didn't care, no matter how strong the opponent was. No, instead the stronger the opponent was, the more the desire to knock it down burned inside them.

Roco also joined the attack.

When Roco left for her part time job they would set up camps and wait until she returned to continue hunting, and after this repeated for four days they finally arrived near Cairo.

"Kukuku, now I…….when I killed the Allosaurus I received a lot of bonus experience. Thanks to that, I went crazy for a few days. Besides, after I helped rescue the Migu Migu clan I received a bunch of strange items."

Gwon Hwa-rang told his story with a proud voice.

Like most people playing the game.

Gwon Hwa-rang now seemed like a fully-fledged gamer.

Even though he crossed the same jungle as them, their game experience was different.

Although Ark was higher level than them, with Sid there were only two people so he didn't dare touch the intermediate boss monster, Allosaurus

But the number of people in their group was 12.

Also recovery was possible because they had Roco and the passionate will to fight was flowing in every one of them.

The Allosaurus was a monster that was blocking the way into the wilderness that consisted of fallen trees and wheat.

Although Hyun-woo also met the Migu Migu, they didn't give him any quests.

‘Is the quest only given to parties with a certain number of players?

In New World, the quest scenarios always changed depending on the time and situation Therefore, he listened with interest to Gwon Hwa-rang’s story even though he had crossed the same area.

“By the way…….”

Hyun-woo who had listened for a while spoke in a pained voice.

“Actually, I can’t go and meet Uncle at the moment.”

“Huh? What do you mean? Did you already go to a different area?

“That’s not……..there are circumstances where I can’t go outside to meet you.”

“Hum, I don’t know what’s going on but it seems a bit difficult. The guys were so excited to see you they were cheering like little kids……in the game it’s been a long time since we’ve met. Well, if that is the situation then there’s nothing we can do. So how long should we wait? ”

“But it is possible to give you the food immediately.”

“What? How?”

“Please wait outside Cairo for the moment.”

“Outside?”

“Yes. When you reach Cairo you’ll understand. Cairo is only for chaotic players. So if you are interested just wait outside and I’ll give you the food through somebody I know. He is a hobbit merchant named Sid. And did you collect a lot of japtem in the jungle? He’ll also organize and sell it for you.”

“Okay, I understand.” Then tell him to meet me at the bear rock near Cairo.

“Yes.”

Hyun-woo hung up and connected to New World again.

Bang!

“What the?”

Flames blew from someone’s mouth as they slammed the table. He was sitting in front of the hobbit who freaked out and hunched his shoulder.

The scene seemed like the little suspect was being questioned by detectives in an interrogation room. It was reasonable.

The one who had yelled was the former detective, Justiceman.

And the hobbit sitting in front of the group was none other than Sid.

“Is that the reason why Ark couldn’t come and meet us?”

“Tru, it is true……..”

Sid restlessly said. Then the rehabilitation members lined up against the wall growled.

“This is the real issue isn’t it?”

“This, after a long time this really got me fired up.”

“How dare they touch our dongsaeng?”

“That organization will be forced to taste bitterness.”

‘Uhh, what on earth? Ark-nim being who he is, how does he even know these people?”

Sid turned pale as more threats emerged.

Those who played the game would feel a certain sense of realism.

Interestingly, if you look at a character’s alignment it would seem like you were looking at their real natures.

Should he point that out? But a conversation would interrupt the subtle mood in

the room.

Judging from Sid's experience, the rehabilitation members weren't 'ordinary' people. Furthermore, he could tell that there was offensive power just from the impression of their faces.

At the same time, the impression they gave caused Sid's heart to beat so fast it felt like it would burst out of his chest.

Sid had a worried expression.

Even Lorenzo who was a delinquent avoided the eyes of the ex-convicts and pretended ignorance. The violent atmosphere of the rehabilitation company reached such an extent that he shrunk and retreated to the NPC.

That……..it was because it was Ark that Justiceman that the rehabilitation company got so angry.

A little while ago, the atmosphere was okay at Bear Rock. Justiceman and the ex-convicts had a good impression of Sid because of his cute looks, and it was a relief for Sid who had been hiding a while to meet reliable users.

However, after he confessed the whole story about Ark and Andel, the atmosphere went through a 180 degree change.

Anger welled inside Justiceman and the ex-convicts until they were spewing out profanities.

"I know Andel. He was the one that was hit by Alan."

JusticeMan growled in a low voice.

"I knew that he didn't get along with Ark……."

"But defending the Quartermaster so Ark can't revive is going too far. Why the

hell would he do such a thing?”

Roco also muttered in an angry voice. Although Ark thought number 1405 was the most calm, he was actually the violent former boss of an organization……..Bul-kkun clenched his fist as he asked what was known.

“There’s no water. Because he’s a bad guy.”

The rehabilitation members were simple. It wasn’t a matter of learning more. Violence was a key part of the world for them. The distinction between good and evil was clear in their world. The inner circumstances were irrelevant. If someone bothered them, they were a bad guy.

It was a clear and simple way of thinking. Justiceman and the rehabilitation group were generous to villains.

However, to the fellows who touched their side there would be no forgiveness. The police were also committed to that idea.

“Hyung-nim, do you know?”

Number 1401 looked at the others with serious eyes. Number 1401 was a former con artist in the rehabilitation group called Jjak-tung.

“It’s not an issue that we can let him get away with.

“Um……”

JusticeMan nodded with a serious face.

Justiceman, Roco and the rehabilitation members knew about Ark's situation. Ark was not simply playing the game for enjoyment. He joined the test for Global Exos to find a way to live.

For Ark, the costs of living expenses and hospital bills came from New World.

Yes for them it was a simple game but for Ark, New World was reality.

In fact Justiceman, Roco and the other members previously wanted to play the game with Ark. However, Ark had a distinct purpose. However they were unable to bring it up, and now this fellow came along and bothered Ark?

"Ark. He didn't say anything when I called……."

"Well he probably didn't want to worry us too much."

He wilfully pretended not to know.

They were mistaken. In fact, Ark had completely forgotten about Andel.

His memories were of the ☆ ☆ ☆ and + C quests from the Underground World.

He poured all his spirit into training the raccoon clan.

The training occurred for 5 days and thanks to this he had already forgotten that Andel was waiting for him at the Quartermaster. Sort of……when looked at from someone else's point of view, Andel seemed more pathetic.

However, the rehabilitation group didn't know that fact.

"Kuk, Ark is also human."

"When he acts like that, I feel like I want to help him even more."

“Naturally. When it is like this, we should help out?”

“Oppa, I will also help!”

“Heh, when the Prince is in a crisis, even the Princess helps out.”

“Let go, let go!”

A rehabilitation member had grabbed Roco in a headlock while she kicked him.

“It’s not that simple. Do we know why Ark didn’t talk to us?”

“He didn’t want to trouble us……..”

“So, there might be a reason why he didn’t want worry us.”

“Eh?

They asked again absentmindedly. At that time, JusticeMan folded his arm and said.

“Jjak-tung is correct. Hey, former hoodlum.”

“Yes? Yes? Me?”

Lorenzo was surprised suddenly and replied.

“Would you say that Ark had a hard time when he fought against those guys?”

“Yes, the Dark Brothers’ profession is assassinating foreigners. Even 1 of them was too much for Hyung-nim to handle.”

JusticeMan nodded and said.

“It is like that. Jjak-tung, you saw Ark fighting in the Event Quest, so you would understand that he’s not an ordinary guy. Our levels aren’t even a comparison. But if he had trouble with one assassin then their levels must be equivalent to his. Even the user is sticking to those three. Do you understand?”

“Ark determined that we wouldn’t be able to win. But after listening to Lorenzo’s words, we actually do stand a chance.

In the jungle Justiceman, Roco and the rehabilitation group had significantly raised their levels.

They had fought through a dense jungle against monsters over level 100, so it was a natural result.

Thanks to that, Justiceman had long since surpassed level 60, while others had reached level 60 a few days ago.

Recovery was also possible as Roco was level 40……..It was a party of 12 with formidable power.

However, their opponents were three assassins level 120.

“In the words of Jjak-tung. In reality we would unconditionally win. But this is a game. It is hard to win with such a huge level difference.

Our offensive power and defense is too different.

The level difference between us and Ark who fought the assassin 1 on 1 is approximately 2 times as big.

If it was just one or two of us, we wouldn’t stand a chance against the four guys including Andel.”

JusticeMan was now a gamer.

JusticeMan pushed down his past definition of unconditional evil, and now understood the difference between ability and level in the game.

If it was just skills, JusticeMan was confident that no one could push him. But in the game if a level 10 attacked a level 100 with a sword, he wouldn’t even do any damage.

On the other hand, if the level 100 attacked then the level 10 would certainly die. It was an impossible match.

The only way for a low-level to win against a high-level was to have overwhelming numbers.

However with 14 against 4, it couldn’t really be called overwhelming numbers.

“If we die here, then we’ll just be giving Ark more baggage.”

“If it continues like this, he might end up saying why?

“We have to look for a way.”

JusticeMan thought for a while before he looked at Sid and asked.

“Sid?”

“Yes.”

“What was he doing before Ark encountered those guys?”

“That……..”

Sid looked at Lorenzo and spoke about the former circumstances.

The General Store owner’s quest which involved Lorenzo. After they heard the quest contents, JusticeMan and the rehabilitation members had warm smiles on their faces.

“That guy Ark……..he was doing such quests?”

The ends of Justiceman’s mouth rose.

JusticeMan was a former detective and had seen that situation many times.

The former hoodlum couldn’t escape the demands of the organization and would become a criminal again……

Thanks to the sense of realism, JusticeMan easily accepted Lorenzo’s situation.

The rehabilitation members who had experience the situation directly didn’t speak.

However, they accepted Lorenzo like he was one of them.

“Lorenzo, I guess your mind was troubled as well.”

“Yes? No…….just…….”

“By the way, Ark also……..”

If a pretty guy does something good, the law looks prettier.

Although it was a quest in the game, the fact that he was trying to help Lorenzo wash his hands of the organization only made the rehabilitation group’s respect for Ark grow even more.

Then after Jjak-tung considered something for a while, he opened his mouth and began to talk.

“Hyung-nim, there may be a way.”

“What?”

“Ark’s work was urgent, but isn’t it possible to do something for Lorenzo?

“Hum, yes. That is what we need to do.”

“Then how about finishing the two things together?”

Jjak-tung spoke to JusticeMan about something secretly.

Then liveliness entered Justiceman’s eyes.

“Ohu, that sounds good! Hey, Sid? Ark’s quest, can we also do it?”

“Yes? Then……..Please invite me to the party.”

After Sid joined JusticeMan’s party, he fiddled with the system window. And after a while, the quest information window flashed in front of JusticeMan.

-Sid-nim’s party has requested to share the ongoing quest <Clear Lorenzo’s name>. If you allow it you will share the reward but if the quest fails then you will receive a penalty. Are you sure that you want to share?

“Oh, fortunately it is a quest that is able to be shared.”

“It is decided so let’s complete it immediately.”

“What do you say?”

The rehabilitation members all replied to the question with decisive voices.

“Rehabilitation!”

“Yes?”

“Lorenzo you might get annoyed with those guys. But in the end, they are your hyungs so you should listen to their commands. We have to do everything we can to help someone change his heart just like Lorenzo. We were also given such a chance. Therefore, I am going to rehabilitate them. And make them join the side of justice.”

JusticeMan smiled and said.

“Of course once they joined the side of justice, they would have to prove themselves. For example, catching an assassin without shedding blood…….”

It was the plan that Jjak-tung suggested.

Despite their numbers, the people that bullied Lorenzo didn’t have a level higher than 60. The first hooligans would be lured in and forced to change sides. Then, the numbers of the rehabilitation group would double by 2.

14 against 4 would become 28 against 4.

Even if there was a large level difference, if they had 7 times the number then it was enough to try!

“Very good”

“Now it’s time to do the right thing.”

New World was a part of the rehabilitation program for the ex-convicts.

Their social adaptation program was justice!

At last, they hit their goal for the quest.

“7 people are headed to the appointed place.

Lorenzo said in a low voice.

JusticeMan nodded and looked at the old building.

“Ok, approximately 10 people remain in the hideaway.”

After they came up with the plan in the cabin, JusticeMan entered Cairo using the [Lie] scroll.

JusticeMan acted for the group. When he was a detective in South Korea, Justiceman was used to jumping into a group of armed criminals under orders from above.

Of course, every criminal was too scared to relax in their own homes……..at least JusticeMan lived like that.

But that did not mean that JusticeMan never relaxed his body.

No matter how outstanding his skills, no superman was invincible.

In addition, sometimes detectives spent years battling gangs in the field.

It didn’t matter if he was alone.

He also had a responsibility to command other first line officers.

Because of him, the south piled up tactical knowledge, he was also a part of a special task unit that looked for countermeasures for terrorism and also served as a training instructor in South America, where it just built on his legend.

And the hero of that legend used his ability in the game.

‘The gangsters in the hideout are level 60-70.’

On the other hand, the average level of the rehabilitation members was late 50s.

If the difference between users was 10 levels, the chances were slim. However, if the opponents were NPC then it was likely that JusticeMan and the rehabilitation members would win.

‘The problem is how many of these guys there are.’

The number of hooligans was around 17-20 people.

On the other hand, including JusticeMan, Roco, Lorenzo and Sid, the rehabilitation side only had 14 people. There was a 10 level difference plus they were outnumbered so it was difficult.

Furthermore, JusticeMan’s objective was not just to win. He wanted to subdue them without killing, in order to rehabilitate them. And needless to say, the difficult thing was capturing rather than killing.

‘There is no way to increase our numbers. If it is like that, there is one method. I’m going to reduce the numbers of those guys.’

That was the conclusion JusticeMan reached.

“The purpose of these guys is to force Lorenzo back into the gang. The others might not understand, but they would have no choice but to move if Lorenzo called them.”

A few minutes later, Lorenzo’s letter arrived at the hideout.

I will return to the organization.

But before that, there is a problem so please meet me at the cabin.

And not long after, 7 gangsters headed towards the appointment place. Those remaining inside were just 10 people. He was sure that they could subdue those numbers.

“Okay, before the other guys notice and return. Let’s get started! ”

“Hummm, how would you like to practice justice?”

“Think about it before going out.”

“Ya, get extensions.”

The rehabilitation members took out their weapons with eerie smiles.

Iron pipe, sashimi knife, chain …If it appeared in gangster movies then they had it.

They had obtained it from the restricted area in Jackson, the rotting bogs.

Well, the form wasn’t special but the members were used to such weapons so they held it steadily.

Furthermore, it was also a magic weapon.

The iron pipes increased attack speed, the sashimi knife increased the probability of a critical hit and the chain had a side effect that caused stuns.

And as a bonus, Sid had the effect of inflicting fear.

‘As expected, these people are ordinary.’

Now the rehabilitation group were carrying crowbars to the fight the gangsters just like it was seen in a movie. No, the actual situation wasn’t that different.

Double bang!

When he kicked the door and entered the building, the delinquents inside turned their head to look at it.

The door roughly shook and scattered dust……it showed JusticeMan in the background laughing.

“You guys, arrest them all.”

“Eh? Arrest?”

“What did you say? That old person?”

The gangsters said in an amazed voice.

“Ah……..Embarrassing. Hyung-nim should get a better grip of the atmosphere. Was now the time to recite those lines?”

JusticeMan was sullenly pushed back as another member stepped forward.

When a former leader of an organization stepped forward, the atmosphere was different.

Suddenly he growled in a deep voice.

“Kneel down. We will receive it as your surrender.”

Indeed, the experience of the person was clearly shown in their choice of words. There was an immediate response from the gangsters.

“What, what the?”

“Hey, it’s a raid! Get them!”

“Fearless scum, pull out their tongues!”

The hoodlums in charge got up.

However, the movements of the parole group were a few times faster.

“Ha ha ha! How stupid do they have to be to think they could win against justice?

And the table fell with a crash. They jumped over the chairs flying from all

directions and swung their sashimi knives at the gangsters.

It truly unfolded like a scene from a gangster movie.

Also as expected, the hooligans were slightly stronger than the rehabilitation members. However, thanks to Lorenzo and JusticeMan helping out, the situation was easily controlled.

Lorenzo was level 80 and could fight to opponents sufficiently by himself.

On the other hand, JusticeMan was able to help with his absurd stats, since he was armed with the deceptive stat of Justice.

That stat doesn't do anything when fighting solo, but in a group battle it had absolute power.

However, the user that had a decisive influence on the outcome. Minstrel Roco!

When Roco earnestly joined the battle, the odds quickly shifted to the side of the rehabilitation group.

In the early stages, the minstrel was a job that most would want to quit since it was useless.

The minstrel had low damage and defense so they couldn't solo, while most parties weren't looking for weaker recovery or secondary magic.

There was also a penalty applied to the minstrel for not being battle affiliated, so the experience they received in battle was similar to a merchant's.

They couldn't fight and their growth rate was low.

It was an occupation which didn't really seem like one.

However, Roco always had an affection for musical instruments so raised her minstrel with love.

Anyway, Roco had never played solo.

When she entered the game, she immediately met JusticeMan and the parole group.

Instead of fighting against a fearsome monster, Roco had more fun using her

magic to save her oppa.

And recently, the Minstrel passed level 40.

She gained a skill that no one expected.

[This skill can only be learnt after the Minstrel satisfied certain conditions.<Condition: Minstrel level 40, Artistry stat 150, Intermediate skills in three types of musical instruments>Gentle Reverberation (Beginner, passive): You have been deeply worried about real music for a long time. You have handled numerous instruments and listened to their beautiful voices with your heart. Therefore, it has increased you understanding of music. Your music will now develop the same depth and power. The gentle music will dwell in the soul and heart of those who listen to it, and a reverberation will remain long after the performance ends. Even if other music is played, this gentle reverberation will not disappear but rather improve the effects of the music.<If the same kind of music is played continuously, 3 buffs can be piled up due to the synergy with gentle reverberation. The duration is subject to the duration of the final performance>]

If it was good, without stopping.

That was Roco up to now. However, after the level 40 skill the situation changed.

The effect of Gentle Reverberation was terrific.

“It became one strong wind that split the grassy plains……..”

In order to raise attack speed and movement speed, Roco would sing the ‘Song of the Gale.’ The ‘Song of the Gale’ only raised the speed by 5%. The magician’s skill that raised speed by 10% was far more attractive. However Gentle Reverberation allows buffs to be stacked three times, which changes the situation.

‘When ‘Song of the Gale’ is stacked three times, it increases speed by 15%! In addition, the duration of the minstrel’s song was much longer than the acceleration magic of a magician.

The same applied to the ‘Song of Life’ which is used to restore health.

For 3 minutes, health was recovered by 200 but now ‘Song of Life’ recovered 600 health recovered in 3 minutes. If health was recovered in a fixed duration, the effect was stronger than recovery magic.

Although the slow growth was a weak point, the results could be favourably compared to a magician’s magic. The minstrel who had no exclusive boards dedicated to them in information sites, and the users who did choose minstrel received a cold shoulder from other players and because it was lonely, cancelled their profession.

However the laws of the game descended, just like in a legend……..

The weak and troubled character in the beginning would change into a formidable character. We don’t have to tell you what games are people who know that we talk about grunge.

It was a fact that everyone who played games should know, even if they don’t speak it out loud.

Although a hoodlum noticed Roco’s participation and rushed forward, the parole members wouldn’t let him attack their mascot.

“Does this child think we’re going to let him touch our cutie with their dirty hands?”

The hoodlum quickly collapsed under the attack of 3~4 rehabilitation members. The violence continued for 10 minutes.

Eventually there was an overwhelming victory for JusticeMan.

Although there were 3 who resisted to the end and died, the rest were in a critical condition. JusticeMan and one of the guys took turns to stun them.

“Once you put all these guys together, tie them up.”

“Yes!”

Number 1402, also known as Fixer used his racial special skill ‘Bound’ to tie them up and threw them into a room. With the situation settled, the 7 hoodlums who went out had returned.

“Damn, that Lorenzo! He screwed us…..! Eh? What are you doing here?”

“Us?”

“Justice!”

The parole group shouted in unison.

Pepepek! Gwadang! Snap! Crunch!

Soon, the faces of the rest of the hoodlums were crushed.

Once again, 1 warrior died but 14 hooligans were captured.

“Now, let’s cut to the chase?”

JusticeMan entered the room with the hooligans and started the ‘rehabilitation’ operation.

“Well, Lorenzo has told me about every one of you.”

JusticeMan coughed and opened his mouth.

“Every day squeezing someone and threatening them, and even threatening a fellow colleague who wants to live more sincerely for money……! You guys are really the same. Nonetheless, I don’t think your foundation is bad. Anyone can make mistakes for survival and once you choose the wrong path it is difficult to go back. But life is long. Although you might think it is too late, it is still early. Now, this is an opportunity. Do you want to be reborn as a new man and wash your hands clean?”

“Sheesh, you’re playing.”

“I don’t know what you’re doing but don’t think it would end like this.”

“When you meet Hyung-nim you’ll understand……..huhuhu, Lorenzo. The same goes for you, too. Yes, you’re going to be buried alive along with the old man.”

He had given them sincere advice, but where was the expected reaction? A thick vein popped on JusticeMan’s forehead.

“Yes, is this friendly atmosphere to your liking? Jjak-tung.”

“Yes! Hey, the guy who talked just now.”

Jjak-tung gave a satisfied smile as he pulled out the hoodlum.

The hooligans stiffened with tension. Looking at the atmosphere, anyone would imagine that some violence was about to occur. However, their faces soon oddly

changed.

“Open your mouth!”

Jjak-tung forcefully opened his mouth and ladled food in, and began feeding the hoodlum.

What on earth was he doing?

A gag? Is he being gagged?

The hooligans all laughed with a silly expression. But at that moment, a bloodcurdling scream emerged from the mouth of the hoodlum eating the food. A different hooligan who ate the food reacted the same way.

“What, what the?”

“Poison?”

The hoodlums looked at each other with confused eyes. The only ones who could explain just trembled hollowly once they ate the food.

Without knowing what the poison was, they were certain that it was something incredibly horrifying. And Lorenzo who had experienced it before, could only shudder as he imagined it.

The food being fed to the hoodlums was Ark’s special medley.

JusticeMan had ordered it after he asked Lorenzo for any prior information, such as the effectiveness of the chowder medley.

The gangsters were frozen at the unknown torture.

“Now, it is an atmosphere where I can talk.”

JusticeMan laughed in satisfaction before speaking again.

“Everybody close your eyes and look back at the past. See what manner of life it was. The method to start a new life is surprisingly simple. You have to regret any mistakes and make amends. Then I’m sure a new life would unfold in front of you. Then you’ll be living for justice. Now, the definition of justice is……..”

What followed was JusticeMan’s theory course on justice.

The hooligans listened with an annoyed expression, but they endured it. But that was just the beginning. The course finished after 10 minutes before someone else said.

“……Ashamed of justice. Then how would you practice justice and live? Although the way that you guys live your life is dire, if you open your eyes to justice then you are already walking along the path to being reborn. Now, Jjak-tung. You begin!”

“Yes, I understand.”

Jjak-tung stood on the podium with a small uncomfortable face.

“Eh, so I’m number 1401, called Jjak-tung. In order to not be like an android production number, when I was young I was determined to be an artist. However when I was six, my mother passed away and my father started drinking…….. ”

Jjak-tung's biography began to flow out.

It was about a kid who walked on a dark path and participated in an enormous fraud of an organization which cherished ambition friendship and betrayal.

Finally prison life caused him to fall to the bottom, and one couldn't hear the epic tale without bursting into tears. However, it was too long.

3 hours …in the game, the story was told for a whole 9 hours. However, the hooligans strained their ears and listened eagerly. They weren't impressed.

But if they dozed off for a short time, then a chowder medley was immediately shoved into their mouth.

"Strange."

"Come on, applause!"

Loud applause shook the room.

It finally came to an end. Although the hooligans tears flowed like they were upset it ended, it was a trick.

At the end of Jjak-tung's speech without any breaks, number 1402's speech 'I'm so alive' followed.

It was followed by the 'If I'm stuck' speech by number 1403. 'The prison's bean rice' was the topic for number 1404……the speeches was to achieve the original goal but by the time it reached the end of number 1406's speech, two days had passed in reality.

In the game it was six days.

Of course, the rehabilitation members had a good sleep but if the hoodlums dared doze off the would be met with the chowder medley. This occurred so many times that they now had bloodshot eyes.

“Come on, now it is number 1407.”

“Wa-wait a minute!”

The hooligans cried out in surprise.

“We’ve had enough.”

“That’s right.” Uhh. What have we done……I regret it so much that I just want to commit suicide!”

“Now we have washed our hands and became new men.”

“Yes, we do not need to hear anymore.” We only live for justice! ”

“So please stop now……..”

The hoodlums with red bloodshot eyes cried and tearfully begged.

“Hum……You regret it right? You will live for justice?”

“Yes, of course.”

“So one question remains.”

JusticeMan scratched his beard and opened his mouth.

“The people who tried to kill a good fellow are around here. How do we deal with these guys? If you guys give a hint to the assassins then we won’t consider you rehabilitated and feed you more grub.

“The bad guys should have justice withdrawn from them!”

“Who should do it?”

“Yes? Ah, of course it must be us!”

“Do you also know whether it is dangerous?”

“Justice is willing to spare no lives!”

The hooligans shouted like they were recruits in a cult.

It was sincere.

They had stayed awake in dark rooms, listening to the speech of the rehabilitation members for 6 days.

The hoodlums were completely brainwashed.

And frankly, after being tortured and hearing the speech they were probably happy about the possibility of fighting and dying.

JusticeMan was revived…….he looked at the brainwashed hooligans with a pleased smile.

“Okay. Then let’s go practice justice?”

“Justice!”

The hoodlum’s eyes turned round and round.

[Chaotic NPC ‘Rehabilitation’ was complete.Punishing the guilty was an easy task. However, you will need a lot of time and effort to convince them to repent for their sins. The people who cherish life and not begrudge them of that life will receive a reward. <Rehabilitation Bonus: Rehabilitated NPC X 5000 Alignment experience: Good +50>]

During the rehabilitation of the gangsters, JusticeMan had sent a few people to monitor Andel and the assassins.

And received the information that the 3 assassins slept in shifts.

The rehabilitation group had 14 people and that number increased to 28 people, but the assassins were level 120.

If they attacked from the front then they should expect to receive considerable damage.

In addition, the situation might become more difficult if they used scrolls.

‘It would be better to receive less damage. Anyway, it isn’t necessary to take risks.

JusticeMan decided to defeat each assassin.

The first opponent was the assassin sleeping in the camp close by. You couldn’t build a campsite adjacent to the village. Because of that, the assassin was sleeping quite a distance away from the Quartermaster.

“Ja, can we really do a sudden attack?”

“It’s a little cowardly to attack a sleeping person……..”

A hoodlum asked with a worried expression. But JusticeMan replied without hesitation.

“It’s okay. We don’t have to choose the methods and means of true justice.”

“That, that is what you’re doing?”

“That’s right.”

In fact, even in reality a detective would attack sleeping criminals. There was no reason to feel uncomfortable.

JusticeMan’s party surrounded the assassins.

The distance was quickly narrowed and the assassin was attack from various sides.

The sleeping assassin received a critical hit and woke up.

“Huck, yes, you…….what!”

“Noisy!”

“Now, the group!”

“Ah ah ah, justice!”

Like a dog, the group listened to JusticeMan and attacked. Nevertheless the level 120 assassin was powerful.

Although he received at critical hit while sleeping, his health only decreased by 15%.

His basic stamina and defense was high level.

On the other hand when the assassin attacked, the hooligans each lost 25% health and each hit was likely to be a critical hit.

At level 50~60, it felt like they were facing a boss monster.

However, even if the level difference was 2 times as much, it was 28 against 1. In other words, the assassin had to defend against 28 attacks coming at once.

-The attack failed.

As the level difference was so huge, half the attacks missed. But Roco played the ‘Song of Focus’ and increased the hit rate of their attacks by 60%.

In order words, if JusticeMan's party swung simultaneously at least 16 attacks would hit. The assassin fell to a critical condition and took out a scroll.

Number 1406, also known as Yapsab was waiting for a chance and it was at that time.

"Pickpocket!"

-You have stolen the warp scroll from the assassin.

Yapsab's hands moved like lightning and quickly stole the scroll from the assassin.

"What is this……..!"

The assassin looked stupidly at his empty hands.

At that moment JusticeMan who had withdrawn, released the battle state. At the same time, he applied his justice stat.

JusticeMan's various stats rose in leaps and bounds.

Eventually, the assassin was a victim of the group and fell to the ground.

The assassin disappeared leaving behind black leather armour.

It was a high quality armour as it was dropped by a level 120 NPC. As a result, the group played rock paper scissors over the armour.

"Huhuhu, only a man of my size could wear it."

The one who won the popular armour laughed at the others clenched their fists.

“We’ve dealt with one guy. All that’s remaining is Andel and the two assassins!”

“Now I’m sure that we will be able to handle two assassins And Andel wouldn’t be high level yet. 2 people should be enough to handle Andel while the others take care of the assassins.”

“Okay, let’s go!”

JusticeMan led his remaining followers to the Quartermaster. On the other hand, Andel and the assassins were still waiting near the Quartermaster. Ten days of real time had already passed since Ark fell into the hell. Although the wait was horrible, Andel endured it by spending time in reality. Although the assassins were cooperative at first, after ten days had passed and then a month the assassins began to show dissatisfaction.

“Are you certain that the guy will return here?”

“For sure. He must be quite impatient by now. Just wait”

“But we can’t wait aimlessly around without a commitment?”

“You made a contract.” Are you going to take the 300 gold and then complain?”

“Sheesh, at this rate we’ll grow old and die first.”

The assassin murmured with an annoyed voice. JusticeMan and his group then arrived at the Quartermaster's. When they heard people approaching, Andel turned around indifferently and say JusticeMan.

"Eh? You were with that child Ark…..?"

"If you remember my face, then I don't have to tell you why you'll get hurt?"

"That child Ark…….why he didn't come here……..did he ask you for help?"

"Jeez, I'd say so. Crush them!"

"Ah ah ah, justice!"

"Stop them! We can't let them snatch the Quartermaster away from us!"

Andel shouted and quickly pulled out his sword and shield.

"Rehabilitated group, take the guy on the right. The rest take the left side. I'll take Andel."

JusticeMan commanded and shot forward.

However, Andel kept running away and it took time for JusticeMan to do any damage.

Although Andel had stopped levelling in the mid-60s, he used money to arm himself with high level warrior gear.

He ran around trying to escape and prayed that the assassins would take care of the situation. He ran away trying to escape and prayed that the assassins would take care of the situation.

However, the battle situation didn’t turn out like Andel expected.

First, the assassins were handled by the rehabilitation group that was supported by Roco.

With their hit rate increased to the maximum, the assassin could not handle their strikes and collapsed. The hooligans joined in and concentrated on the remaining assassin.

The assassin blindly used a scroll but his opponents numbered 28 people. Since the scroll could only be applied to one person at most, it was meaningless.

The scrolls could reverse the balance of a fight or even give an advantage.

However, it wasn’t possible to last against that many guys and soon he was collapsed on the ground. When the assassin was killed, the rehabilitation group immediately surrounded Andel.

“Now, it is time for you to die!”

“Eat this, you lousy bastard!”

Andel clenched his teeth and hurled profanities.

“You shouldn’t say those words.”

“Let’s leave!”

Andel took out a scroll and shouted.

At the same time, Yapsab ran up and used a skill.

However, the pickpocket skill only worked on opponents in critical condition. The skill came back as a failure.

Andel used the [Warp] scroll and disappeared.

JusticeMan tried to grab his collar just as he disappeared and fell to the ground.

“Damn, rat-like child!”

“…….The solution is settled for the moment.”

“Yes, but we cannot guarantee that this guy has given up. Since we don’t know when Ark will return, we’ll have to take turns guarding it. The rest will stay at the cabin or hunt.”

“What about the Lorenzo related quest? I got the keys to the warehouse…….”

“Well when Ark returns we’ll complete it together. Anyway, because of that Andel fellow we’ll have to spend some time here. And it’s good that useable hunting grounds are nearby.”

“Okay. Now, you guys wait here while the rest of you will return to the cabin.”

And JusticeMan recaptured the quartermaster’s place just like that.

In addition, they also gained the items the assassins dropped as a bonus.

After that, JusticeMan left 2 sentries there and became immersed in hunting while using the cabin as a central point.

Of course, he dragged along the delinquents as well.

One of the ways they could contribute to humanity was to kill monsters.

The path to true rehabilitation was distant and steep.

“Damn, those guys…….!”

At that time, Andel who had used [Warp] to run away had returned to Cairo.

‘I never thought that Ark would call his colleagues here. But they made a big mistake. I don’t know why Ark in this situation still hasn’t come back. The opportunity is still there. Even if it takes hundreds of gold, I’m going to make everyone a beggar along with Ark!’

Andel logged out and picked up the phone.

“Alan? It’s me.”

“What’s going on? Do you know what time it is right now?”

An irritated voice was heard over the telephone.

“There’s no time. The situation has hit a roadblock.”

“What?”

“The assassins have been killed.”

“At his level, Ark shouldn’t have the ability to beat them!”

“It’s not Ark.”

Andel was prepared and explained the situation. And in a resolute voice, he added.

“I need your help. Ark is also your enemy.”

“Damn…….I told you. I cannot lose my fame with the guild.”

“You do not need to come. The levels of these guys were only around level 60. Just send me more assassins. I’ll transfer 5 million won to your account right now.

If it isn’t enough then I’ll send you more money later.

“5 million won? Isn’t that too unreasonable? Isn’t your new car in need of tuning?”

“It does not matter. I’ll just get it off my father. Rather, those children…..I’m going to keep on stepping on them.”

“……I understand. The additional payment is unnecessary. Please step on Ark because I feel the same. I don’t care if there is a lack in money. Instead, please clearly step on Ark. Would you do that?

“Naturally. Even if I have to sell the car, I’ll completely step on Ark!”

It was the subject of those humans who were flush with money.

Andel was an example of the pathetic bourgeois that was common in the world.

“Yes, this is the service.”

A voice within the company was heard over the telephone.

“It’s Lee Myung Ban

“Oh, what brought Doryun-nim here?”

“I was looking for a person?”

“We don’t specialize in that? As you know….. ”

“I only know their ID in the game New World. But the guy recently took the entrance examination for Global Exos. He is using the ID Ark, can you do it? ”

“Well. In such circumstances, I cannot guarantee that we can figure it out. As you know, it is difficult to hack into a virtual reality game and Global Exos has very good security…….”

“You can do it. Can’t you? If not then simply say.”

“I will try it.”

“Ok, so I’ll send the deposit sometime tomorrow.”

Andel…….Lee Myung Ban hang up the phone and gnashed his teeth.

“You’ll see soon. If you’re not in the game then I’ll hire a solver to find you and beat you up in real life!”

Reality PK, it once was social issue which caused blood to be spilled.

March, Raccoon Troop!

“Wah ah ah!”

Bang bang double bang!

A dark valley was filled with roaring and shouting.

Several hundred people congregated with their swords, the sound of their swords and shields echoing in the ear.

Subarutalp……..a battle situation was occurring with the raccoon clan facing off against the monsters underground.

A few nights ago, Ark had finished the training of the raccoons and they set off. At first, a small reconnaissance unit wander around and built up hands on experience.

Even small forces were formidable against the level 150 Kanggeul. With 300 raccoons fighting against the Kanggeul, there were around 20 casualties. However, the more they fought the more experience they gained. Even if a small amount of raccoons were sacrificed, Ark also grew a little bit. And soon they would be able to take down the Plant Golems.

“Let’s do it!”

“First we must attack and finish off the Plant Golem!”

So far, the level 250 Plant Golem had been considered an impregnable enemy by the raccoons. However, after beating their enemies the raccoon clans began to gain confidence. And their levels rose as they continued beating strong enemies. In New World, NPCs who gained experience would also level up.

However, there was one notable change that he paid attention to. After the battle

ended, the raccoons noticed something and muttered.

“Well, I use this trick for the sword.”

“That’s right, I also understand how to use a shield now.”

“Is this a more effective way to use the cannon?”

If a raccoon used a weapon, a related skill was generated by the user.

The attack power for the sword and shield as well as their defensive powers went up. They received destructive skills for the artillery cannon, or an engineer would receive skills to increase the performance of profession items such as potions.

He realized that NPCs could also learn new skills.

Of course, it wasn’t the raccoon group wasn’t the only reason that he grew. The current commander of the raccoons was Ark, in New the commander also receives a bonus to all experience. Thanks to the bonus experience, Ark’s levelling speed increased. Of course, being commander didn’t only have good points.

The raccoon clan NPCs such as the craftsman NPC were also eating the Warrior’s cookies.

Well, thanks to the scam it decreased their understanding of tactics. Therefore Ark had to give orders one by one in groups of ten.

‘Crazy, the 300 raccoons are so stupid that they have to move one by one……”

In the beginning, there was no spirit.

However, he had gradually become used to tactics and came up with a new

interpretation. In the past, Ark had read JusticeMan's manual many times. But since Ark never went to the military, it was difficult for him to understand. After leading 300 soldiers and directly experiencing through trial and error, it began to make more sense.

'There is a limit to how much I can learn with just Uncle JusticeMan's book.'

Ark came up with new tactics that could be applied to the raccoons. And when the same action is repeated his understanding would deepen, that was the system of New World!

[You have learnt a new skill.Tactics (Beginner, passive): You have led the troops and gained a deep understanding of tactics based on your experience. In large-scale battles, it is important to pay attention to tactics.Excellent tactics would cause the situation to become more favourable to you and your allies. You will also learn how to lead your troops more effectively.

If your troops are made of 100% NPCs, you will be able to apply additional tactics.

<Allies morale, offensive power and defensive power +10, Strategy accomplishment rate +5>

* Beginner additional tactics

Unconditional assault: Order the troops to immediately attack one target.

Unconditional retreat: Order the troops to immediately retreat from combat.]

'This is the tactical skill that Uncle JusticeMan was talking about!'

However, some of the strategies contained in JusticeMan's manual were different to the ones Ark used.

Meanwhile JusticeMan was on Tactics III.

On the other hand, Ark only wrote down the new tactics he learnt during the day as well as his bonus tactics.

It was the inevitable result.

JusticeMan had an entire lifetime of tactical related work therefore Ark couldn't possible have the same understanding.

However, even though Ark primarily played solo he was not satisfied learning just one skill. They were skills that were necessary now. When the skill was used, it was felt by the movements of the raccoons which seemed to grow.

If the user's tactical skill was used then it could buff their troops. Other users could move with care.

However, this mission required the competence of the NPCs which means that the effects applied by the commander could vary the movement instead.

The effect was revealed in the current battle in the Valley of Darkness. Dozens of Kanggeul with lined up with the axes raised.

"They're throwing weapons! Lieutenants, gather your power and defend it!"

When Ark raised his voice, the lieutenants immediately lifted their shields.

The axes flew out of the dark and hit the raised shields.

In the old days, if Ark raised his voice then the raccoons were slow to respond. Some raccoons even ran forward straight into an axe. However, after the tactical skill was used that rarely occurred.

"No, the Nazis, no!"

When their surprise failed, the Kanggeul shrieked and ran wild.

The twenty crickets that had climbed to attack the rear of the raccoons froze.

“2nd division artillery, Plan A-3! Intercept the crickets!”

Ark commanded the artillery who immediately turned their cannon. Ark used the same tactics to command the raccoons as the ones he used on his summons. Plan A-3 was a tactic where his summons would attack on Ark’s order. When plan A-3 was applied to the artillerymen, they would launch an artillery barrage at the target.

“Kueeeek!”

The cricket and its rider were forced to the ground.

Ark ordered them to narrow the distance for a double critical chance.

“1st division lieutenant, plan A-2 surround the Kanggeul and attack in waves!”

Again, the movements of the 120 lieutenants flowed as they changed formation and attacked the defenceless Kanggeul.

The other Kanggeul rushed to the rear to rescue their colleagues. Ark switched to the B-3 plan with a ratio of 30:70 attack and defense to block the attack. And he switched to the B-1 plan and rushed forward as the Kanggeul began to weakly withdraw.

“Huhuhu, they’re not the previous raccoons anymore. Now they respond to Ark like soldiers!”

Like someone possessed, Ark controlled the battlefield using tactics and combat. At first the raccoon units moved together, but after fighting the Kanggeul, he became familiar with giving orders to different troops. Such a thing was possible because of Dedric.

“Master, should the raccoons on the right side start fighting?”

“Well, tell them it’s changed to the D-1 plan. And make the 3 engineers at the back support them! How is the left side?”

“There is a setback.”

“Plan A-1. Tell them to settle the siege quickly and then help the right side.”

“Understood. I’ll visit them now.”

With the battle situation examined, Dedric took to the sky to deliver the messages. Thanks to that, he could freely use different tactics in battle. So the raccoons were clearing the Kanggeul in the valley.

However, Ark had to pay attention to things other than the combat.

“Snake, it’s now. Swallow it!”

Ssak ssak ssak!

Ark commanded Snake as he threw it from his waist.

When he thought about a way to send Snake to Sid, Ark realised that there was a very easy method of utilizing Snake.

So, the ability to swallow items and spit it out when curled around his waist was a feature that he could utilize.

At Ark's command, Snake swallowed all the items on the battlefield at a tremendous rate. The item drop during the battle wasn't high. Therefore, Ark was determined not to abandon even one piece of japtem. Even if he had to sacrifice the raccoon soldiers to pick up the item……..

Was it too horrible? You're welcome!

The raccoons or the japtem that will belong to Ark when the quest ends.

Is it necessary to think about which is more important?

Ark's biggest purpose to play the game was money!

When it comes to making money, Ark could push his conscience down at any time.

Ark would survey the battlefield and if he spotted any raccoon trying to pick up an item he would immediately shout at them.

"Hey, that 1 person there! What are you doing? Do you want to die? If you have time to pick up an item then swing your sword!"

Flicker.

So the raccoons would flinch away while Snake quickly swallowed the item.

Soeeeeeek! Double bang!

Then, suddenly a giant vine flew through the darkness. At the same time, his side formation collapsed with a loud roaring sound. Ark and the raccoons headed towards that side.

“Plant Golem!”

“It appeared!”

From the other side of the valley, a huge presence was approaching.

A Plant Golem that was 10 meters tall was approaching. Its level was 250!

The raccoons to the right of the Plant Golem’s vine instantly lost 40% of the health and fell to the ground.

“1st lieutenant division, Unconditional Retreat!”

Ark activated his additional tactical skill.

The additional tactical skill was applied to the troops without Dedric having to convey the orders.

Then the raccoons shouted and dispersed like ants. When the formation collapsed, the Plant Golem didn’t know who to chase after so it stayed still.

Then, someone behind Ark shouted.

“Ark-hyung!”

He turned around and saw that Popo had shouted.

“This is ready.”

“Okay, Dedric, inform the whole army. We’re going with plan A-4.”

“Hey, raccoons! Plan A-4!”

Dedric shouted as he flew in the air. And the scattered soldiers retreated to one side.

When the target was narrowed to one side, the Kanggeul and Plant Golem immediately pursued it. They chased after the soldiers for a while until the earth started shaking. At the same time, the chasing monsters fell through a hole that appeared in the ground.

‘It’s a success!’

Popo yelled and jumped out. Popo was responsible for destroying the land along with the engineers of the 3rd division, so when the Kanggeul ran about nothing would happen but once the Plant Golem who was 10 times heavier stepped on the ground it would collapse. Therefore, the Kanggeul and Plant Golems who were lying intertwined on the ground was a bridge for the raccoons to climb on. The Plant Golem who was stuck halfway in the ground gave a shriek.

Of course, Ark wasn’t just calmly watching.

“Now! 2nd artillery division, A-2 plan!”

The artillerymen turned their cannons and fired wildly.

The A-2 plan was one to get rid of the weakness in its slow reloading speed.

In the past, a rifle unit of Napoleon's used the strategy of dividing into groups and then alternating firing. The continuous cannon attack fired and exploded into the Plant Golem's body. It was a large monster, so there was additional damage when caused the Plant Golem's health to be noticeably reduced. Meanwhile, the engineers eagerly used potions to treat the seriously injured.

"Master, recovery of the 1st division is finished."

"Ok, let's finish this. The unconditional assault!"

"Wha Ah Ah Ah! Attack!"

Ark used his additional tactical skill again. Then all the raccoon soldiers brandished their weapons and gathered at the Plant Golem. Swords and axes attacked the Plant Golem while there were flashes as the cannons continuously fired at it. The engineers also frantically poured potion after potion.

"Keu Ah Ah Ah!"

The Plant Golem finally collapsed with a cry of distress.

Over 60 Kanggeul and a Plant Golem had been defeated. If you think about how they used to struggle against a Kanggeul, it was a big development.

-Your level has risen.

When the battle was over, the amount of experience was added with the commander's bonus. 5% of the total experience. The experience of a level 150 and

250 monster was a considerable amount.

Thanks to that, Ark steadily went up a level every time a battle ended. After this battle, his level again rose by one until finally……..!

“Stat Window!”

Character Name	Ark	Race	Human
Alignment		Good+200	
Fame	1695	Level	100
Profession		Dark Walker	
Title		Cat Knight, Caretaker of All, Jackson’s Hero	
Health	1855	Mana	1570 (+100)
Spiritual Power	100	Strength	232 (+ 5)
Agility	262 (+ 15)	Stamina	362
Wisdom	41	Intelligence	305
Luck	42	Flexibility	32
Art of Communication	33	Affection	55 (+ 10)
Special stat: Knowledge of Ancient Relics		83	

Equipment item effects

Guardian Armour of the Merpeople: Water Attribute Resistance +100%, Penalty based on water is nullified.Cat Paws: Attack Speed +10%, Agility +15, Critical Hit +10%Crystal Golem’s Head: Mana + 100

Improved Norad Boots: Movement Speed + 15%, Evasion + 10%

Veil of Fire: Fire resistance + 50%

Adelaine’s Necklace: Def + 40, Affection + 10

Resurrecting Spirit: Strength + 5, Mana Recovery + 5%

* All abilities will increase by 30% in the dark* You have the ability to hide in the darkness (15 minutes duration. Cancelled when you get into combat)* Resistance Fear, Darkness, Blind, and Seduction spells is increased by 50%.

* You can bring out the true abilities from all types of tools.

‘I finally reached level 100!’

……..He thought back to just 30 hours before.

At level 100, not much changed.

However, like most people Ark liked a tight number. Once he confirmed that he reached level 100, he felt a sense of satisfaction.

And it only took 30 hours to gain 6 levels.

There more the number of advancing enemies increased, the faster his level up speed became.

Thanks to that, his levelling up speed was even faster than when he did the Event Quest in Jackson.

“Ark-hyung, we did it. Now we’ve occupied the Valley of Darkness.

“Mmm”

Ark nodded and used his cartography skill.

At first, it seemed black until 1/3rd of the space brightened and was opened. In the Underground World, there were 14 raccoon villages.

Among them, 13 had already been corrupted by Yggdrasil.

However, Ark had led the raccoon troops over a period of four days.

They had marched into and occupied 6 of the opponents' strategic camps.

It was reclaimed.

And regaining the villages meant that they were moving closer to Yggdrasil.

Ark led the raccoon troops into the newly reclaimed town. Like the other villages, blackened wood had been turned to ruins underneath a tangle of vines. And it clung to tree trunks or nearby clusters of buildings.

They were now familiar objects.

"Division 3, get rid of the cocoons!"

"Yes, Commander!"

Ark gave a command and the engineers immediately left to get rid of the cocoon of vines. They scratched it roughly with their claws and when it was peeled back a raccoon fell out.

They were the raccoons fed to the Plant Golem. The raccoon was put in the cocoons by the Plant Golem and goes through a transformation into the Kanggeul. If the raccoon undergoes a transformation then the Plant Golem is accepted by Yggdrasil.

Fortunately, in this village there weren't many that had transformed to Kanggeul. When treated with a purification potion, most returned to their original form.

Of course, those raccoons were recruited into the army using the Warrior's cookies and relegated to the back for training where they were transformed into warriors. This means that every time they occupied a village, they were decreasing the enemy's forces while increasing their own.

However, if they don't occupy a village then those cocoons could transform into Kanggeul and then hit them from behind. This was the first reason why a town should be taken over.

The closer they get to Yggdrasil, the number of casualties increases while the number of Kanggeul and Plant Golems also increases.

And the second reason why the town should be occupied…….

"Popo, what was the specialty of this village?"

"This town had many craftsmen who created cannons. These cannons had a longer range, making the projectile damage even stronger."

"How many of the cannon craftsmen can we rescue?"

"Around 10 people."

"There are 70 people in the artillery division. Assign seven to each person."

"When you only focus on recovery, it's not going to take long."

“Popo, tell the third division to rush the recovery of the cannon craftsmen. And when the craftsmen recovery, ask them how long it would take to upgrade the cannons.”

“Understood!”

Popo hopped away and ran across the town.

The battle of the Underground World was similar to the classic arcade game three O.

Ark’s initial power was the 300 raccoon soldiers and common equipment. However if he won a battle and occupied a town then things were different. When he entered a village, although the casualties increased, by purifying the raccoons confined to the cocoons then his numbers once again increased.

But there’s even more. The original craftsmen NPC who originally owned artisan workshops were still present in each village.

When he recaptured a town specializing in leather items, the raccoons were able to contribute leather armour to the troops. And if they were armed with better swords then sword damage would increase. One village offered a special potion that would increase the damage.

Therefore depending on the specialization of each village retaken, it was possible to repair, upgrade or even replace equipment. Of course, a lot of the military funding was provided by the war chest of the raccoon elders.

‘As Popo said, it is possible to increase the range and damage of the cannons.’

Artillery was a core part of the raccoon troops.

If it was upgraded, the damage of the raccoons would rise by leaps and bounds. The standard of upgrading was also rising as he approached Yggdrasil.

‘I was worried the first time I walked into a village……..’

As expected, nothing was impossible in New World.

‘The march of the raccoon troops has risen recently.’

If he was doing it alone, the quest would be impossible but with just one change all his problems were solved. Raccoon troops! Thanks to them, monsters over level 200 were being subdued and Ark was gradually occupying the Underground World.

“Fortunately, I also got some pretty useable items……..’

Ark gave a heart-warming look at his equipment window.

Ark had changed 2 of his equipment at the leatherworking village he stopped at not long ago.

[Veil of Fire (Magic)Armour type: MantleDefense power: 20

Durability: 67/80

Weight: 5

Use restriction: Level 90 and higher

A mantle made from the scale of the Fire Draconian. This mantle made from hardened scales is strong enough to deflect a decent weapon. In addition, it contains the characteristic high fire resistance common to fire draconians living in

lava.

<Option: Fire resistance +50>]

[Improved Norad Boots (Magical)Armour type: Leather ShoesDefense power: 40

Durability: 36/50

Weight: 5

User restriction: Level 60

Good quality footwear made using skin from the Great Worm. The Great Worm is an ancient monster that only lives in special environments. The epidermis is piled up in swamps or volcanoes or even in the stomach to avoid being harmed.

<Option: Movement Speed +15%, Evasion +10%>

<Special Option: You will not receive a penalty if damaged on the ground>]

It was another harvest obtained from the Underground World.

‘I never thought I would be satisfied leading raccoons.’

When Ark first entered the leatherworking village, there was a NPC called Norad.

Ark had heard the name Norad somewhere before. After a long time he finally remembered. Ark remembered it was in the description of the boots he picked up from Jackson.

A long time ago the armour maker that had disappeared, Norad!

“Yes, my grandfather made this. Every generation of my clan has inherited the name Norad.

After he showed him the shoes, Norad nodded.

Then, some materials surfaced to Ark’s head. There were materials that he didn’t trust to other users and kept locked in his bag.

The scale from the fire draconian and the skin from the great worm. After he showed the materials to Norad, a mantle was made from the scale while the Great Worm skin was used to modify the Norad Boots.

The performance was the highest quality.

‘Even though the processing fee was 500L, when it is this degree of performance then it was profitable business!”

He gained ore through the steady sale of cookies. After looking at the distribution sales he increased the price by 100% to 2L but the cookies still sold instantly. Furthermore, the japtem in his bag from the battlefield also sold at a higher price in the subterranean world and ore piled up in his bag.

‘Huhuhu, The war of the underground one is one that I quite like? At the rate everyone is defeating the monsters in the underground world, it wouldn’t be a dream to reach level 120 within the week!”

It was difficult to find a light representative hunting ground. And how many days had he invested into training the raccoons?

Once Ark started, he wasn’t going to pull back. So even though he could just head straight to Yggdrasil, he travelled around in circles to recapture the towns. All for the purpose of making a fortune!

“If you can find the source of Yggdrasil’s corruption and fix it then everything will return to normal. Therefore is it necessary to reclaim all the villages instead of advancing?”

Sometimes an elder would also start protesting.

However, if he gave them a bag of cookies then everything was fine.

When Ark called him with a whistle, Popo returned.

“Arc-hyung, it will take half a day to upgrade the cannons.”

‘Half a day……so about 2 hours in real time?’

This was one thing he didn’t like about the Underground World. When a town is occupied, it is good that the troops increase and equipment was upgraded, but until all the tasks were complete then it wasted a lot of time.

Ark didn’t want to rest because the time it would eat up was too valuable in gaining experience. Although the time was precious, he also couldn’t abandon increasing his troops or upgrading.

‘It can’t be the soul’s bane.’

“Popo, I’ll be along for a while so tell me when the preparations are complete.”

“Eh eh? Again? Where are you always going? Come play with me.”

“Hyung is busy. Please play by yourself.”

Ark lightly poked Popo who grumbled and headed towards the outskirts of the village.

“This is the patella?”

Ark took a hollow bone with joints.

“It fits perfectly. So ……..Because the pelvis is F, this would be number F-4.”

Ark labelled the patella F-4 with a pen before putting it back in the bag and picking another bone. He looked carefully and carved a number and repeated the work.

He had been doing it for a few nights and at the bottom of the bag, bones with different sorts of numbers were recorded and piled up.

How much time had passed?

After a while, Ark found a bone as small as a pebble. Soon it was mixed with the other bones and joined together like a puzzle as Ark stated with a confident voice.

“Okay, this is definitely the 3rd cervical vertebrae. Now everything is gathered!”

Ark threw away the remaining bones and summoned Skull.

“Skull, now everything has been equipped!”

Clack, clack clack clack!

Skull moved back and forth, thrilled.

Now he was ready. Only half was left.

It had been a week since he entered the Underground World…….in the meantime, Ark hadn’t forgotten about Skull. In order to defeat Warwick the owner of the Saw Blade and finish the evolution of Skull, summoning him in the Underground World was the optimal condition for his growth.

First there was an excess of ingredients all around.

Ark collected the ingredients and every time he arrived at a village when the raccoon troops advanced, he would instantly cook a new dish. And of course, Skull was dedicated to verifying the dish. He ate the food with enthusiasm and within a few days, Skull was already level 60.

Ark immediately summoned Warwick and challenged him to a duel.

“For sure……..it became better than before……..good…….the duel is accepted.”

The stats were accepted by the stubborn Warwick and he consented to the duel.

However, the result was a total failure!

Unlike the excited Dedric, Skull's battle unfolded calmly. Still, Warwick's health was only at 50% before Skull got forcefully recalled.

'Well that is a problem.'

24 hours later, Ark sighed as he looked at the grumpy Skull rolling about.

Ark also knew the reason for Skull's defeat.

The crucial difference between Warwick and Skull was that Skull had no limbs.

The battle understanding of Skull was quite high.

Because it had trained with Ark many times. However, the only movement Skull could do without limbs was rolling and jumping forward for a head butt. Such simple attacks weren't going to defeat Warwick.

When he took part in operations with Ark and Dedric, it was able to accomplish its role, but when 1-1 with a goblin it was more difficult.

'Even if Skull was level 70, he wouldn't stand a chance of winning against Warwick.'

Now Ark began to seriously explore ways to defeat Warwick. Then, a scene suddenly came to Ark's mind.

'Polluted Skeleton!'

In the underground labyrinth, he had fought against Polluted Skeletons. Even if

they were broken once, they had the special ability to use the surrounding bones and reform themselves. Skull's body was a skeleton. Then wouldn't it be possible to make arms and legs for Skull in the same way?

Ark immediately went back to the underground labyrinth and collected the surrounding bones. But when the bones were collected, it wasn't possible to know which bone went where.

Ark discussed with JusticeMan about this issue, who handed him a judo textbook.

Since judo specialized in joints, the textbook had an appendix with illustrations of the bones in the human body. Since then, Ark had sorted through the bones and now everything was ready. It was a body created with blood and sweat!

It was to the extent that he was now able to close his eyes and draw the bones of the human body. When he placed the bones according to the numbers written on them, a plausible skeleton was formed.

The only part left was the head.

"Skull, get ready."

When Skull was placed on area of the head, like a transformation robot the skeleton was complete. But now there was an important task.

The skeleton couldn't be a body just by lining up the bones. It must be firmly attached and able to move to Skull's will.

'What can make it successful?'

Snake, Spirit Body Glue!"

Ssak ssak ssak!

Snake opened its mouth and spat out the Spirit Body Glue.

Ark had first thought of this plan the moment the description called it a spirit body glue.

He could attach the bones and Skull with the glue. Moreover, it was not a simple adhesive. The spirit was set to the body using the ectoplasm, and then the ectoplasm could be used like nerves to move the body according to Skull's will.

'The only way to know is to try.'

Ark attached all the bones using the Spirit Body Glue. And after attaching Skull, he retreated.

"Skull, everything now depends on you. How is it? Can you move?"

There was no response from Skull.

He concentrated on all the nerves in his new body.

How much time had passed? Ududuk, the finger bone moved with a strange noise. Then the wrist and arm lifted up.

'There is a reaction!'

Skull tried to raise his body by pushing his hands against the ground.

Ark even forgot to breathe as he looked at the skeleton.

Geppeto the maker of Pinocchio would probably understand how he was feeling.

“Skull, you can do it. Think about the body you had before! Then you’ll remember how it feels!”

Ark nursed him using the sentiment of a father.

At that moment, Skull clenched himself and stood the body up.

“It was successful!”

Clack….Clack clack clack!

Skull looked at his arms and legs with a strange attention.

And once he starting moving his body, he adapted immediately.

Skull moved his body regained after hundreds of years like a newborn foal, and became so familiar with it that he was able to run and roll on the ground. He did this for a moment, before Skull looked at Ark with a gaze that seemed to want something.

He desired a rematch against Warwick.

“Okay, now the condition is the same. If the conditions are the same then there is no reason for you to be defeated. You are different from Dedric as you don’t speak. In the meantime, don’t forget experience when you fought with me.”

Ark gave simple advice before summoning Warwick.

When he saw the changed Skull, Warwick spoke with a surprised voice.

“That body……..right……..we have met great masters…….yes, if you have a

body then this body should be more satisfactory……..no more words are necessary……come, warrior!”

Soon the two skeletons clashed violently.

Unprecedentedly, Warwick pulled out a shield and rushed forward.

Until now, there was no way that Skull could deal with such a simple attack. But now he was not the past Skull. Skull quickly withdrew to the side and stretched his arm.

Unlike Warwick, Skull did not have a weapon.

His summons couldn’t wear equipment. Therefore, a finger bone was changed beforehand by Ark to compensate for this weakness. Fortunately, there was a little attack bonus attack to the considerable damage received and Warwick retreated.

“Ack……..certainly…….it is different from before.”

Warwick happily muttered.

In fact, Ark didn’t have big expectations for this duel.

Even though he only had bones left, Warwick still remembered the memories of his life. In addition, he was armed with a sword and shield. On the other hand, Skull who had no memory of his past before he was beheaded had only gained a new body.

‘Well in order to get acquainted with the new body, some fighting experience would be nice to see.

That was Ark’s honest thoughts.

However, Ark was a good way off the mark.

‘That kid Skull……..!’

Ark looked at Skull with bemused eyes.

It seemed as though Skull was using the same movement as Ark. Using evasive action to avoid the enemy’s attack, then countering through the gap were all specialties of Ark.

Even the manoeuvre of stepping to the side and kicking…….he mimicked all of Ark’s attacking techniques.

Of course, in terms of completion it didn’t compare to Ark. However, Ark had perfectly trained Skull in his battle techniques.

With movements exactly the same as his, the existence was different.

He felt like he was watching his child or student.

“Indeed……..after defeating the Kraken……..You will be able to summon the answer!”

Warwick’s exclamation clearly praised Ark.

“Go, skull!”

Ark clenched his fist tightly and shouted. The longer the battle was the more familiar Skull became with his movements.

Although it seemed a bit early, when confronting each other they were almost at the same level.

However, Warwick was also getting stronger while Skull’s movements were

gradually getting better. After 10 minutes……..!

Skull's health was at 20% while Warwick had 25% of his health left!

After both sides clashed again, their health dropped by 10%.

"It is great! For a sense of honour……I will put everything into the next blow."

Warwick shouted and raised his sword.

Skull felt the desperate resolution and stepped back.

He stepped back and moved behind Warwick. There was a tense silence like the static that rose from the end of a needle……

"It's now!"

Ark, who was Skull's master instinctively, read the timing.

Skull narrowed the distance and quickly struck with his hand. The technique to read the perfect timing to attack needed to be learnt by the body.

However, Warwick who was also experienced in combat read Skull's movements. Warwick's sword quickly moved from side to side.

Rattle, rattle!

Warwick struck and hit Skull's hands like lightning.

And ripped the chest open with his sword.

"A brave attack……..But this time…….it is my victory!"

Ark’s eyes shone.

“Skull, now!”

Clack clack clack! Clack clack clack!

At the same time, Skull’s scapula split open and a sharp bone rose. It rose up through Warwick’s side. Into Warwick’s eyes……flames erupted as he received a critical hit.

“This…….My goodness……How…….!”

“I assembled Skull’s body. It wasn’t impossible to give the body an unexpected weapon.”

Ark said with a smile.

Yes, there was a sharp bone hidden behind the scapula. It was a bone that wasn’t originally for humans.

However, when the bony part was assembled he installed something unique because Ark wanted a secret weapon.

It was a risk to determine whether Skull could utilize a bone that wasn’t originally human. However, in a desperate situation Skull showed a strong will and exceeded Ark’s expectations.

Warwick understood the situation and nodded.

“Right……with the master who believed in his summons……..he rewarded the summons……hu hu hu, you and your master……..are beautiful……I will hand over my power……with the power……..serve your master.”

Warwick said one final thing.

“Already……..it is possible for me to go to the hills……..thank you…….blessings for your future…….”

Warwick lifted his head as his body slowly crumbled. A message window popped up in front of Ark.

[The player’s summon ‘Nameless Dead Man’s Skull’ has defeated ‘Warwick.’You can now fuse the summon to evolve it. Please choose one familiar to be the main. The Familiar created by the fusion evolution will have the main Familiar’s stats with the auxiliary Familiar’s stats after consideration.]

It was a no-brainer.

Warwick was a knight with a good balance between offense and defense.

However, Skull had received Ark’s training and a body that was specially made. Warwick was a subject that couldn’t even been compared to Skull.

“Main, Nameless Dead Man’s Skull. Secondary Warwick.”

At the end of the decision, Skull’s body was enveloped in light.

The body of Skull began changing inside the light. The light also became more intense to look at. Warwick had an old sword and shield, with ragged chain armour affixed to his body.

[The Familiar’s fusion evolution has successfully finished.After fusing with

‘Warwick,’ Nameless Dead Man’s Skull had become a Skeleton Knight. With the mighty will to control the whole Netherworld, he has received the name ‘Deimos’. Therefore, Deimos has earned a low-ranking noble status in the Netherworld and has gained the right to bear an artifact.The Saw Blade is now Deimos’ artifact.

<By owning the artifact, Deimos can use an additional skill>]

DeimosA resident of the Netherworld who has inherited the spirit of Warwick and promoted to an Undead Knight. As a knight, honour is his strongest value and he swears absolute loyalty to his owner.However, if his master engages in dishonourable behaviour, his loyalty can be decreased.

Race	Undead	Inclination	Dark
Ranking		Lower Class	
Health	870 (+ 200)	Loyalty	270 (+ 200)
Strength	96 (+ 15)	Agility	63 (+ 15)
Wisdom	38 (+5)	Intelligence	59 (+5)
Luck		35 (+15)	

* Deimos hobby is ‘Bone collector.’* Learned the nature of the ‘sword’.<Sword: Deimos can transform into the Saw Blade. The transformed blade has two different uses, as a sword and as a whip. If you want to use as a whip, although it is possible to attack multiple enemies at the same time, damage is reduced by 30%. Spiritual Power consumption: 100>

‘Deimos?’

Ark knew about Deimos.

Among the two moons of Mars, one was the master and the other the vassal.

In other words, this means Ark’s familiar contained one of two shapes. His stats had also grown.

‘His stats were raised by 65~70 points.’

His elevated stats were similar to Dedric. The unusual thing was that his health and loyalty increased tremendously. His health had increased to 1070! His body was compatible to be a bread. Also, his loyalty rose so he didn’t have worry about disobedience like Dedric.

Rather his return as a bread would probably make him even more eager to serve Ark.

‘But what is this ‘bone collector’ hobby?’

Ark looked at the information window and shook his head.

Deimos’ eyes suddenly lit up and he run to the remains of Warwick’s body.

He searched through the bones until he found a rib with no flaws.

“Ara? Deimos, what are you doing?”

Clack clack clack! Clack clack clack!

Deimos pointed towards the ribs and touched it.

It’s not Morse code…..Ark couldn’t possibly understand so he summoned Dedric. He explained that he needed Dedric as an interpreter and they communicate for a while before Dedric said with a strange look.

“Master, this guy is surprisingly cheeky?”

“What?”

“The master went to all that difficulty to make my body. But it is not especially pleasing. The master has difficulty with his sense of beauty. I’m insincere yet he says such bad things? A bad one? Isn’t it?”

Clack clack clack!

Then Deimos grabbed Dedric and shook him.

“Uhh, this child! Just because he happens to have a body he dares……..snap! Ah, I understand. Please don’t pull my wings. Should I convey what you said? Ouuuk, don’t shake me while I’m upside down! Unlike a bat, my hobby isn’t being upside down. I have motion sickness! I understand! Keuk, Master. I was being abused. This guy says that……the bones collected by Master aren’t good. So it is difficult to exert his power?”

Ark was convinced by Dedric’s words.

Ark also knew that. When he collected the bones from the underground labyrinth, they were useable but most of them were dull or cracked. Although a body was made using such bones, he had no confidence in their performance.

“Well, I wanted to make it out of good bones too……..”

Uduk, Pakak!

Ark breathed out a sigh.

Would Deimos suddenly pull out one of his ribs? He didn’t mind injuring himself?

Ark looked at Deimos who seemed to understand as he shook his head.

He picked up the bone from Warwick and placed it in a vacant spot.

Curiously, Warwick and Deimos' ribs had become a perfect fit.

After he assembled the rib, Deimos skipped and jumped delightedly.

Suddenly a message window appeared in front of Ark.

[Deimos 'bone collector' skills have reassembled the ribs.You will be able to summon a skeleton with an intense love for bones.The bones you used to make the body was shabby. This is reflected in the dissatisfaction of Deimos, who found himself with the ability to reconstruct his body. He will search for bones that meet the special criteria according to Deimos and readjust his body. In addition, it has a low probability of improving the abilities of the blade.

<Warwick's 5th rib: Defense +10, Luck -5>

<The Blade: Maximum Durability +10>]

"What kind……."

A bizarre skill to change the bones.

It was a strange situation, but the effect caused some surprise.

Once a bone was changed, the ability also rose.

There was also a penalty but he didn't pay much regard to it as it only decrease luck by 5.

Of course he could also use the bones of monsters so there was another way to raise the stats other than food.

'If this kind of thing occurs in the future, Deimos may be able to grow even faster than Dedric!'

The body he went through much difficulty to create was going to be changed. It wasn't a pleasant feeling, although Ark was a utilitarianism person. If there was a benefit then it was fine.

"Okay, Deimos. Bone collecting, I like it."

The one unfortunate thing was that it wasn't possible to use the Saw Blade and Deimos at the same time. The characteristic of Warwick that Deimos inherited was his ability to transform into the Saw Blade.

'I can use the saw blade as a whip?'

The best thing to do was to try it out himself in order to understand it.

"Skull……..No, Deimos. Sword!"

Ark commanded Deimos who folded his body and turned into the Saw Blade.

He swung it but not much changed. But it had a metal object running along the handle. It was just like a switch. Ark pressed the metal object and swung in the opposite direction.

Cheolkek, Chwarararak, Double bang!

"What, what the?"

Ark freaked out. The moment he swung the sword, the vertebrae bone extended like an elastic cord and hit the tree 5 metres in front. Ark was stunned for a while before swinging it to the opposite side, towards the rocks. The distance was approximately 6 metres. But the sword blade extended and directly hit the rocks.

“This is great……..Awesome!”

Whenever he swung the sword, it extended!

Ark wielded the sword with enthusiasm. While swinging his sword, he discovered the range to be approximately 7 metres.

It wasn’t so great compared to the distance of long-range weapons. However, if he could attack an enemy 7 metres away with his sword then it was a different story. And that wasn’t all.

Pak, Pak, Pak, Pak, double bang!

Ark lined up branches and they were each cut off in order.

In addition to long distances, he could hit multiple enemies at once! Unfortunately, the damage was reduced by 30% but if utilized correctly it could be used to tremendous effect. In addition, it wasn’t hard to use the whip.

If he set a goal and swung the sword then it would probably hit.

“This is a weapon!”

It was worth the many days he spent troubled while reading about the human bones. So Ark was glad that it could help him.

Kkurururu, Bang! Kwa Kwa Kwa bang!

He felt the change and stood up. Suddenly the earth shook as the underground world erupted. And thick cracks began to split the road.

“Eh? What, what the?”

When his foot collapsed underneath him, Ark hurriedly threw his body and rolled across the ground. He turned his head back to see the split ground.

“What is happening?”

“Ark-hyung!”

At that time, Popo ran from the village with a desperate face.

“Popo, what is happening?”

“I, I don’t know. The elder is looking for Hyung!”

The Fallen Yggdrasil

“Earthquake!”

“Gather everyone in the square!”

When he entered the town, the raccoon soldiers were running around in confusion. Ark ordered some troops leaders to calm the turmoil and went to see the elders.

The elders’ face was pale like they had been sick.

“Ah, Ark!”

“What happened?”

“Nídhöggur is ……..The cause of this earthquake was certainly Nídhöggur.”

“Nídhöggur? What is that? Calm down and tell me.”

“It is the wicked malevolent deity we fear the most, the fallen dragon that lives in the deepest place in Subarutalp! And in the dark century……it was one of the six followers of the Lord of Darkness.”

“Yes?”

Ark asked again with a stupid face.

Dark century? Deity? Fallen Dragon? What are they talking about?

Wasn’t the problem that needed to be fixed Yggdrasil?

When Ark made an expression like he didn’t understand, the elders trembled and explained.

Once again, the Northern continent followed Norse mythology. And a dragon called Nídhöggur was also featured in Norse mythology.

Nídhöggur was described in the Norse mythology.

Even deeper underneath Subarutalp, the Underground world, there exists a frozen land of darkness and fog called Niflheim.

Niflheim was often called hell. Nídhöggur started eating away at Yggdrasil’s roots, and it was the dragon that ate the corpses in hell.

Ark already knew that part thanks to his common sense.

“In the Dark Century, this was the place where the 7 heroes and Nídhöggur fought a fierce battle. And at the end of a long battle, they were finally able to defeat hell’s army led by Nídhöggur. However, the 7 heroes weren’t able to completely defeat Nídhöggur. Therefore, as a temporary solution the 7 heroes borrowed Yggdrasil’s power and seal Nídhöggur and his army from Niflheim into Yggdrasil.

“So when Yggdrasil became corrupted……..”

“He waited for Yggdrasil to become weak and then weakened the seal in order to break out!

The elder held his head and made a sign to ward off evil.

“Didn’t I say so? We should’ve reached Yggdrasil faster!”

“But in this situation you never told me a single thing.”

“It is taboo to speak of it for the raccoon clans.”

The elders countered.

“The raccoon clans made a promise with the 7 heroes. The raccoons must isolate Subarutalp from the outside world as a way to keep the secret of the seal containing Nídhöggur.”

“7 heroes?”

“Yes, so this place was deceptively hidden……”

The Elder revealed the amazing secret.

The Underground World wasn’t originally isolated from the outside world.

According to the vow between the 7 heroes and the raccoon clans, they blocked the entrance using the underground labyrinth.

Then the one year monarch who built Cairo was a descendant of the 7 heroes. At that time, the barbarians were gradually approaching the underground labyrinth, so in order to repel their approach the monarch mobilized his soldiers and built Cairo in order to prevent the secret of the sealing from escaping. However, after a few hundred years the will of the monarch disappeared and Cairo became a simple lawless city.

‘Then the reason the other beast species didn’t know about the location of the raccoons was because of this?’

Once again, there were many existences buried in New World.

If there were such things in other games. The whole situation was set up. There was an underground world just like there was an underwater city. However, New World was different.

The underwater city and underground world demonstrates that there must be a purpose in order to reach it.

The same goes for monsters. There were many reasons for making monsters that inhabit different areas. Legends of the past or traditions had a high possibility of being used as a historical event. And all of that results in a single scenario.

The Dark Century……..!

At that moment, Ark’s head was spinning fiercely.

‘The Heartsoul Bead disappeared and then Nídhöggur’s seal weakened. If so, that might be the purpose of the Red Man in the first place.

Once again, Ark wondered about the red haired NPC.

So far, he had thought that the Red Man was simply a NPC related to the quest. However, the problem wasn’t so simple if he has anything to do with Nídhöggur.

This scenario was likely to play a huge role in the prophecy that predicts that the Lord of Darkness and the 7 heroes would return.

‘Maybe what happened in Jackson and the resurrection of Valderas was also related to the Red Man.’

Everything must fall in place to find all the clues.

Such as not knowing how Valderas resurrected himself. If someone had resurrected Valderas intentionally. Then the timing seemed to fit.

The Heartsoul Bead was stolen from the Magic Institute a year ago, but it was after the Event Quest finished that the Red Man disappeared with the Heartsoul Bead.

The time in between……..

The Red Man must have been orchestrating the events that happened in Jackson.

‘If my guess is true……..The Red Man is the main NPC that holds the key to all the scenarios in New World!’

A spark flew in Ark’s head while he was thinking.

‘Perhaps…….perhaps…….!’

It was the condition to pass the Global Exos test.

He didn’t know whether the condition was a quest or unknown event scenario. However, the Red Man was an NPC that might influence the fate of New World!’

Maybe figuring out the clues was the key to passing the test to enter Global Exos.

No, if Ark’s reasoning was no doubt correct. Then even if it wasn’t the answer requested by Global Exos, if he managed to clear the quest then there was no doubt a strong impression would be given.

‘It is New World after all and everything is related to the Dark Century and the

seven heroes.’ ‘Yes, it’s clear the passing the company’s entrance examination was entangled in the legend scenario!’

He had finally found a clue.

This was the answer to Global Exos!

‘Even though there was a report sent about the Jackson Event Quest, there was no reaction which seems strange…….it must have been just a clue. It is Global Exos after all. They must be careful with the scenarios to avoid unscrupulous people joining the company……’

A clear view of the future increased is mood.

Have the other candidates found any clues like this? Of course, in order to choose more people Global Exos might have other clues. But anyway, Ark had managed to find a clue so it became a little clearer what he had to do.

‘I have to stop the resurrection of Nídhöggur for the time being. Because if I don’t solve this then there is no meaning in finding the clue. When completing a quest like this, I must do it clearly so that points will be piled up neatly.’

Ark asked with an urgent voice.

“What would happen if Nídhöggur is resurrected?”

“Doom …..Ruin! The Nídhöggur from the Dark Century almost drove the entire Northern Continent to death. It was only when the Lord of Darkness appeared and the dragon submitted to them that the Northern Continent was saved. But now,

there is no Lord of Darkness to restrain him. If he wakes up……the Underground World along with the Northern continent would become a land of the dead in just a few months.”

“How do we stop the resurrection?”

“Before the seal breaks, you have no choice but to return Yggdrasil to its original state.”

“There is no time to delay anymore.”

Ark nodded and murmured.

Dududung, the quest information window popped up.

[Quest has been updated.

Reclaim the Peace of the Underground World! = Prevent the resurrection of Nídhöggur!

You have discovered the secret hidden in Subarutalp.

Nídhöggur, the dragon that almost led the Northern continent to destruction is sealed underneath Subarutalp. But when Yggdrasil became corrupted, the seal weakened and if Nídhöggur is resurrected then he will lead his hellish army again.

If Nídhöggur is restored then the entire Northern continent will be engulfed in a huge disaster.

The only way to prevent the resurrection of Nídhöggur is to rescue and restore Yggdrasil. Lead your raccoon soldiers to Yggdrasil and restore it before the seal breaks.

The current rate of seal destruction: 30%

<Difficulty: ☆ ☆ ☆ Quest is limited to: Dark Walker>]

Bang bang double bang!

“1st division retreat! 2nd artillery division, support the 1st division!”

Flames were burning as the artillerymen covered the first division’s retreat. A variety of flames flew through the air and exploded from the body of the Plant Golem.

“3rd division engineers, restore the 1st division using potions!”

Meanwhile, the engineers who had dug tunnels came up through one and applied potions. The first division who had their health restored once again went to face the Plant Golem and had their health decreased again.

“There is no time to rest. Go back to the potions and recover your health. As quickly as possible!”

Ark shouted at his raccoon troops.

Since the quest updated, Ark literally pushed forward like a tank. Thanks to Nídhöggur, he found out that the Red Man held the key to passing the entrance examination.

However, the situation was worse. The quest had a time limit before the seal would be destroyed. If the limited time was over then the quest would fail. And the Underground world would perish.

<Prevent the resurrection of Nídhöggur!> if the quest failed then the one he spent a long time on <Find the Heartsoul Bead> was also likely to fail.

But the biggest problem was not the failure of the quest. He could get one of the Three Marvels from Yggdrasil.

It was a major item required for 2 quests and his profession at the same time. Of course, the Three Marvels was the only way to upgrade his profession…….he was lucky to have found a fragment of it in the Underground world. There was no guarantee that he would be able to find the clues again if he started from the beginning.

It also wasn't possible to give up on the company entrance examination.

'In the end, everything is hanging on this quest.'

Ark didn't stop to reclaim the town.

Upgrading the troops and equipment required a minimum of 2 hours. He had to skip stopping in towns to save time.

By the rate of destruction of the seal wasn't indicated in time, it made him even more impatient.

'It is lucky that even the monsters are confused.'

Ark looked around at the shaken Underground world.

The earthquake was still continuing to move forward.

It was a natural result of Nídhöggur trying to break the seal. There was a deafening sound before the rocks rose and the ground cracked open. As a result of that, the earth in the forest where the battle was occurring sank down.

“Aaaaah, help me!”

“The crack is coming. The damage!”

Fortunately, the raccoon troops didn’t receive considerable damage.

However, that also happened to monsters. The monsters would fall into the sudden crack or would have to avoid most of the raccoon troops. And at that time, Popo manifested a strange ability.

“Arc-hyung, this is dangerous. We have to turn to the right.”

Wherever Popo said, a crack was likely to appear. How on earth did he know that, was something that thought at first.

However, the situation repeated several times so Ark trusted Popo with the direction of the march. And they marched for three hours without distraction.

“Yggdrasil!”

The leading soldiers shouted.

“That is the number of worlds that appears in Norse mythology……..!”

Ark looked at the huge tree on top of the hill with a sigh.

At the heart of the jungle, the towering tree on the hilltop looked like a giant that was bearing the weight of the ceiling. With roots that extended everywhere, it was the patron of the raccoons, Yggdrasil.

There were numerous Kanggeul and Plant Golem’s running around the vicinity of the hill.

‘There is only one chance. If the troops are defeated then there is no way to return and try again.’

There was no time to rush blindly.

“Dedric, tell the heavy troops of the 1st division to use plan A-4 and lure the enemy. The 2nd artillery division will wait on standby to begin plan A-1 of concentrated attacks. The 3rd engineers will back up the 1st division. You will concentrate on watching the movements of the monsters from the sky and if anything changes then tell me immediately.”

“I understand.”

When it was busy he would return.

Ark had commanded the raccoon force and suppressed his impatience. He took advantage of Popo’s ability to predict changes of terrain in advance, in order to keep the Kanggeul and Plant Golems separate and enabled their attacks to be

concentrated.

The raccoon soldiers also found the situation urgent and became more aggressive.

They spent 2 hours hunting around 20 Plant Golems and hundreds of Kanggeul. Numerous crosses floated over the heads of the raccoons as they levelled up like crazy.

Ark reached level 108 and his tactical skill increased considerably.

At that time, Dedric flew back.

“Master, the clean-up is now close to finishing. There are no monsters around Yggdrasil.”

‘Okay, the amount that I can raise my level and skills has become limited. The preparation is sufficient. The game hangs on this!’

Ark immediately gathered the raccoons and sold them the Warrior’s cookies. The ravenous soldiers ate the cookies wildly with shaking shoulders.

The raccoons that had their moral raised to 100% weren’t afraid of death at all.

“This way!”

Popo pointed from the front.

A few kilometres around the bottom Yggdrasil, there was a break that looked like a giant cave.

The gap was so huge that 100 people could enter and line up in rank. Ark stationed the soldiers too injured to march at the front of the entrance.

“I hate it; I want to fight with my hyung as well!”

“The front is going to be many times more dangerous than it is now. I won’t have the capacity to protect you.”

“I don’t need the protection. I am from a warrior raccoon clan that fought to the death! I’ll just enter by myself!”

“……I understand. Then don’t fall from my side. Got it?”

“Yes, I’ll protect Hyung!”

Popo brandished a twisted dagger.

Ark sighed.

He really didn’t want to take him, if possible. However, Popo was a soldier and there was no time to argue with him.

-The current rate of seal destruction: 68%

‘It’s not enough.’

Ark checked the information window and immediately ordered them to march.

“Charge. It is right in front of your eyes!”

Ark led his troops into the interior of Yggdrasil.

The light of the ore didn't reach inside and it was difficult to even see an inch in front of him. Besides, somewhere in the darkness a mist was pumped out that clogged up his breath.

To make matters worse, the interior was complicated like a maze.

In some places, thick tree branches tangled together to block a route. Ark looked back at the elder and asked.

"Elder-nim?"

"I don't know. When I went, it wasn't this dark or complicated."

"Did it transform? I can't do it. Dedric, go first and examine the terrain."

Ark commanded and Dedric flew away and searched around.

However, he soon returned and shook his head.

"No, it is too complicated and I don't know where I am."

"Unbelievable. 1st division soldiers march forward and find the way."

"Yes!"

After a few minutes of searching through the darkness……..

Swaeeeeek, Double bang!

“What, what is that sound?”

“An attack. Aa-avoid! Incoming!”

“Keuak!”

In the darkness, a huge object flew and attacked the troops. When he used Eyes of the Cat, he saw that it was a huge thick vine. Yggdrasil used its inner wall of vines to attack indiscriminately.

“Do not panic and maintain formation. 1st division form a circle and protect the troops, 2nd artillery division use plan A-3 to barrage the vine! 3rd engineer division, dedicate yourself to helping the wounded.”

It was a fearsome attack that flew in the dark!

Although it was a situation that would cause fear, the moral of the raccoon troops was already 100%.

Thanks to that, the fearless raccoons calmly followed Ark’s command.

Flashes from the cannons firing penetrated the darkness. 3~4 vines were destroyed under a chain of explosions.

However, another vine took their place along the floor.

“Arc-hyung, fighting the vines won’t do anything.”

Popo jumped back and forth as he shouted.

“The vines are Yggdrasil itself. If you destroy the vines then they’ll just be replaced! We must hurry to seek the core of Yggdrasil and remove the source of corruption!”

“I know!”

Ark shouted in an irate voice.

He could guess that much just by looking. But was it as easy as he said? How would he move the troops that are battered from all sides by the vines?

At that time, something appeared like lightning inside Ark’s head.

“Yes, that’s it!”

Ark immediately packed Lancel’s sword into his bag and replaced it with ‘sword’ which was Deimos transformed into a blade.

Saw blade ……..although the damage was better, Lancel’s sword had several bonuses which meant more damage. However, this time was different. It was a time when a special effect was more important than damage.

“Snake, return all items to the bag! If you run out of space then discard the japtem!”

Ssak ssak ssak!

Snake quickly climbed Ark's body and entered the bag. And uncontrollably spat out items.

Items were also quickly thrown out of the bag. Tears gathered as even in this situation, Ark didn't want to give up 1 copper. But there was no time to think about it.

"Snake, paralysis poison!"

When Snake climbed back out, Ark immediately made it eat a poisonous plant and shouted.

Snake which produced poison inside its body spewed out venom.

"Go!"

Once the sword was poisoned, he switched on the whip. Ark who had done all that in a few seconds twisted his sword, and swung the saw blade at the vines.

Chwarararak, the sword attacked like a fan and hit all the vines within a radius of 7 metres. The number of times the poison could be used was five times, but if he used the sword like a whip to strike five times, the number of uses disappeared. And it took 3 seconds for the 6 vines that were struck to fall paralyzed to the ground. Although he attacked a lot at the same time, the probability of all the enemies being poisoned was low.

However, if he used a poisonous herb the probability increases.

"Continue, create the poison!"

Ark made Snake eat the poison nonstop. And he jumped crazily all over the place

and wielded his sword. Soon all 20 vines that had attacked the raccoon troops fell to the ground paralyzed. Ark restrained the raccoons from attacking the vines and shouted.

“It is not necessary to attack the vine. Anyway, it can’t catch up to us!”

He arranged the raccoon troops after defeating the vines and advanced. However, as they entered the maze became even more complicated. In the end, it was difficult to distinguish where they were and they became even more disoriented.

In the meantime, some of the raccoons died from the offensive of the vines. In the beginning he had 300 people, but only 200 entered Yggdrasil and that number was now reduced to 150 people in the interior of Yggdrasil.

‘Damn, I keep losing more troops…….’

It won’t make removing the corruption from Yggdrasil any easier.

The boss would be even more difficult. Thanks to the difficulty level of C+, it was important to preserve all his raccoon troops. But honestly in this state, he couldn’t even guarantee that he could find the nucleus of Yggdrasil.

-The current rate of seal destruction: 80%.

He closed his mouth as it began to dry up.

Meanwhile, he turned a corner.

All of a sudden he felt a feeble shake from the bag.

‘What? This is……Star Fragment?’

Once he opened the bag, he saw a feeble light shining from the Star Fragment of the Three Marvels. The Elder’s eyes widened and he muttered as Ark took out the shining Star Fragment.

“A Star Fragment! That’s right, you had a Star Fragment!”

“What do you mean?”

“At the centre of Yggdrasil is another of the Three Marvels. And according to legend, the pieces of the Three Marvels would recognise each other if they were within a certain distance.”

That stupid raccoon! Only telling him this information now?

Ark swallowed the profanities that were rising up his throat.

He cleared his thoughts as now wasn’t the time to be angry.

Woong Woong Woong, he moved the star fragment back and forth until the light became stronger. And he felt like a child being pulled to one side by a force.

‘This way!’

Ark judged the situation and immediately shouted.

“Concentrate your power on defense! Don’t worry about anything else and just follow behind me. Unfortunately, I have no time to concern myself with

stragglers. The life and death of the continent as well as the Underground World is concerned in this battle. At whatever cost, I have to prevent the resurrection of Nídhöggur!”

“Ooh oh oh oh!”

Ark shouted while running at a furious pace without looking back.

The raccoon soldiers in the lead prevent vine attacks using their shields. He didn’t know how many people died from the attack since there was no time to turn his head. If he stopped to help them while surrounded by vines, it would eat up time again.

“Ack, don’t pay any regard to us!”

He heard a praiseworthy sound caused by drugs.

Of course, Ark didn’t even look back as he continued running. And at a crossroad he would go depending on where the light from the Star Fragment shone stronger. For 10 minutes, he ran like crazy while striking vines……..

Suddenly he heard water and saw a bright ambient light.

“Hyung, we did it! This is the heart of Yggdrasil!”

Popo jumped and shouted.

Ark and the raccoon troops had arrived at a huge cavern. In the centre, there was a giant bud that rose from the ground. A crystal ball the size of a fist was lodged. But the flesh surrounding the area where the crystal was stuck seemed to swell up.

Dugun, dugun, dugun…….

The odd flesh twitched like it was breathing. And with every pulse, he could feel a black sinister aura.

He was able to determine the circumstances with a glance.

‘The Heartsoul Bead is causing Yggdrasil to be corrupted!’

“1st division soldiers, 2nd artillery division! Concentrate your attack on the crystal ball!”

“Wha ah ah ah ah ah!”

The soldiers ran forward holding their swords. However, it was the artillery that attacked the crystal ball first. The artillerymen aimed the cannon and pulled the trigger. 50 sparks flew from the muzzle as lit up the darkness as it flew through the air.

Just as it was about to hit!

The leaves at the back suddenly rose and protected the crystal ball. And every bullet disappeared under the leaves. At the same time, the defensive vines attacked the troops as well.

“Kuaaaak!”

The heavy troops became disordered as they fell to the side.

A red warning message appeared in front of Ark.

-Boss monster ‘Awakened Heartsoul Bead’ has appeared!

[*A page is missing from the raws]

Cocoons hung along the wall.

The size of the cocoons was ten times the size of the ones he saw when reclaiming the dungeon. Then when some twitching, the cocoon split in half. Then something slowly crept out……..!

“Plant Golem!”

A giant body covered with bark tore the cocoon. It slowly emerged like a scene from a horror movie.

‘Oh my God…….if all the cocoons hatch…….!’

There would be around 100 Plant Golems swarming the cavern. They had difficulty fighting a dozen Plant Golems, if they were surrounded by one hundred then they would need all their concentration to survive.

“Switch attack! 1st division, stop the Plant Golem. 2nd artillery division, attack the cocoons!”

When Ark raised his voice, 50 bullets started firing at the cocoons immediately. Just like the famous classic RTS game Stark O, maybe the cocoons defense was really strong?

Sure enough. The defensive power of the cocoon was unimaginable.

After hitting one 100 feet up, the cocoon barely exploded and the dead body of the unfinished Plant Golem fell. And meanwhile three Plant Golems had finished hatching and emerged.

‘Unbelievable. The degree of difficulty for this boss…….’

Even if he concentrated his power, he wasn’t sure if he could break the crystal within the time limit.

If they tried to avoid the vine’s attacks, the rest of the Plant Golems would hatch! And until the artillerymen finished attacking the cocoons, there was no way for the heavy troops to attack. He only had 150 troops but even if he had 300~400, it wouldn’t be enough.

-The current rate of seal destruction: 86%

‘Jeez, what is with this hospitality? How am I supposed to defeat this boss? If I want to defeat it within the time limit, I’ll have to completely destroy the petals!’

It was really endless. If one cocoon was destroyed then another one would rise. However, if he didn’t pay the vines any attention then it would attack and deal damage. He was being pushed back. He couldn’t seem to grasp the feeling of control of the situation.

Ark swung his blade coated with paralysis poison at the vines in order to gain more time. However, after 10 seconds the paralysis wore off and the situation was the same.

‘I can’t waste time on the vines but they keep on thickening……..can I tie it up?’

A thought suddenly sparked in Ark’s head.

‘That’s right, it might lead there……..No, I think this is definitely correct. I can block all the vines and Plant Golem at once! There’s no other way!’

Ark made a decision and immediately commanded.

“1st division soldiers attack and attack the back of the bud! 2nd division artillerymen, concentrate your attacks on the cocoons of the Plant Golems. 3 division, hand out potions that will increase damage!”

“But how do we prevent attacks from the vine……”

Popo gasped.

“Leave that to me! Transformation off!”

At that moment, the sword changed back into Deimos.

“Deimos, protect me.”

Clack clack! Clack clack clack!

“Snake, Spirit Body Glue!”

Snake opened its mouth and spat out the glue.

“Now the rest is ours! Dedric, use your full power and attract the vines this way!”

“Eek? It that really okay?”

Don’t speak and just do it!”

“Hung, I don’t understand so I’ll just do it. Hey over here! The stupid vine!”

Dedric opened his wings and soared. He flew through the air at an incredible pace while avoiding the vines’ attacks. Dozens of vines huffed as they chased after Dedric. And after a moment, it glimpsed him and the vines changed their direction towards Ark.

“Well done!”

Ark had quickly thrown the glue in front of his body.

-……..Wooeoeoeo, I shall stick them all!

Green slime …….The ectoplasm gave a strange sound and sprung out.

The ectoplasm hit the entwined vines and stuck them to the ground. They only became even more tangled as they tried to escape.

‘It’s a success!’

Ark waved the ectoplasm as he jumped all over the place.

When Dedric attracted the vines, he brandished the ectoplasm. And the slime increased and wound around the vines. The entangled vines became stuck to the ground.

The number of times the spirit body glue could be used was a maximum of five.

He had already used it twice so there were three times left. However, once used there was no limit to the time it would stay stuck. The material was the ectoplasm which increased the affinity with the spirit. And once glued, it would never break before falling.

Double bang!

Deimos stopped the surprise attack.

Thanks to the fusion with Warwick, Deimos had 1000 health. And thanks to the shield, his defense dramatically increased.

“Dedric, I’ve finished cleaning up here. Lead the other vines towards this place!”

So the ectoplasm spread and attacked dozens of vine stems to the walls and floors.

“Ha ha ha! How about that, wood bastard!”

As Ark had already used it, he even used the ectoplasm to glue the cocoons shut.

When the Plant Golem tore it to escape, there would be a perfect blockade. However, when he finished gluing everything one hour had already been wasted. But the vines and cocoons were glued together and couldn't attack anymore.

'This…….once I've tried it out, it was an extravagant item!'

Ark marvelled at the efficiency of the spirit body glue.

It was used to repair the lever and open the door as well as build a new skeleton body.

And now it was used to attack a boss that had a difficulty of C+.

At first he wasn't sure what to do with it, but now that he's tried it out it was an object with limitless utilization.

'Sheesh, this is so good. I can only use it two more times so I shouldn't waste it.'

He had a chance to win now thanks to the spirit body glue.

The only thing left is…….

"Okay, one more thing to eliminate! Unconditional Assault!"

Ark used his tactical skill to make the raccoon troops attack one target.

The 1st division swung their swords at the bud while the artillery fired like crazy. The engineers even threw an explosive potion.

The 150 raccoon troops poured all their firepower on the target.

The leaves gradually withered and twisted off one by one. And finally, all the leaves fell off to reveal the crystal ball.

Even without the protection of the leaves, the crystal ball had a lot of health. But after a few minutes, the health fell down to 2%.

Then a brilliant idea shone in Ark's eyes.

"The whole army, unconditional retreat!"

"Eh eh?"

The raccoon troops were perplexed by Ark's order.

Why was he calling a retreat with victory right in front of his eyes? However, since the additional tactic's orders were absolute, the raccoons discretely dispersed.

"Now. Blade Storm!"

Ark took out a sword and used his skill.

The special effect of the Blade Storm was displayed. The sword broke into many pieces and whirled around like a storm. And the bunch of sword fragments was drawn to the crystal ball.

The hundreds of fragments did X 5 damage!

Inside the crystal ball, something scrambled before there was a popping sound.

And the black aura stopped flowing from the crystal ball. The crystal ball lost its power and fell away from the bud.

-Your level has risen!

-Your level has risen!

-Your level has risen!

The message windows popped up simultaneously.

‘One, two, three…….eight, eight times!’

After he defeated the awakened Heartsoul Bead, he levelled up 8 times!

Ark had commanded unconditional retreat at the last moment in order to get all the experience. It was a level 400 boss monster!

It was a huge chunk of experience. I thought of sharing the experience with the raccoons was something he couldn’t even fathom.

One piece of common sense, there was a limit on experience gain in New World. If he completed the quest and boss monster in several steps, his levels would rise but the experience wouldn’t apply 100%.

The first time the level rose he would get 100%, the second time 90% would be applied, the third time 80%…….and so on.

In other words, no matter how much experience the boss gave or have difficult the quest completed, at a high level it was impossible to raise more than 10 levels at one time.

But even with such a penalty applied, he still gained 8 levels! It as astronomical experience.

‘Wuhahaha, I level up 8 levels at once!’

Now that they grasped the situation, the raccoon soldiers had bitter looks on their faces.

“Dirty……”

“Dang. Tick.”

However, they didn’t dare say such words under Ark’s eyes.

Well, anyway the Underground World was saved so the raccoons should be satisfied.

“You did it! Ark-hyung accomplished it! Subarutalp is saved!”

Popo tears fell as he glanced around.

“Yes, I made a promise. Hyung has never broken his promises.”

Ark rubbed Popo’s head when suddenly.

[Heartsoul Bead

Handle with care! The Heartsoul Bead is a crystal ball filled with ancient magic and a curse. An ordinary person who touches the Heartsoul Bead will lose their soul to the Devil. But now it has lost its magic and is just plain beads.]

‘As expected, it was the Heartsoul Bead.’

Ark picked it up and sighed. There was a lot of talk but this situation was finally neatly arranged.

“Okay, it has ended. Everyone went through a lot of trouble.”

Koo-Kung!

Ark had opened his mouth to praise the raccoon troops.

When with a sudden roar, the whole place started shaking. Popo saw the buds of the tree start breaking and threw his body.

“Ah, Ark-hyung! Danger……..Ack!”

Ark had been pushed to the floor by Popo. And reflexively lifted his head as his breath returned.

“Po, Popo!”

A crack had spread across the floor like a spider web from the shock of the bud. And protruding from the gap was a black shape that impaled Popo. Popo had lost 90% of his health and his body was flashing red.

Ark hurriedly rushed to Popo.

Wuuuuuu!

Then, an eerie ringing came from under the crack.

Ark’s face hardened as he turned his head.

Underneath the crack was a cavern where the end couldn't be seen. And climbing up the rocks along the walls were black shapes. The monster's whole body burned from the heat, but what was even more terrifying was the enormous existence at the centre of the black form.

The deep red eyes of a dragon were visible in the tattered body. From a dozen metres down, the huge body started climbing up.

It was a scene like the devil was rising from Hell.

It looked horrible, but after looking at the dragon's information he had a more realistic fear.

The Immortal General Nídhöggur. Level 500!

It was the nightmare of the Northern continent that was sealed by the 7 heroes!

His breath got stuck in his jaw.

'Oh my God!'

"What on earth is happening? The Heartsoul Bead was destroyed so why is Nídhöggur still resurrecting?"

"I never considered it!

The elder flopped down in a panic.

"What? What do you mean?"

"Nídhöggur had been sealed using the divine power of Yggdrasil……..but in order to break the Heartsoul Bead in this battle……..Yggdrasil received too much

damage……..therefore it lost the power required to maintain the seal……”

“That……..!”

Double bang!

Once again, a roar was heard and the cracks widened even further. Some of the dead people wearing gear began to emerge from the gap.

“Raccoon troops, steady! Attack, attack!”

The surprised raccoon troops began hurling attacks. The dead were bombarded and pushed back into the crack. But it was only a temporary measure.

Rocks. There were hundreds and thousands of dead souls from Niflheim! Nídhöggur offered them the ability to climb out of the crack……

‘Heck, I haven’t come this far just to give up!’

Ark cursed. Now, the only reliable thing was the spirit body glue! Ark filled the crack with glue. After he did, the crack became quiet for a while. But it was only temporary, as with another shock a new crack opened.

The crack spread out and was right next to the old one.

Eventually Ark burst out screaming.

“No. Even if I try to close up the crack, it’s no use. Really …….Will it end like this?”

“It’s over. Everything is done!”

Raccoon troops abandoned formation and flopped down with a desperate moan. At that time, Popo’s body that was in a critical condition fell.

“Keuuuk, Ah……..Arc-hyung!”

“Po, Popo!”

Ark and Popo hugged.

Something green and sparkly spewed from Popo’s eyes.

-The current rate of seal destruction: 97%

“Pant!”

At the same time, screams emerged from the Planning Department of the Global

Exos Company.

“Wha, What it this?”

Kim Gwon-tae looked at the monitor with bloodshot eyes. The formerly fine monitor suddenly changed as uncontrollably data started appearing. It was like he suffered from hack like symptoms, but he had already experienced this phenomenon once.

“An Event Quest?”

When an Event Quest appears in New World, it was necessary to update the data in the main system. Kim Gwon-tae jumped and flinched as he heard Ha Myung-woo’s voice coming from the side.

“Event Quest?” “What do you mean?”

“The enormous amount of data! There is no doubt. Somewhere, an Event Quest is about to start. The security level…….Huk!”

After he checked the data on the laptop, Kim Gwon-tae let out a muffled scream.

And murmured in a trembling voice.

“B……The Event Quest has a B difficulty.”

What nonsense is this? When it is a B difficulty, doesn’t the average user have to

be level 300 in order for it to start? But the average level of the users hasn't even reached 100 yet."

"Ha, but it is true. "The Event Quest has a security level of B!"

"Oh damn! Has the main system gone crazy and discarded the security rating?"

"If only……"

Ha Myung-woo moaned and beat at this desk.

"Where is this going to happen?"

"The place where the data is being gathered appears to be near the Brandt Mountain range. But that place has no town……For now I can't tell what will trigger the quest."

"Stop! All the employees set aside your work! We have to do whatever we can to stop it! If a class B Event Quest is activated now, it will throw off the balance of the game! Understood? Even if you have to take an axe to the main computer, stop it!"

Kim Gwon-tae shook his head helplessly.

"But all the outside interference codes have already been blocked."

“Then do I just have to sit here and watch stupidly again?”

“Well……oh?”

While he was watching the scrolling data, Kim Gwon-tae’s eyes narrowed like a hawk.

He lifted a telephone and turned to Ha Myung-woo.

“What is it?”

“The data is somewhat abnormal.”

“What do you mean?”

“When the Event Quest was activated, another data showed up.”

“Another data? Explain it in a language I would understand!”

Ha Myung-woo threw the phone and looked at the monitor.

Kim Gwon-tae explained, pointing to some data coming up on the monitor.

“Here and here and here, this is not quest-related data. Rather the data appears to be a confrontation with the program that started the event quest. So you see……..if I used a metaphor, I would call it an antivirus program.”

“Vaccine? A program that catches viruses?”

“Yes, if the computer is infected with a virus, won’t the vaccine program run automatically? It is similar to such a program. Now the data is automatically moving and blocking the event quest related programs.”

“You mean the event quest might not be triggered?”

“If this program is perfect.”

“Perfect?”

Ha Myung-woo wrinkled his forehead as he frowned.

But Kim Gwon-tae searched through a thick booklet and found what he was looking for. And when one page was compared to the computer monitor, he nodded.

“Yes, when it is perfect the event quest won’t be triggered. Any outside interference is blocked but since this program lurked in the interior, it doesn’t seem affected. But this program is missing an important source”

“What is that?”

Kim Gwon-tae sighed and shook his head.

“I don’t know. But even if I do, there is no way to interfere from the outside. The only way to settle it in the game is to defeat the boss…….it seems to……act like a human and ignore the war between the data.

The reality was that the next generation of lost myths and legends were breathing in a virtual reality game called New World.

It was a world unknown even to its operators.

The Dark Piece

“What are you doing? Miners! Dedric, Deimos, quickly bring the miners!”

Ark shouted at the lifeless raccoon soldiers. Popo’s health was rapidly decreasing.

Popo lifted his trembling hands.

“Ah, Ark-hyung…….”

Ark shouted as he grasped Popo’s hands.

“Yes, I’m here. Hold on and wait. This wound will heal quickly enough.”

“Hyung……did we fail? Eventually……..to stop the plans of evil people…….isn’t it possible?”

“It’s not over yet!”

“Master, I’ve brought the engineers.”

Then Dedric and Deimos appeared, dragging one behind them.

When the engineer poured a potion, Popo’s health was instantly restored. But the symptom where his health constantly decreased didn’t improve. No, instead it seemed to be accelerating.

The confused engineer poured a detoxification potion to try and cleanse it out but

the result was the same.

“Mum……Dad…….Sobbing. Subarutalp is…….”

Popo was in a delirious mental state and burst into tears.

“Damn, what is happening to you?”

He had thought everything was resolved just a few moments ago.

But in a short time, the situation immediately became worse. The raccoon troops fell into a state of panic and lost their souls and the seal destruction was still continuing. And now Popo who he thought of as a little brother was dying. There are so many things happening at once that it wasn’t possible to contain them all.

‘Let’s try to save Popo.’

Surprisingly, the thing that Ark chose was Popo.

And of course, it was not the result of logical judgement.

He knew that it was only a NPC. And once the seal was broken it would be difficult for Ark and the raccoon troops to survive as well as Popo. If he used a rational judgement, he would have decided to move the raccoon troops and figure out a way to stop the seal from being destroyed.

But……..he couldn’t let Popo die in front of him.

It was an emotional judgment, not a logical one.

…….That is a human.

There was nobody that would sacrifice their life for world peace.

But there were a lot of people who would sacrifice their life for a person they held affection for.

Even if he was good at simple maths, it was one that was full of contradiction. But affection wasn't a matter that could be calculated using pros and cons.

"Popo, stay with me. You're not going to die. I will not let you do so."

Ark grabbed Popo's hand and used his nursing skill.

At that moment, a phenomenon he was unable to understand took place in the vicinity of Ark. The shared time was stopped. The shaking ground and trembling raccoons, even the dust floating in the air……..everything went perfectly still.

'What, what the?'

Flash-!

Ark turned around as the green light emanating from Popo's eyes became more intense. And on one side of the wall, a picture was drawn like a projector screen. It was an image that was stuck in places like the noise in old film.

An image of Yggdrasil, holding u the ceiling of the underground world with its giant trees showed.

In the vicinity of the town, smoke rose and showed raccoon families living peacefully. It was showing a comforting image from the mind. In the video, Popo was visibly laughing while holding the hands of his parents.

At that moment, a close up appearance shed light.

'Author…….Red Man?'

The face was masked but he was recognizable at a glance.

The man had red eyes, red hair and a red aura. He wielded a red sword and made the raccoon village a sea of blood. Overwhelmed raccoons fell one after another. Among those, Popo's parents barely hid Popo. The Red Man had killed all the raccoon families and came to the interior of Yggdrasil. Yggdrasil used all its strength but was not able to resist him. The Red Man proposed something to Yggdrasil. However, Yggdrasil refused and the Red Man aimed at Yggdrasil with his sword.

Then, one raccoon attacked the Red Man from the side. It was Popo who had to hide and watch his parents' deaths. For vengeance, he had grabbed a dagger and ran after the Red Man. However, Popo collapsed bleeding with one blow.

Yggdrasil was protecting its own spirit was a defense boundary. However, the death of his clan had disturbed the defense enchantment.

The Red Man did not miss the opening.

He allowed Popo to chase him for the sake of this moment! The Red Man squeezed the Heartsoul Bead and tore through the enchantment. And the Heartsoul Bead had powerful magic that was swallowed by Yggdrasil.

A humiliating defeat!

However, even in that desperate moment Yggdrasil didn't give up. Using the last of its strength, Popo was warped to a safe place.

This was an arrangement to protect the ancient vow.

……..The video ended there.

At the same time, the brilliance in Popo's eyes disappeared and the time that had stopped restarted again.

Suddenly, Ark heard Popo's voice in his ear.

"Ark-hyung."

“Popo…….what is it?”

“I think it’s all over now.”

There was a light of conviction in Popo’s eyes.

“I already died then.”

“Died?”

“Because a part of my living body came from Yggdrasil.”

“……!”

“Yggdrasil already knew then. It couldn’t stop the Red Man with its powers. Before being hit with the magic, a part of its spirit moved to me. In order to find the saviour that would stop that guy’s ambitions…..it knows now.”

Popo looked at Ark with new eyes.

“Yggdrasil’s awaited saviour was the descendant of Hero Maban…..it was Ark-hyung. Then he told me to bring him here to Yggdrasil. Now it is my turn.”

“Your turn…….?”

Ark asked with a worried voice.

Popo nodded with a pale smile.

“You know. The power of Yggdrasil is necessary to protect the seal. Now, I’ll give back the power that Yggdrasil gave me. It should be enough to prevent the resurrection of Nídhöggur.”

Popo pushed Ark and slowly raised his body.

And he approached the place where the seal was located with weak steps.

Ark looked at his form and tried to talk many times, but only closed his mouth. He would like to ask but was afraid of the answer. Popo lowered his head to the seal for a while and murmured in a low voice.

“I wanted to live a little bit more.”

“……..!”

“I met hyung and discovered the outside world…….I would like to hear more things. This world…..and hyung……what adventures hyung had……how he lived……I wanted to know. And if possible…..If it is possible to say……..”

Tears fell from Popo’s eyes.

“Now, wait a minute! Wait, there has to be another way!”

When Ark raised his voice, it surprised him.

His partner was a NPC. The NPC would clear up the situation.

Normally, it would be welcomed with open arms. But it wasn't possible to do that.

He didn't see any other way. But……..this was different. He didn't want it settled in such a way. It was a NPC but he didn't want the NPC to disappear forever.

However, Popo shook his head.

"I'm sorry. Hyung……The promise to go to the outside world together…….I can't keep it."

Flash-!

An enormous light emerged from Popo's body. Like a metal of metal put into a flame, it was red before it started turning white.

-The current rate of seal destruction: 99%, 98%, 97%……..

The number that had continuously ascended started going down.

Once it spontaneously recovered, the magic was drawn down to a huge circle on the ground.

"Popo……..!"

The devastated Ark looked at Popo with blurry eyes. That was when almost all the cracks returned to its original state.

Suddenly a deafening cry came from the ground as flames emerged. Popo's health

was reduced to 50%.

“Ugh!”

“Giggling, impertinent raccoon child! This body is an emperor of Niflheim. At best you will just be sealing me again!”

It sounded like a voice was coming out from hell!

It was Nídhöggur.

After Nídhöggur attacked Popo with the flames of hell, the seal’s destruction rate started climbing again.

“The hundreds of years. If you though I’ve would leave politely after being sealed for hundreds of years then you miscalculated. Before Yggdrasil fuses with you, you will die without a trace from the fires of hell.”

“No…….I stop……I’m…….I……Underground World and Ark-hyung…….I’m going to save you!”

“Impertinent!”

“Ah ah ah ah ack!”

When the fire became stronger, Popo’s health decreased even more. However, clenched his teeth lightly and endured.

“I……I’m going to……..I am from a clan of raccoon warriors…….support……..I’ll do!”

“Kukuku, you dare defy me?”

Once again, the explosive flames became stronger!

“Yes, Popo. You can do it.”

“M-Master!”

Ark plunged into the flames.

At the same time, he felt a shock as he immediately lost some health. Ark only felt a degree of the impact, as an NPC Popo would truly feel the pain as the flames burned him. Even so, Popo had not given up.

He was a little boy who had stomached such pain.

If so, it was time to show the will of Ark who was a user!

Ark took off his mantle and used it to block the hole where the flame was emerging. And he closed the lid with his own body.

The mantle which had 50% fire resistance properties, the Veil of Fire. When he switched to a Dark Walker, he gained a 50% resistance to the dark. Fortunately fire and darkness, with the two properties the damage of the fire in the darkness fell by 50%. And 50% of it was all Ark.

“Ah, Ark-hyung……..!”

Popo flinched and stiffened as he watched Ark.

As he looked at Ark, tears flowed down his face.

“Popo, do it. Please do! Discard that dragon and throw it back into hell! You can do it! No, it is only possible if it is you. Remember when we first met and you said you wanted to live like a hot foreigner? No, the foreigners aren’t so hot, you’re a few times hotter. This situation is too hot. Damn, do you understand? Popo, when you try you’re a guy that can do anything. And…….if possible, live. You’re going to live. Become the hero that seals that worm in hell and live.”

Ark continuously used his nursing skill.

He had no choice but to scream out all his feelings.

At the moment, Ark saw a mysterious light pour out.

The light seemed to dance in the darkness around Popo’s body before descending. Popo’s mental power went down to the bottom of the flames before ascending.

“Goodbye, Hyung…….”

A smile formed around Popo’s mouth.

However, in a short moment Popo was enveloped by an even stronger light. At the same time, the destruction rate of the seal went down at an incredible rate. Until finally!

-The current rate of seal destruction: 0%

The seal was fully recovered.

Chwarararak, crunch, double bang!

Suddenly huge thick branches stretched out. The branches intertwined together into several layers and formed a ball and chain on the seal.

Then the crack disappeared and a magic circle finished appearing.

“Kuaaak, this, unbelievable! No……!”

Nídhöggur’s voice faded as he was sealed. And ……..Popo changed into light and scattered.

[The Miracle Nursing was successful.True nursing is careful exchanges with your partner.Caregivers are not therapists. Although you can heal the patient’s wounds, you can’t stop death. However, if it was what they truly wanted.You can infuse courage and understanding into them.

You understood Popo’s behaviour, who had the courage to sacrifice himself. And you learnt about the sacrifice’s courage by yourself. You understood your partner’s true sacrifice and respected his intentions. You didn’t want to lose Popo, but you did your best to respect his intentions and fulfil his wish.

The true sacrifice of Popo and your sacrifice for each other formed a great rapport that moved Yggdrasil.

Yggdrasil will shed everything about Popo and he will be born again into a new existence. If you want to meet Popo again, grow as you meet the millions of foreigners.

* Due to the success of miracle nursing, all stats increase by 1.

* Affection increases by 10.

* Fame increases by 50.

* Increased the alignment to good by 50.]

[You have acquired the title ‘Caregiver of Sacrifice’ from the success of Miracle Nursing.Fame as a Caretaker has increased, so you will receive praises from many patients.* As a title bonus, all stats increase by 1.*Fame increases by 50]

Suddenly a dim light fell into Ark’s hands as a crowd gathered around him.

[Yggdrasil’s seed.A soul crystal created with the power of Yggdrasil.This seed contains the soul of the boy hero who sacrificed himself to save Subarutalp. It is Yggdrasil’s soul and if planted in an appropriate place then roots would take hold and a new Yggdrasil would grow.]

-Foreigner……

A ringing sound appeared in Ark’s head.

He flinched and looked up as a hologram appeared of a man that was Yggdrasil’s representative. It was in the form of a Buddhist priest with a white beard hanging down to his chest.

“You?”

-I am Yggdrasil, the ancient worlds that are already forgotten as well as Popo. Foreigner, first I would like to show respect to you. I have already seen all your achievements through Popo’s eyes. If it weren’t for you, I would’ve never been able to stop the resurrection of Nídhöggur. And Popo would’ve had no choice but to face death in vain.

“Death in vain? Then Popo?”

Yggdrasil looked at Ark with gentle eyes and nodded.

-Popo’s death was inevitable. But at the last moment, a miracle surpassing the magic occurred. It was the result of your affection towards Popo and his towards you. Hope is really the mysterious power of life.

“Then Popo is still alive?”

-Thanks to the miracle, Popo has received permission to live again from the powers that govern the world. That seed is my alter ego, and Popo. In accordance with Popo, I give that seed to you. Please find a new land with hope and plant the seed. It is the seed of a new era and Popo will finally be able to see the wide world.

Ark looked at the seed with bemused eyes.

-Ark-hyung!

He heard Popo’s voice from the seed.

And a little image rose up from the seed.

“Po, Popo?”

-Ah, it’s really embarrassing.

With an embarrassed expression, Popo scratched his head.

-Well, it is like you heard. Now I can accompany you like this. Please look after me in the future as well.

“Ha, ha ha ha, ha ha ha.”

Ark was taken aback and laughed as he sat down against the tree.

That’s right. He often forgot, but it was a virtual reality game.

If you truly want something to happen then it wasn’t impossible.

“It has ended.”

“Ended? What do you mean?”

“Event quest……it has been cancelled halfway through.”

Kim Gwon-tae looked at the monitor with a soulless expression.

Just a few moments ago the monitor had a crazy amount of data. But now only a few pieces of data came up.

It looked like it had been engaged in a long war and was now cleaning up.

“I can understand that by looking at the monitor!”

Ha Myung-woo shouted in a raspy voice.

“What I want to hear is why? The class B event quest started and now it just suddenly cancelled. Even if something is stopped, don’t I still need reports?”

“I’m really sorry. There is no way to figure it out now.”

“Hell, that fellow is really tedious.”

“I agree. We might be fed up with him but.”

Kim Gwon-tae blew out a huge sigh.

He started computer related work 10 years ago, but it was the first time he was ignored by the computer.

The operator doesn’t have to lift a finger to run the game. It even rejected the operator’s interference. It moved depending on the program that seemed alive, and that was often a fearful idea.

‘Can such a game even exist?’

He had a sudden urge to blow up the main system to stop this thing.

However, New World's main systems worth was equivalent to the budget of a small nation. If New World was blown up, the whole world would shake. Because the service had started, he had no choice but to go all the way.

"I can guess one thing……."

After a while, Kim Gwon-tae spoke in a cautious voice.

"The whole process that started the B class event was something likely to be caused by artificial errors. And some sort of restoration program was operated to block it. This means that two programs that oppose each other coexist in New World."

"But……artificial? Contradiction? What does that mean?"

"The two programs running at the same time in its basic form is perfect. If the first program is invoked followed by the triggered program then that means is not just triggered by system errors. It is clear that someone must have built the program with a specific purpose. Do you understand? The two programs were made by two people with conflicting thoughts."

At the moment, Ha Myung-woo's eyes went back to him.

His turned head seemed to say that he wanted Kim Gwon-tae to make it simpler.

"Either way, one of them would be related to the main programmer Park Woo-seong. But who is the 3rd person? He created a program to counteract Park Woo-

seong's?"

"It's like that."

"Ok, let's put it in order. We don't know who was the one that started the event quest and who stopped it…….and we don't know who would be favourable to Global Exos. Right? But looking at the circumstances, their performance must be equivalent to that of Park Woo-seong. Am I wrong?"

"No, that's right."

Ha Myung-woo's eyes narrowed.

The reason why operators trembled was because of Park Woo-seong's genius.

Even if he searched the world, there was nobody that could match him. But now there was a person that planted a program that could oppose Park Woo-seong.

If they were able to find him then he might have the key that Ha Myung-woo was looking for.

"Ok, then send an email to the developers to find 'him.' If the material is identified then track down his location. I don't care how much money it takes."

"……..And in this case, you got another one."

"Something?"

"Don't forget that intentional or not…..No, I think there is a 90% chance it was

intentional.”

Kim Gwon-tae organized the date files while muttering.

“The anti-program that solved this problem wasn’t perfect. Although it is an amazing program, like I said earlier there are several layers of code missing. It is too blatant that they couldn’t have missed it by mistake. Instead, there was an indirect variable.”

“Indirect variable?”

“User”

Kim Gwon-tae pulled the data file onto the monitor and spoke.

It was a summary of the anti-program from a little while ago.

“Please look. Do you see the most important keyword? This is part of the indirect variable. Here there are some of the choices being presented, depending on your choice, the rest of the program was to act like as if the quest branched out. And the indirect variables are only accessible inside the game.”

“You mean this event was stopped by a user?”

“That’s right.”

“It looks like clues have been solved.”

Contrary to expectations, Kim Gwon-tae was very surprised. Ha Myung-woo thought of something and said.

“I guess you know better than I. Before Park Woo-seong covers up his traces, send a mail to headquarters.”

“Park Woo-seong directly?”

“Yes, the content of the mail should be a challenge to the user. The user isn’t a part of Global Exos. But it isn’t accepted so seriously at headquarters. When develops put out new games, it is common for them to judge the results. But Park Woo-seong immediately disappeared without a trace, and there was a huge lock on New World.

Now he realised that the problem was serious.

Therefore, he left the contents of the email for Park Woo-seong to identify.

Eventually, the conclusion reached by the headquarters was that Park Woo-seong hid a clue inside the game to unlock it.

It was the reason that Ha Myung-woo used the company entrance examination as a pretext to drag users in. The conditions of the company examination meant that millions of users should stick to the game. And they worked out a plan to dig up the secrets of the game through the regular reports.

“In the end, the millions of users will hand you the key?”

“I was a little sceptical at first but now I’m convinced. And this user is the person I desire. The users that can participate in the system…….the information they have is needed. The user’s gaming system, if we know this then we could possibly undo Park Woo-seong’s lock. What are the coordinates where this incident happened?”

“Near Brandt Mountains.”

“All personnel should focus on that area and monitor its surroundings. Alternatively, examine if anything has happened in Cairo. If there was an event quest, then obviously something big has preceded it. And find out the identity of the user who stopped it.”

“I understand.”

Ha Myung-woo commanded who immediately passed the information down to the monitoring agents.

However the incident happened in the Underground World, thousands of metres underneath Cairo. The monitor personnel who wandered the Brandt Mountains couldn’t have known that.

However there was a chance that Kim Gwon-tae and Ha Myung-woo could figure it out. If they had paid a little bit more attention to their selected examinee’s reports.

However as soon as Hyun-woo’s reports arrived, it was instantly sent off to the shredder. It was bad luck for both Hyun-woo and Ha Myung-woo.

At that time, New World was entering a new era.

New World’s main scenario proceeded over time. In New World, the scenario was divided so the contents of <Episode I: Foreigner’s appearance> was in progress. However after a few years of game time, it would automatically change to Episode

2.

-The main system requires a data update for Episode II.

<Episode II: Pioneering age of the Foreigner>

“What decision?”

“Yes, I think we’ll like it just as it is……..what I mean is that it is too hard to say yes.”

“That’s right.”

Ark nodded.

Nídhöggur was once again sealed and the peace of the Underground World restored. Ark had organized the survivors and led them back to the closest village.

First by changing the taste of the Warrior’s cookies, the raccoons returned to their original state.

Fortunately, there are a lot of other herbs he could blend with the cookies that made the addiction not as strong.

‘Appetite Killing Stew’ was fed to them and they were quickly restored.

The raccoons then realised that they had been addicted. But it wasn’t regarded as a big problem.

Because if he hadn’t done so then the Underground World would have perished. However, his intimacy with them couldn’t help falling a little bit.

‘Well since I won’t come to the Underground World again, it doesn’t really matter…….’

However, there were still a few problems that remained.

Once Yggdrasil regained its power, the Underground World returned to its original state. The Kanggeul and Plant Golems changed back into raccoons. The problem was just that. They still had the memories of their time as a monster.

“What we have done so far……..”

“Alas, I……..I…….”

The raccoons suffered from killing their own species with their own hands.

In addition, the raccoon troops also killed a lot of Kanggeul and Plant Golems. They remembered that they had killed each other. Even if they were controlled by an irresistible force, it wasn’t easy to pretend like nothing had happened.

To solve that problem, the Elder had a meeting with representatives of several villages. And he wanted the raccoons that had been turned into monsters to leave the Underground World.

The Elder was embarrassed, but Ark thought about it in a positive way.

“There are too many raccoons to be isolated and it isn’t possible to live together and not confront them. So this is an opportunity to widen their field of view. When the heart is settled after living apart for several years then they can come back and talk about it.”

“But how would they live if they have no knowledge of the outside world……..”

The elders muttered in a concerned voice.

Then a brilliant idea shone in Ark’s eyes.

That’s right. Ark called up a concerned heart. He quietly looked at the raccoons that were to be expelled standing to one side.

“Do not worry.”

“Is there anything you can do?”

“There is a way but it is far…….but I know a pioneering village. Lancel Village is a great place that is happy to accept anyone as a resident.”

“But we are a beast species.”

“Yes, it is fine. The Meow is already living there.”

“Meow? Huh, the Meow didn’t like socializing with people…….”

“It is a great place to live. It is also a pioneering town so it would welcome anyone skilful like the raccoons are. The raccoon clan would prefer a place that requires good artisans right?”

“Yes, it is as you said.”

The elders nodded and replied.

And he went over to communicate the plans to leave to the raccoons.

“If the Truthseeker recommends it then we would like to go there.”

Ark talked to 70 raccoons and they accepted immediately.

[‘Find New Settlers’ quest has been updated.You have made the raccoon clans who can’t stay in the Underground World any longer move to Lancel Village. The raccoon species are naturally born with high dexterity. If they move to Lancel Village, than the village would grow faster and become richer.<New settlers found: 60% complete>]

[You have found new settlers with special skills.With the migration of the raccoon clan, the commerce of the town will increase by 50%.However, since the nature of the raccoons means they are reluctant to communicate with outsiders, the unity of the town has temporarily decreased by 30%. If it drops below 50%, it may cause the residents to leave the town.<If you invite a settler with a special ability, trade, safety, and the food situation values will increase. Depending on the values, you will be able to receive a bonus reward upon quest completion>]

“So now the problem is all resolved.”

Ark smiled and looked at the elders with a coy look. Of course, the law was there should be compensation for his effort.

‘Well, I remember receiving a promise of compensation, so if they are grateful but don’t stop to wipe the mouth then it could be considered a betrayal.’

Ark blatantly used his eyes to pressure the elders. The elder who belatedly understood his meaning nodded.

“Ah ah, yes. In fact, I have something I had thought to give to you.”

“Right.”

Ark grinned as the elder looked through his bag with a burdened expression.

“This has been handed down to the raccoon clan…….I thought you might like it. Anyway receive this as a token of my sincerity.”

The Elder extended one crude leather helmet.

[Raccoon Pith (Magic)Armour type: Leather HelmetDefense power: 60Durability: 50/50

Weight: 5

User restriction: Dark Walker profession, Level 80 and over

It is a helmet that has been passed down from generation to generation in the raccoon clan.

The ancient raccoons made it from the material of a mysterious species that enables it to transform the user's form. Ever since Subarutalp was isolated, the outside world has forgotten the ability. However, the power passed down from the ancient raccoons was still used.

The raccoons used the ability of the helmet to trade with the outside world while hiding their identity.

<Option: Agility +10, Wisdom +10>

<Special option: Transformation is possible once a day. Duration is unlimited. However, once the transformation is released you have to wait 24 hours before you can transform again>]

-Quest 'Prevent the resurrection of Voltaire and the Immortal Legion' has been completed.

The quest had automatically been completed once he received the quest item.

However, Ark had a little look of disappointment.

'Ara? What? There's no experience?'

Because none of the quests received in the underground world were easy to complete. Besides, the completion of the quest wasn't even mentioned in the information board.

He had expected to gain 3~4 levels when the quest was completed. However, there was no experience at all?

Then, the sound of the information window popped up.

['Victory Quest' has been completed.The completion of the Victory quest has accumulated 3☆ information window.In New World, a ☆ is a decoration provided for the player who has achieved a historical and great achievement which has an influence on the world.The player who receives a ☆ would be a legend in that area. In addition, the accumulation of a certain number of ☆'s would receive a very special reward.

Currently owned ☆ (3)]

There was something mediocre about the message since it didn't even give experience. Frankly, he wasn't satisfied. But are there other ways to add stars in the system?

'Hah……However, no matter what I solved the quest but the only reward is one old pith? No, it's still possible an incredible reward would be given later. And the difficulty of the quest compared to the not so great looking helmet……..well, as long as I got the necessary thing.'

…….If he didn't, he didn't know if he could endure it.

In fact, the performance of the helmet was slightly vague.

Ark was still using the Crystal Golem's Head that he obtained early on. Of course, he found a few more helmets. It had superior defense, but he needed options with mana.

The Raccoon's Pith also had a mana up option.

However, its defense was 20 points higher than the Crystal Golem's. Also, his summon demon skill used a lot of mana and that would increase even more.

'Yes, the Crystal Golem's Head usage limit is too low now. If I sell it later for an

appropriate price, it probably wouldn’t be popular. And now I need more agility than mana.’

Ark was satisfied to some degree and put on the Raccoon’s Pith.

But the Raccoon’s Pitch had an unexpected bonus that Ark hadn’t considered.

[The set items’ effect has been applied.New World has a number of items that are closely related to each other throughout history. The items are associated with a famous event or legendary hero and so on. Once you have a certain number of these sets of items, an additional bonus will appear.* Currently equipped set items: <King>'{Raccoon’s Pith} {Cat Paws} {Guardian Mermaid Armour} {??} {??}

Equipped with three items from the set <King> and the effect of the set will be applied.

<Wild Ability: Strength, Agility, Stamina +10. Defense +20>]

‘Set items effect!’

Ark’s eyes widened.

The bonus added from the set items was enormous. It indicated that when Ark equipped the set his strength, agility and stamina increased by 10, while his defense also increased by 20.

‘In addition, there are still two more items. If I can find everything and complete the King set……?’

He couldn’t even guess how much bonuses would be added.

‘Set items…….they were often seen in other games, but I didn’t know New World had them. So far, he had never heard such information…….after all, it is only when you possess at least 3 of the set that you can tell? Does that mean I now have to be careful when I sell an item?’

It was difficult because the items looked different from the other ones in the set.

However, he could get a significant amount of money if he sold it on the auction.

Every one of Ark’s thoughts was about making money.

“Thank you,”

“Huh? Well, it is lucky that you like it.”

“Then I’ll take this and go. Since I am meeting Yggdrasil, I’ll say goodbye in advance.”

“I see.”

Ark turned to the elders and bowed.

And outside the Town Hall, hundreds of raccoons had gathered.

When Ark came out, they lined the road.

“Serve, Hut!”

The soldiers raised swords while the artillerymen pointed their guns at the sky. Finally, each leader saluted Ark while the cannons fired simultaneously in the air.

At the same time, colourful fireworks appeared in the dark sky of the Underground World. It was like a spectacular Olympics opening ceremony!

“Ark commander, Hooray!”

“Well, you have worked hard and we achieved such peace thanks to you. As a group, the raccoons are thankful to you. Anytime you want, we are willing to lend our strength to you. We have learned how to muster courage thanks to you.”

The Elder hit Ark’s shoulders as he spoke.

Ark looked at the raccoon soldiers with deep emotions in his eyes. In the words of the Elder. They were actively conscripted and trained by Ark, and he had fought together with the NPCs.

How much did it mean?

He also felt affection for the soldiers of Jackson.

‘That’s right……Now the Underground World is at peace I have to say goodbye.’

Ark looked at them one by one as he left the town.

And after a while, he went to find Yggdrasil. Once inside Yggdrasil, Ark saw that the inside had already been turned into a shrine.

The vines weren’t seen and small lights floated around like it was daylight. And everything Yggdrasil willed it, the tree trunks would split and a new path formed.

Thanks to that, Ark could arrive at the centre in a straight line.

-Welcome. Have you finished saying goodbye?

Yggdrasil welcomed Ark in the form of the Buddhist priest.

“Yes.”

-Now the only thing left is your original purpose for coming here.

“I heard that I had to undergo a test to receive the Three Marvels.”

Yggdrasil lightly asked with a smile.

-Do you know what piece of the Three Marvels is here?

“I haven’t heard it yet. The raccoon elders also don’t know…..”

-The Three Marvels that I kept is the ‘Dark Piece.’

“Dark Piece?”

Yggdrasil nodded.

-As the name suggests, the artifact contains the powers of darkness. According to legend, the piece fell off the Lord of Darkness but I don’t know whether that is true or not. Anyway, it is the most dangerous piece among the Three Marvels. In

the past, even the Truthseeker had trouble controlling its power. There was a possibility of being inadvertently misled by the powers of darkness and straying from the path. Therefore, a test must be passed before receiving the Dark Piece.

Yggdrasil sent him a soft look.

-But you have already proved everything you needed to in a moment of desperation, the courage to embrace the dark without losing your courage and overcome the hardships. Because of the previous vow with Hero Maban, I will give you the Dark Piece.

Yggdrasil gripped his fist tightly. When he opened his hand, there was a stone sculpture emitting a black strength. His Knowledge of Ancient Relics needed to be 50 to confirm the item. However, Ark's Knowledge of Ancient Relics was at 83.

Taking the piece automatically opened the information window.

-Your Knowledge of Ancient Relics has confirmed 'The fragment of stone filled with an ancient power.'

[Fragment of stone filled with ancient power (Dark Piece)The Dark Piece pulsates with an aura of deep darkness.The Dark Piece is the reason you will feel the touch of a deadly temptation. Making this your own power won't be an easy task. But I hope that you find a strong will and courage in the darkness to make it a part of you.Using Knowledge of Ancient Relics, you have confirmed that it is one of the Three Marvels that Hero Maban used in the Dark Century.

Hero Maban has left his power inside the Three Marvels for later. If the Truthseeker obtains the Three Marvels, it is possible to obtain Hero Maban's power.

*The owner of the Dark Piece can use Hero Maban’s techniques.

<Experience +30,000. Knowledge of Ancient Relics +15. Intelligence 10, Fame has increased by 20>]

[New Profession-specific skill.The gift of darkness II (Beginner, passive): The power of the Dark Walker in the dark is slightly increased. All abilities are increased by 40%. The duration of ‘Stealth’ is raised to 20 minutes. However, this skill cannot be raised.]

[New Profession-specific skill.The Dark Dance (Beginner, active): The second half of Hero Maban’s power increases your vision in the dark. By hiding yourself in the darkness, you can use quick movements to make the enemy’s attack collapse. The player’s success rate depends on the level of the skill. The higher the skill, the more damage received would be reduced and in some cases, you can even reflect the enemy’s attacks. <Mana consumption: 300>]

[New chain skill has been registered.* Currently available chain skill-Dark Strike (Dark dance + Dark Blade)Evade enemy attacks and counterattack with a critical hit.

<Chain skill success: 50% chance to give the enemy a 200% critical hit>

<Chain skill failure: There will be a 50% chance that Dark Dance is released and a critical hit received.>]

Once again, pleasure has come at the end of suffering.

By completing the quest to reclaim the peace of the Underground World, he has received the second piece of the Three Marvels. As soon as he sealed up Nídhöggur, compensation started flowing out.

In particular, the main purpose of the Dark Walker was to find the Three Marvels so the compensation was tremendous.

First was the Gift of Darkness II. Since he had already received the Gift of Darkness, it was somewhat expected. But a 40% increase in abilities in the dark……..! Isn't that like being level 140 when he was level 100?

It was his new skill Dark Dance that was unexpected.

When he read the information, his expectation was different.

Unlike other professions, Ark didn't have a good evasion skill yet. He wished for it but there was a reason he didn't like it. The problem was that Dark Dance consumed mana.

'If I use it once then it consumes 300 mana?'

It also does not damage, so he would waste 300 mana just for teleportation…….! If he used 100% of his mana, he could only use the skill four times? In addition, a chain skill was created with the Dark Dance skill.

'Dark Strike…..I don't know how effective that technique is since it uses 400 mana in one go. I could use Blade Storm once with that mana.'

Blade Storm was his strongest attack that consumes a sword instead. On the other hand, Dark Strike only increased the damage of his critical strike.

The Dark Strike was also risky so he would rather use Blade Storm once and lose a sword.

'Well, I still increased my skills so it isn't too bad.'

Ark decided to be satisfied with it. After all, he had achieved the purpose of coming to this world.

“But the way can I ask you something?”

-Speak.

“Do you know the location of the remaining Three Marvel?”

Ark recalled the description of Yggdrasil from Norse mythology. Yggdrasil was the symbol of wisdom rooted in nine different worlds.

Of course, there was no guarantee that the number of worlds in the myth and in the depth of the earth was the same. Especially since it existed in ancient times and met Hero Maban, it may give him a clue.

However, Yggdrasil shook his head.

-I have spread my roots through most of the northern continent for a long time. So I see a lot of things. The rumours I heard about the location of the Three Marvels was from a long time ago. Maybe……..it is in a world that you don’t know about.

“Another world? Then has it been destroyed?

Yggdrasil laughed at Ark’s question.

-No, it’s completely different. The middle earth is the world that you know. If spoken in our language, Midgard is just one of the nine worlds. In other words, humans exist in a world on this system. The Lord of Darkness and his followers lived on a different system.

“Then I would find the remaining Three Marvels in a different system?”

-I don’t know either. However you are the Truthseeker, didn’t you come here in accordance with the guidance of a greater will that governs everything? If you try, it might be possible to detect its presence.

‘Do I have to go back from the beginning?’

Ark sighed. At that time, Yggdrasil spoke again.

-This is a bit of grandmotherly advice but…….be careful.

“Yes?”

-The Red Man weighs on my heart. Nídhöggur has been sealed in this place for hundreds of years, with the secret only being told to a few people. His reason for trying to resurrect Nídhöggur is unknown……..but if my guess is correct……..

Yggdrasil murmured and sighed.

-His purpose might wake up the darkness.

“What on earth is the darkness? A person? A malevolent deity?

-Darkness…….it is. The existence that every being on the continent fears that would bring disaster. Nothing more and nothing less. And if the purpose of the Red Man is really to wake the darkness……..his biggest goal is directly linked to the heritage of the 7 heroes. So pay attention and don’t overlook him.

“I will keep that in mind.”

-Then this is it. Now, you should go back. To the place that requires you……..

Yggdrasil approached him and stroked Ark’s head. Then Ark’s body was engulfed in light.

Small particles of light rose up in the heart of Yggdrasil and followed the passage. He followed the capillary of moving water along the stem until in his range of vision, a blue sky appeared.

His adventure of commanding the raccoons in the Underground World had finally ended.

Dirririri, dirririri.

At that time, his phone ringtone was audible from far away.

Underdog takes one more step

The sound of metal colliding with each other was heard.

The battle had been going on for quite a while and a few people had already collapsed. It was the rehabilitation group and delinquents. But even those who hadn't collapsed didn't have a lot of health left. Not even Roco's 'Song of Life' could compensate for the health being lost.

The people who were attacking them were NPCs in black clothes, assassins from the Dark Brother organization.

"Hu hu hu, did you think I would just give up?"

The person watching from the back let out a brutal laugh. They indicated towards the assassins from the Dark Brother.

A few nights ago Andel who had escaped, followed JusticeMan in Kairote.

Of course, it was in order to watch the movements of JusticeMan's party. He took over the Quartermaster's, so Ark would resurrect soon. Then Andel shadowed them secretly in case they moved to another area. However, Ark didn't resurrect even after a couple of days.

'That Ark, did something happen to him in reality?

Andel thought of a plan that would solve everything in one scoop and it was sweet. He hoped to find Ark and beat him up in the real world. Because he never imagined that they would defend the Quartermaster for so long.

However, was there a reason Ark didn't resurrect after sleeping for a few days?

Have to dig out the reason……

‘Heck, I really don’t like that guy.’

Andel ground his teeth together. If JusticeMan and is party didn’t leave Cairo, that means that Ark would resurrect here.

In other words, it was an opportunity to get revenge!

‘You’ll see soon, Ark and Justiceman. I’ll return the favour 10 times, no 20 times.”

Andel hid around the Quartermaster in Cairo hoping for revenge.

And…….Finally, the time for revenge had come. Alan contacted the Dark Brother again and an additional 15 assassins were dispatched.

It wasn’t free, of course. The money required to hire 15 people was 1,500 gold. Just like hiring mercenaries, even the assassin guild required compensation. In the end, if he combined the first sum of 300 gold then 1,800 gold was spent.

In cash, it was 18 million won.

Even if it was Andel, that was still a large amount for him.

‘Damn, when I think about the lecture I had to go through to scrape that money……..But if I can kill Ark and those guys then I don’t care. I’ll kill them again and again until I’m satisfied!’

Andel had completely forgotten the purpose of the game.

Only revenge! For that he would willingly sacrifice everything.

‘If Ark resurrects and runs away while I’m fighting those guys then it would be

more difficult.’

Andel left one assassin at the Quartermaster’s and led the rest to the cabin.

JusticeMan’s party consisted of 14 delinquents and the rehabilitation group. In total, it was 28 people.

However, their average level was not more than 60. Even if they had hunted around Cairo, only a few had risen to level 70.

On the other hand, Andel had 14 assassins that were level 120.

‘If I don’t want to lose this then I have to use this much power.’

In addition, the new assassins sent were more cautious than before.

“We are assassins. We kill the opponents while suffering little damage.”

The assassins waited for the evening.

They received a bonus 10% to their stats in the dark. In addition, one of the main weapons of the character with a dark attribute was ‘Stealth’ and ‘Assassination.’

“Those delinquents won’t be a problem. However, the group of foreigners with strong organizational abilities would be more complicated.”

The assassins hid themselves using ‘stealth’ and waited outside the cabin door. And surprised 3 of the rehabilitation members when they exited. Using their assassination skill, they dealt 300% damage! With 14 level 120 assassins concentrating their attacks on them, the 3 rehabilitation members didn’t even have

time to scream before they collapsed.

“The enemy!”

A delinquent came too late to help the rehabilitation members.

As soon as the battle began, it was under the control of the assassins as they issued orders. The assassins activated their scrolls and cornered them. 7 delinquents collapsed instantly while numbers 1408 and 1409 of the rehabilitation group also died.

“Ack, what the hell……!”

“Ha ha ha, it looks good. Cheeky children!”

Andel giggled as they kept dying.

Now there were only 7 delinquents, JusticeMan and 6 rehabilitation members left.

If they excluded Lorenzo, Sid and Roco then it was only 15 people. And they also only had 50% health left.

Two assassins also died, but the health of the remaining assassins was above 70%.

“I’m going to make you beggars along with Ark!”

When an NPC dies once, the delinquents couldn’t revive.

Of course, the rehabilitation members could revive but it wouldn’t have an impact on the outcome. The law of New World was that if a user died from an NPC, then they would be immediately revived at the Quartermaster.

However, if they died in a group battle then it was different. The resurrection would be stopped until the battle was completely finished. The system was to make sure they couldn't resurrect themselves and fight in the area near the Quartermaster. In other words, once the rehabilitation members died then they couldn't interrupt the battle.

'When the battle ends, all of us can't revive at the same time.'

At the Quartermaster, it was only possible for them to revive 1 at a time.

The users would be resurrected at the Quartermaster's depending on their time of death. If all the rehabilitation members died and they defended the Quartermaster's against resurrection, then it was possible to beat them. Andel didn't pay any attention even if the assassins' numbers decreased.

'This battle can only end with a winning conclusion.'

And now, the goal was right around the corner. Andel smirked and laughed as JusticeMan's party pushed in vain.

"These children, so fast!"

"Damn it, my skills can't even reach them……"

"Ack, being hit two or three times is punishing. These guys are incredibly strong."

Even if JusticeMan used his justice stat, he still couldn't fight against the assassins 1 on 1. In addition, there were too many opponents that he couldn't exit the battle

state.

In the end, he had no choice but to fight them face on. But their agility difference was so large that most of the times he attacked, a MISS warning would show. Then there would undoubtedly by a counter attack.

“JusticeMan ajusshi!”

Roco hurriedly used the ‘Song of Life.’

Roco’s voice was heard softly over the sound of the lute. Then JusticeMan’s health that was at the very bottom quickly restored. If it wasn’t for Roco then the battle probably would’ve been over a long time ago.

When the battle had started, the assassins prohibited the use of potions using the [No recovery] scroll. However, a limit of the [No recovery] scroll was that it had no effect on a Minstrel’s song.

“Che, this girl again……..!”

Andel shouted with a hard countenance.

“What are you doing? Kill her first!”

Andel yelled at the assassins.

“Stop!”

“I won’t allow one finger to touch Roco!”

JusticeMan and the rehabilitation members stood blocking the assassins. However, it wasn't enough and the health of JusticeMan and his party quickly decreased.

Some also fell to the ground as they were stunned.

"Ajusshi! Oppa!"

Roco screamed in a tearful voice.

She had been hunting with JusticeMan's party for two months. In the time when she couldn't battle, they had always helped her. Instead of colleagues, they were now liker her uncle and older brothers. Even though it was a game, they were still stabbed by a sword and collapsed. It was the assassins hired by Andel…….

She felt regret as tears started falling. The assassins who had stunned JusticeMan then rushed at Roco.

"It is the end. Minstrel!"

"Ack!"

The blade advanced underneath her nose. Roco didn't even think about counter attacking and just raised her arm to protect her head. It was at that time. Something clear flew across the space.

Kka kkak, kakakak! Tong!

A violent clash resonated through the air.

Following the sound, the assassin was thrown back with a pop. Roco was suddenly surprised and raised her head with eyes that were 2 times larger. The person who used 'Stealth' in front of her was a user.

Wearing leather armour with a bone sword……..it was Ark.

“Ah, Ark oppa?”

“Was I a little bit late?”

A smile spread on Ark’s mouth.

“Ark? It is Ark?”

All eyes focused on her as Roco spoke.

Ark-nim!”

“Ark hyung, welcome back!”

Sid and Lorenzo spoke with tears in their eyes.

Andel also looked at Ark with a shocked face. There was a reason he was surprised that Ark showed up. In preparation, he had left an assassin stationed at the Quartermaster’s. Ark didn’t even make contact with the assassin and appeared here. Unless……..?

“Yes, you…….Didn’t you definitely die at that time?”

“Who said that? I’m afraid I didn’t die by your hands”

“But certainly in the hell……..”

“Ah, it took some time to come out from there.”

“No way!”

“You should wait before judging whether it’s possible or not……your opinion seems to be quite different. Don’t you know that determination can make many things happen?”

“Determination?”

“I told you. I would strip you naked.”

Ark said with a smile.

Andel retorted like he was bored.

“You think that the situation would change just because you disappeared?”

And realisation showed on JusticeMan and his party’s faces.

That’s right. They had forgotten when Ark appeared, but there were still 12 assassins left that were level 120. On the other hand, JusticeMan had 15 people with an average level of 60~70. And their health wasn’t even 50%. Even if it was Ark, 1 person wouldn’t change the situation.

“Kukuku, stupid. You’re going to be sorry you didn’t run away when you had the opportunity.”

“I have good manners unlike you.”

However, Ark was still composed.

“I forgot to tell you, I brought a few friends with me from down there.”

“What? Friends?”

“Yes, they should be arriving around now…….”

“Master!”

Dedric’s voice was heard from behind him. Andel reflexively turned his head and his face stiffened.

“W-what, what is that?”

Behind Ark, the ground around the cabin started shaking as small forms started appearing. They numbered nearly 100 people! They were hooded so it wasn’t possible to examine them closely…….three or four whiskers protruding from the nose was exposed on the side underneath the hood.

That’s right, it was the raccoon inhabitants of the Underground World.

Ark had received a call as he was leaving the Underground World.

The phone call was from number 1407 who had died early. Andel had brought 14 assassins to raid the cabin.

Ark was troubled as he contemplated. If there were 14 assassins, then they should succeed in defeating JusticeMan's party. But even if Ark showed up, the results would be the same. Then the raccoon troops appeared in Ark's mind.

'Yes, they can appear in Cairo through Yggdrasil!'

Ark immediately called Yggdrasil through Popo's seeds.

Popo was spiritually connected to Yggdrasil and could communicate with it. Ark explained the situation to Yggdrasil and asked for assistance from the elders.

His request for support was received, and the 2nd artillery division was sent to assist their former commander. Meanwhile, Ark left Dedric to prepare for the battle and rushed to the cabin.

"Let me introduce my new friends."

Ark smiled at Andel.

"Say it again. The headcount from a little ago was……."

"This, this child……..What are you doing? Kill them!"

Andel shouted at them to attack. The 12 assassins rushed forward with their swords. Level 120. It was definitely an amazing level. But who were the artillerymen of the raccoon troops? The troops who had undergone Ark's spartan training and defeated monsters that were level 150 and 250.

At the moment, dozens of the raccoon troop watching from the forest grabbed their weapons. And……..clink, clink, the cannon was armed with swift movements and then fired in unison.

Bang bang double bang!

The ensuring scene would cause the heart to race.

Colourful fireworks exploded from everywhere.

The assassins were no different from the falling autumn leaves. Every time they were hit with a bombardment of ammo, their health quickly declined.

9 assassins died from this simple method while the rest scattered messily.

JusticeMan and his group just looked on with a bemused expression.

“This, this is ridiculous!”

Andel raised his voice as 9 assassins immediately died from the attack. Then Ark raised his voice to stop the bombardment and spoke.

“I’ll give you a chance.”

“What?”

“3 assassins remain. That was the number that you used to chase me in the past. The others will step back and watch as I duel with the assassins. And whatever the result, how about I forget about our bad relationship?”

Ark watched Andel as he spoke.

“Honestly…….annoying. Because I know people like you don’t like giving up, and I also won’t be able to do anything as long as you’re chasing me. So let’s conclude it with this battle.

Andel rolled his eyes and asked with a doubtful look.

“How can I believe that?”

“JusticeMan ajusshi.”

When Ark turned his head and asked, JusticeMan instantly nodded.

“It there is such a condition then there is no reason for me to interfere. I understand. We won’t cut in.”

“Now, how about it? Only your choice is left.”

Andel considered for a while before nodding.

“It is good. The assassins……I won’t cause any trouble.”

“Then shall we begin?”

A laugh emerged from Andel’s mouth.

“This stupid person is still the same. Has he already forgotten facing the same numbers not long ago?”

“That memory……..I remember it very clearly.”

Ark stared at Andel with a cold look as he replied.

“Then you should already know what will happen! Go, kill him!”

Andel ordered the assassins who immediately took out a scroll.

[No recovery], [Impossible to release battle state], [Seize]. It was the same combo of scrolls that forced Ark down the hell. The assassins used the scrolls to prevent any possibility before rushing in.

The sword attack from three directions!

Then Ark’s eyes started shining.

‘Now, is the opportunity to get revenge for my previous defeat!’

It was when Ark had an overwhelming advantage that he applied for a duel.

The abrupt desire for victory spread in Ark.

So far, when the 3 assassins had rushed him then he was helpless. Ark would never admit such a powerless defeat. He would not be satisfied if the conditions weren’t the same.

And another reason was to confirm what he had obtained from the Underground World. He wanted to see how much his skill proficiency had been raised by the

Three Marvels, not just look at the skill level. If he won against the 3 assassins under the same conditions, then it would be solid evidence.

‘I can win. No, I have to win!’

“Dark Dance!”

Ark lowered his upper body as he used his new skill.

Suddenly, the area was dyed with darkness. In the middle, 3 red imprints were seen brandishing swords. The image seemed like an infrared mode in spy movies.

Ark who had tried out the skill for the first time, was puzzled for a little bit.

‘What the? I thought the Dark Dance was just a skill that raised the evasion rate?’

And at that moment he heard the sound of a flying sword.

A red footprint also appeared on the ground in front of him. It seemed like the commentary he saw in martial arts textbooks about footwork.

‘Then I should move following the footprints?’

Ark laid a foot on the red footprint carved on the ground. The footprint disappeared before a new one appeared in front of it. The more times he stepped on it, the faster the footprint disappeared. Although it was initially easy to follow along, over time he had to concentrate in order to keep up with the speed of the footprints.

However, the effect was indeed amazing.

Su su suk, sa sa sak!

He just walked along the footprints.

While concentrating on the footprints, he could barely see the movements of the assassins. However, Ark's body moved like the wind and avoided all attacks.

"Oh my god!"

When Ark avoided the damage and emerged from the other side, the assassins were surprised.

But it was Ark that surprised them.

'This Dark Dance…….!'

It was expected that the evasion rate and defense would increase during the period.

However, it wasn't an easy technique to use.

The Dark Dance was similar to the dancing games that were in style a long time ago. In other words, different patterns of footwork would appear on the ground depending on the situation and the amount of damage avoided depended on how well he did.

The first time he used it, he made around 40% mistakes.

The damage received from the 3 assassins' attacks was only 250 damage. It meant that damage became invalid nearly 50% of the time, even taking his defensive powers into consideration!

'If the percentage of completion increases then I might not receive any damage?'

But there’s even more. The Dark Dance didn’t require the use of his hands.

This time, he focused on following the footsteps. However, once he became familiar with the Dark Dance then he could also attack.

Of course, it wasn’t as simple as it sounds.

If he focused on attacking, then the completion percentage of Dark Dance would fall. It was also possible to receive unexpected damage. In addition, if the completion rate dropped below 30% then the penalty of receiving a critical hit would dramatically increase.

‘Am I looking at a double-edged sword? But if I could attack while keeping the completion rate above 50%, there would be tremendous side effects. First, I should get used to the pattern!’

Ark continuously used Dark Dance. The pattern of the footprint would change depending on the circumstance. It was natural. Because the same attack wasn’t always used. However, after a few repetitions he gradually got used to the pattern.

The attack was avoided using the minimal movement while grasping any chance for a counter attack. When looking at the principles, it wasn’t that different from what Ark had previously done.

“What, what the hell is this guy?”

“These movements……..!”

The assassins spoke in a confused voice after the next attack also missed. After he used the fourth Dark Dance, his completion rate went up to 60%.

Ark then began fighting back.

“Dark blade!”

He used the Dark Dance and Dark Blade chain skill, Dark Strike!

Ark’s sword instantaneously spread out like the rib of a fan and struck the assassin’s neck. Dark Blade ignored the defense and struck a critical hit. Using Dark Strike, an additional 200% damage was also added.

The assassin’s health decline to 30% with one strike.

“No way!”

Andel sucked in a breath at the enormous damage.

“Ha, what the? Did you think that I wasted my time during the ten days?”

This was the reason that Ark had applied for a duel. During his time in the Underground World, Ark had raised his level. When the 3 assassins had pushed him, he was only level 90.

However during the underground labyrinth he increased his level by 5, and after he commanded the raccoon troops in the fight against Yggdrasil then he gained 21 levels. Ark’s current level was 116!

But was that all? After receiving the Dark Piece, his dark attribute bonus was raised to 40%. In terms of his stats, he was around level 162. He also had new equipment and set item effects. They only knew the fighting pattern of Ark before he fell into the hell. It was like an entirely different existence.

On the other hand, the assassins were level 120. With the dark attribute, they would be level 132. Even if they were professional assassins, if the level

difference was 32 levels…….

Bang!

“Cough……! This guy’s replacement……..”

The assassin who received Ark’s concentrated attack collapsed.

From 3 against 1 the situation changed to the much simpler 2 against 1.

Ark used his remaining 400 points of mana to attack using Dark Strike.

Under his shower of attacks, one more assassin quickly collapsed. Now there was only one assassin remaining, but Ark’s mana was completely gone and his health was down to 30%.

On the other hand, the 1 remaining assassin had 80% health.

‘From now on, it is a skills game!’

Ark used his Sword-Hand combat in a desperate struggle against the assassin. With the level difference, he overwhelmed the assassin with just the use of his Sword-Hand combat.

Kka kkak, Tong!

Ark blocked the assassin’s sword and used riposte.

Ark struck the assassin hard with the counter attack and the assassin was sent flying through the air.

At the same time as he landed, Ark attacked him with a shower of kicks.

The assassin was also formidable. Using the last of his power, he swung the sword and pushed Ark into a critical condition. But at the same time, he got hit on the head by Ark and died.

“Hyuu, I won.”

Ark blew out a breath.

He had defeated three level 120 assassins by himself!

“He, He won!”

“Ark hyung won!”

“Wah ah ah!”

The rehabilitation members, Lorenzo and the raccoon troops cheered from the vicinity of the cabin. But the cheer changed into a scream in the next moment.

“Huh? He, he……..! ”

“Ark, it’s dangerous!”

When he finished fighting against the last assassin, Andel who had been watching vigilantly for a chance attacked Ark. Currently, Ark’s health was only 180 points. If a strike landed then it would became a critical hit due to his state.

No, it certainly looked that way.

But just before Andel’s sword reached Ark’s neck.

The light abruptly turned off in front of Ark.

“What……..Sk-skeleton?”

A skeleton holding a sword and a shield had blocked Andel’s attack.

While Andel was confused, Ark turned his head and laughed.

“I know how guys like you think.”

In the first place, Ark hadn’t expected Andel to keep his promise. No, he hoped that he wouldn’t.

He wanted to test out the skills he obtained in the Underground World and he knew that Andel wouldn’t accept the result of the duel. He had marked him as an enemy until the end.

Therefore Ark deliberately left a gap for Andel in his critical condition. After he guessed the timing, he released Deimos from his transformation into the Saw Blade.

Andel was caught in Ark’s trap!

“So now the promise is broken?”

“You bastard, why did you believe me in the first place?”

“This fellow is absurd. You still say things like that in this situation?”

“Damn, you’ll see. No matter what it takes, I’ll force you into hell!”

Andel said as he took out a scroll.

It was the [Warp] scroll which had become Andel's specialty.

"Oh, that, that guy again…….!"

JusticeMan and the rehabilitation members moved a little bit.

Ark only smiled as he took out a scroll and activated it.

"Scroll [Magnetic] target Andel!"

At the same time, Andel's body blurred before he was forcibly pulled to Ark.

"What? What the?"

"Didn't I tell you? I didn't only play."

Ark clicked his tongue and muttered while feigning pity.

When he exited from the Underground World, Ark didn't wait for the raccoon troops and immediately began battle preparations.

The thing that Ark regretted the most from being attacked by Andel was not learning how to properly use scrolls in battle. When Ark recaptured villages in the Underground World, he immediately gathered information about the scrolls from the specialist in each village.

One interesting thing he learnt about was the [Magnetic] scroll. Although it would drag the target forward, there was another use for [Magnetic].

If the timing of [Magnetic] was used in conjunction with [Warp], then the effect of

[Warp] would disappear.

The reason why [Magnetic] was rated higher than the [Warp] scroll was because of this hidden function.

It was the so-called resistance of the scroll.

Therefore, in order to oppose or eliminate the effect, there must be a counter attack.

This was the true advantage of scroll utilization.

“You said I’ll see? Is it time now?”

Ark laughed as he approached the frightened Andel. However, in that moment he responded in a desperate voice.

“Heung, just kill me then. I have used the [Lie] scroll. Since I’m not chaotic, then you would become chaotic if you attack me. Your level is over 100 so can you take such a penalty? At best, all the NPCs would be ordered to kill you. And after I die, I would receive no problems from the NPC. You didn’t receive the archipelago, he he he.”

“……..That disgusting bastard.”

JusticeMan murmured in an outraged voice.

‘Does he think we would be afraid of something like that?’

“Ark, you don’t have to take part. We’ll kill this guy.”

“Please wait. Hyung-nim.”

Ark leisurely took out another scroll. When he triggered it, the shape of a huge sword formed over Andel’s head. When the sword struck Andel, his health was immediately reduced by 50%.

“Cough, no way this is……..?”

“[Sword of Truth]!”

Sid burst out with excitement.

[Sword of Truth]…….It was a scroll that only activated when the opponent used the [Lie] scroll. It dealt powerful damage as well as eliminating the effect of the [Lie] scroll. In addition, it also changed the alignment to chaotic for a period of time.

In other words, there would be no problem killing Andel.

“Ohu, that’s nice.”

“Now it means I have unlimited chances to kill you?”

The rehabilitation members surrounded Andel as they cracked their knuckles.

However, Ark shook his head.

“Not yet.”

“What?”

“Hyung-nim, don’t you have a lot piled up? Please receive this.”

Ark handed the rehabilitation members a few scrolls.

After reading the brief description, the rehabilitation members’ eyes shone brighter than ever.

“Oh, Ark. If it is you then it is done.”

“Hu hu hu, rather at this point we’re really sorry.”

“Still, we can’t help it. Because it is our policy to step on someone who tries to step on us.”

“Of course. We understand that much. Because he was the one that picked a fight first. We don’t have to be fair.”

“What, what are you doing…….!”

Andel murmured in an uneasy voice.

JusticeMan and the rehabilitation group, Ark and even Roco just tore the scrolls with a smile.

– [Peek] scroll was invoked.When the user's bag is targeted, it is possible to peek at an item.

– [Robbery] scroll was invoked.It is possible to designate an item from the target's bag. When the user dies, there is a 100% chance of the designated item dropping. Duplicated items are treated as one item.

The scrolls were applied non-stop to Andel.

He had bought in bulk various scrolls to give to the assassins, which could be used at any time to make gold, and he just left it in his bag along with equipment……..the aim of the [Robbery] scroll was to get any items that would make money.

But that was just the beginning.

"Didn't I tell you? I would keep on attacking you until you lose everything."

– [Seize] scroll was invoked.When the designated target dies, there is a 50% chance that an equipped item will drop.

Ark and the rehabilitation members used the [Seize] scroll four times.

As Andel was chaotic, after his death the probability of dropping his equipment items would dramatically increase. After using [Seize] four times, he didn't even have to see the results.

"B-Bastard…….!"

"Ara? What was that? From now on, it's just the beginning"

– [Misfortune] scroll was activated.The luck of the designated target temporarily becomes 0. The probability of dropping equipment items in various situations would be maximized. If a chaotic player dies in this unfortunate stat, their stat reduction would increase by 2, making them lose 4 stats.

Ark spoke with a pleasant smile.

“After losing the battle, I’m going to step on you once again. That’s my theory.”

With a scared look, Andel died.

“Ugh, Master! This woman, stop this woman!”

Dedric screamed before fleeing.

After refreshingly stepping on Andel, Ark joined JusticeMan and the rehabilitation company who he finally met after a long time. And after Dedric transformed himself into his child form, he found himself being chased after by Roco with great affection (?).

“Ho ho ho, he is……..It’s great to see you.”

“It’s not good, not good!”

“Don’t do that, come play with noona.”

“Who is this noona? I told you, I’m 300 years old!”

“Kkal kkal kkal! Understood, understood. You’re a 300 year old child. Happy?

“I’m not a child!”

Dedric shouted with a painful cry.

However, Roco didn’t hear and just hugged Dedric tighter. Then Deimos suddenly showed up at her side.

“Oh? You are…….Skull?”

Deimos was glad and quickly nodded his head. Unlike Dedric, Roco had spent quite a few friendly days with Deimos. However, Roco’s forehead furrowed as she muttered something.

“You……..look slightly creepy.”

Ddang! At Roco’s words, Skull was shocked as he showed a sulky expression. After he changed, it was the form he wanted to be proud of. However, in just a moment.

Clatter, clatter.

Deimos turned around and clung to Andel’s body.

Deimos’ eyes flashed for a moment as he fumbled around.

And like a psychic healer, he put his hand through Andel's shoulder. And then surprisingly, his bloody hands emerged holding a scapula.

'Don't tell me that he can also collect bones from a user?'

When Ark though about it, it was a big hit.

Deimos immediately changed his scapula to Andel's.

[Deimos has used his 'bone collecting' skill to reassemble the scapula.If he changes bones with a user, their stats and abilities are exchanged.<Deimos: Strength +5, Stamina +5, Wisdom -5, Intelligence -5><Andel: Strength -5, Stamina -5, Wisdom +5, Intelligence +5>]

Andel was a warrior in the game. Because of the bone exchange, his strength and stamina was reduced while Deimos' was increased. Andel was really unlucky.

Deimos changed the shape of his scapula to his favourite.

He smiled as he tinkered with his new shoulder. No, it seemed like he was smiling but he was obviously laughing.

He laughed sneakily.

'Although it's good that his stats rose…….it really is like a horror movie.'

Aa, Deimos ……..what is your real character?

The skull that used to roll cutely across the ground couldn't be seen anywhere now. It was a good thing that his stats climbed thanks to bone collecting, but the way he acquired other bones was really creepy.

The rehabilitation group stared in amazement at Deimos' bizarre behaviour. Ark

also had a similar expression, and had to explain the situation with a smile.

“Ha ha, don’t worry. This guy has a strange hobby these days.

And among such surroundings, the rehabilitation members had managed to finish resurrecting. Then the leader of the raccoon artillerymen saluted Ark and said.

“Commander, we should go.”

“Well, thank you. Give my regards to the elders.”

“Yes! Let’s go!”

The artillerymen saluted before returning to the designated place. JusticeMan and the rehabilitation group looked at the raccoons with amazement before asking.

“What? Did the raccoons escape from the zoo in a group?”

“They are my friends from the Underground World.”

“Underground World?”

Ark explained the last few days to a curious JusticeMan. JusticeMan breathed out a sigh with an amazed face.

“It sounds like a fascinating place, damn, if we knew beforehand we would have entered too…….

“I’m sorry. But I didn’t have a way to enter the Underground World. And ajusshi and hyung-nims wouldn’t have been able to survive the bottom.”

“That’s right”

“Ah! There is someone I would like to introduce.”

Ark took out small seeds from his bag.

JusticeMan and the rehabilitation members stared as a small figure emerged from the seeds. It was Popo, the hero of the raccoon clan. Popo scratched his head at the attention of the foreigners before greeting them.

-He he, Hello? I am a Popo, Ark hyung’s brother.

“Aw!”

Then Roco who was harassing Dedric came running over.

“Woo……! Cu……Cute. It’s a finger sized raccoon…….”

-Ah, Roco noona? Ark hyung talked about you a lot.

“What? R-really? What did he say?”

-That he had a pretty girl as a sister. You really are pretty, just like I heard. Can I call you noona from now on?

Popo was better at flattery than he thought.

“Ho ho ho, you’re sweet. It is in the eye of the beholder……..my younger siblings aren’t like that. Yes, please call me noona. If you are Ark oppa’s brother then you’re also mine. Popo did you say? Can we talk for a short while? Tell me in a little bit more detail about what Ark oppa said about me.”

Roco carried the seeds to a place a short distance away.

“Che!”

Then Dedric who had been abandoned kicked a rock that landed beside Skull. Although he complained, he indirectly enjoyed Roco’s attention. If he really hated it, he would’ve changed into a bat and ran away…….

“I’m living quite happily.”

The raccoon boy was sociable. Roco who was interested in Ark, abandoned his two summons……the form that she was interested in was quite different in other’s eyes.

“What…..that’s right.”

“By the way, what do you think that Andel guy will do?”

“Just let it go. For the time being, he won’t connect for a while.”

“But what if he tries to bother you again?”

“Right. But I wouldn’t mind. Here in the chaotic city it would be a difficult situation, but the other areas won’t have such a penalty against resurrection. So if he attacks me once, then I would be able to return it twice as much. But it’s also not easy.”

“Although, you don’t have to worry about your skills based on what we saw before.”

“Well Andel might hire more assassins again before connecting. Although Lorenzo and the delinquents would receive help from the guard NPCs, we are different. So I think we should leave Cairo before there is more trouble.”

“That’s good. Our time is more precious than that guy.”

“But I have some things to finish first.”

Ark’s pupils turned gold after a long time. He had already forgotten about Andel and turned into a money-making mode.

“Sid. Can you please arrange all of this.”

Ark handed Sid all the japtem he obtained in the Underground World.

“Pant, this, this is ……!”

Sid’s eyes widened at the huge pile of japtem. But it wasn’t because of the japtem. It was due to the ore, the currency of the Underground World. All of the 1,600 Nurunma leaves he obtained from the thief hideout had been used to make the Warrior cookies and sold to the raccoon troops.

First 1L. But soon the price was raised to 2L because he was running out of ingredients. Fortunately, the raccoons were already addicted and had no choice but to buy the cookies at the higher price. Thanks to that, Ark managed to get 2,400 ores!

Even if 500 L was used to pay for item forging, there was still approximately 1,900 ores in his bag.

“Where did you get so many ores……?”

Ark who hadn’t showed up for a while finally appeared with amazing items.

Sid still couldn’t understand the strange user that was Ark.

“No, you expect me to organize everything here? But if we sell it in Giran, we can’t get a 20% higher price.”

“I don’t care. Just sort it out. And change all the items robbed from Andel into gold except for the scrolls from Cairo. You should bring Jjak-tung so you don’t make any mistakes.”

“I understand.”

Soon Sid and Jjak-tung headed to Cairo carrying the items.

The reason why he sent Jjak-tung was to take advantage of his ‘Fraud’ skill. Thanks to Ark, Sid had raised his sale skills but it wasn’t possible to sell any more items once he received a profit of more than 15%. On the other hand, if Jjak-tung’s ‘Fraud’ skill was used, then he could receive an unconditional 15% profit.

“Okay, now let’s finish life in Cairo.”

Ark led the rehabilitation group and headed towards Cairo. It was in order to complete the [Clear Lorenzo’s name] quest that had been postponed. Earlier, JusticeMan had handed him the warehouse key before they headed back to Wolkosu with his supplies. Then, he made him sit down while Lorenzo explained the circumstances.

“…….That was what happened.”

“I see…….I’ve just blindly doubted you without even knowing….I’m sorry.”

Wolkosu said to his son in a regretful voice. Lorenzo seemed tearful as he shook his head.

“No. It was my fault this whole thing started. Father, I’m sorry.”

“Father? Now I am your father?”

“Yes, father. I’m sorry for not calling you that in the meantime.”

“I got it. So stop saying such things. Being confronted with your faults must have been hard on you. I never thought I would have children so I raised your sternly, without unconditional love. That must have been really painful for you and I didn’t know. No, let’s stop. I’ll forget your past. If you’ve decided to become a new man then it is done.

“Father!”

Wolkosu and Lorenzo wept as they hugged each other.

The rehabilitation members had tears in their eyes as they looked at the two NPCs. Although they were NPCs, Lorenzo’s path seemed to overlap with that of the rehabilitation group.

“Hyung-nim, justice is really a good thing.”

“Hum, yes.”

JusticeMan nodded with a satisfied expression.

However, there were no tears in Ark’s eyes.

“Now, Wolkosu ajusshi. Let’s slowly do the calculation.”

“Calculation?”

“Why is it like this? Did you already forget the promise?”

“Promise…….Ah, it’s not like that. He he he, why would I forget? Yes, I do remember. Didn’t I promise to sell you anything from the items recovered for a 40% discounted price? Okay, if you need anything then tell me. I’ll do anything for the man who recovered my son. Since I’m a person who also runs a big business in the capital. I’m a second generation. Even if other stores want them, I will save it for you.”

“Ah, father. What a moment! That…….

At the moment, Lorenzo was shocked and blocked Wolkosu’s mouth. However, it was already too late. By the end of Wolkosu’s words, Ark’s eyes flashed as he drove the nail in.

“Without a doubt you promised. You clearly said that even if the items were wanted elsewhere, you would save it for me?

“Eh? T-that’s right. Why? What’s the matter?”

“Nothing. Not at all. So let’s start the business.”

Ark laid his purse on the counter as he smiled. Wolkosu's face then became terrified.

The embroidered purse on the counter contained an unimaginable amount of money.

"5……..5, 500 gold?"

Ark laughed and nodded his head.

Yes, in the short time here Ark had gathered 5,500 gold.

When Ark first came to Cairo, he only had 1,000 gold. When he was in the Underground, without stopping he sent items back to Sid to sell which earned him 300 gold.

However, the largest part of his illicit funds was selling drugs to the raccoons. The way to earn money was as bad as expected. When the ore was sold by Sid using his skills, he earned 30 gold for one piece of ore. The total price was 570 gold.

Thanks to that, Ark's total gold was 1,870.

But was that all? There were also the items collected from Andel. Scrolls were sold in Cairo, so they were removed as there was no reason to sell it……..however the rest of the equipment items and consumables sold for 500 gold. Thus, he ended up earning 2,370 gold.

Of course, Ark's plans didn't end here.

'I have to maximally make money!'

"JusticeMan ajusshi, hyung-nims." I'll guarantee it. Once I buy it and sell it to other users, then the profit from this business would be 50%.

“Certainly……..”

After hearing Ark’s explanation and calculating in their heads, they nodded.

When buying an item, it is clear that the profit would be guaranteed. There was nobody who would say no to such deals just to save money.

“Okay, everyone will invest as well.”

“Except I don’t know what the outcome would be once the group splits their earnings.”

“Even if you only have a few thousand gold, it would be enough for a business transaction…….”

“Can’t help it. Still it is lucky that everyone can come.”

“Hu hu hu, you’re the blessing for the group. You’re the person that earns money the best.”

The rehabilitation group said with a heart-warming smile as they began collecting the gold. They were only level 60 but they weren’t poor. After all, the rehabilitation members were formerly a part of the dark professions. Even if it was only a game, they still used their former skills to earn a little bit of money.

Since the beginning of the game, people could buy gold from the auction house. With their purses being emptied, 4000 gold was exceeded immediately. However, Ark wasn’t investing all that money.

Ark advised them to use 2000 gold to buy equipment.

“Hyung-nim, now is the chance to change equipment. In the Underground World, there are a lot of items that are difficult to find. The price is expensive but I can guarantee its performance.”

The rehabilitation members were moved by the flattery and quickly parted with 2,000 gold.

Ark grabbed the money bag and immediately returned to the Underground World through Yggdrasil.

Ark was the hero who had rescued the Underground World from a crisis.

Therefore, intimacy was at its best. In the Underground World, he got a discount of 30% off any items he bought.

“Wow, this isn’t a joke?”

“Doesn’t this dagger have additional damage when thrusting?”

The rehabilitation members saw the items Ark returned with and cheered.

They were items from the village of craftsmen, where the price to performance ratio was at its finest. The performance was also rare for mid-priced items.

The drops from the assassins were moderately split up and after the items were equipped, their damage and defense was upgraded.

However, upgrading the rehabilitation members wasn’t the only reason why Ark suggested changing equipment. Ark noted the pleased members before saying in a quiet voice.

“Jjak-tung hyung, in fact I got a little discount for solving the quest. So there was

a little bit of change left over……..”

“Then you can have it, as a tip.”

“Yes, I had trouble with it. Even if it is outside money given, I need it.”

“Just pack it without saying anything. Child, because you are too good to mask it.”

As expected, even though they were former hoodlums, the rehabilitation members were big hearted. This was also the reason why he didn’t include Sid with his selling skills. Because he had accumulated a history of part time jobs, Ark perfectly grasped the nature of the rehabilitation members.

“Wow hyung-nim, thanks a lot!”

“Child, such a thing……..Us hyung-nims won’t begrudge such a sum. By the way, how much change was left?

“600 gold.”

“Eek? “600 gold?”

The rehabilitation members let out a booming laugh. As Ark had no trading skills, they thought he would receive a 5% discount and have 100 gold left.

If they knew that the change left over was 600 gold, the rehabilitation members

wouldn’t have been able to talk about it so easily.

However, the bus had already left. Since the rehabilitation members lived with honour, they couldn’t take back their words.

That was also one of Ark’s motives!

“Hyung nims are really generous.”

“Ha ha ha. That, it’s not like that. Our generosity is only a little bit big.”

“But 600 gold…….”

The rehabilitation members broke into a cold sweat as they trembled while bluffing. Therefore, 600 gold was added to Ark’s fortune of 3,000 gold.

The 2,000 gold from the rehabilitation members also remained. If they included Sid and Roco then there was a total of 5,500 gold.

“You, you’re going to buy all the items using this money?”

“Yes, did you assume that I wouldn’t have enough for everything?”

“Even though all the other stores would buy these items……”

“A promise is a promise…….”

“You are really……..”

Wolkosu eventually sighed and nodded.

“All right. I will discount it, but you really seem like you’ve chosen the wrong profession. You would’ve succeeded as a merchant. Because you wouldn’t shed tears over friendship.”

“Thank you for the compliment.”

“Ha ha ha! Okay, I’ll gladly arrange things.”

Wolkosu burst out laughing.

As a trader he had lost, but as a father he had regained his son. Therefore, the question of profit or loss wasn’t a problem.

Wolkosu willingly handed all the items recovered in the warehouse to Ark. They were expensive items only sold in Cairo and none could be found in any other stores. The value of the scrolls was also expensive, so he bought 10 sets of them first before Sid’s 6 bags and his 1 spare bag was so full it looked like it would explode.

“Ah, Ark-nim.” The bags are overflowing.”

Sid shook it with a happy face at the thought of all the profit.

“Sid-nim. Contract.”

“Yes? Oh, yes!”

Sid wrote the contract with trembling hands.

[Merchant’s agreement.

<Agreement: Item resale of the current party. The contract takes effect from the time the items are transferred to Sid in Cairo. All proceeds from the sale of the items must be distributed by Sid according to their respective shares.>]

It was a sale agreement worth 5,500 gold!

No matter what, he would never entrust it to Sid without a contract. But now Ark trusted Sid 100%.

“I can’t believe I really wrote a 5,500 gold contract.”

Sid confirmed the contract with tears in his eyes.

In accordance with the share of the proceeds, Ark would receive 58%, JusticeMan and the rehabilitation members 30%, Roco 5% and Sid 7%. Roco and Sid’s original investment wasn’t that much.

Sid had only concentrated on raising his skills, so his profit he made so far wasn’t that much.

And Roco was only a bonus mascot so her gold investment was small.

When dealing with a few thousand units of gold, 5% wasn’t a small amount.

5% of 5,500 gold was 275 gold. Since the expected sale profit was 40%, that meant that it was a profit of 385 gold.

Even if Sid only received 7%, that was still 577 gold. It would be enough to pay

off his debt and recover his money as a merchant.

In addition, merchants also raised their characters by trading. If he traded with other users outside of a store, his skills would raise and he would obtain experience.

40% of the profits on all items meant that he would receive a large amount of experience. The penalty received by the silk market slump wasn't a problem anymore.

”It is worth playing the role of Ark-nim's bag for the meantime!'

His feelings of grief quickly withered.

Ark made a warm expression and asked Wolkosu.

“But ajusshi, what will you do now?”

“I……Because I couldn't return to the capital, I had to stay here. But I want to make arrangements to return to the capital.

“That's right.”

“You were worried about the crowd that this guy used to hang with showing up……..”

“Do not worry.”

JusticeMan moved forward and said.

“We can settle that problem since we’re heading to the capital anyway.”

“Is it really possible to do that?”

“Of course. I already asked the delinquents about the location of their other hyungs that tried to bully you.”

“But why would you guys go so far? You might even lose your life.”

Wolkosu looked at him with worried eyes, while JusticeMan laughed and shook his head.

“Ha ha ha. How can I achieve justice if I’m always worried about preserving my life?”

“That’s right.” The reason why we came here was also for justice.”

“In addition, only delinquents can reason with other delinquents.”

“That’s why I have to teach them the true duty of delinquents.”

The rehabilitation members emphasized in unison.

“Thank you, I really appreciate it!”

“Well, it’s the least we could do after you suffered a loss to your sales.”

JusticeMan said absent-mindedly.

JusticeMan joined Ark who was organizing everything he obtained in Cairo outside.

“So now the destination is determined.”

“Yes, since it was our destination from the beginning.

“Can I accompany you?”

At that time, Sid rolled his eyes and interrupted.

“Sid-nim?”

“Yes, the items from Cairo would be more expensive in the capital than Giran. And the capital has more high level users that can afford it.

When organizing the gold, it isn’t 100 or 200 gold but 5,500. Even with a 1% profit you would earn 55 gold! However, the capital should make the profits rapidly increase which would make us happy. If I’m with the rehabilitation group then it won’t be so dangerous.

“I would like that. Because I also want to go to the capital.”

“You too?”

“Yes, I also have to stop there.

Ark nodded and replied.

Finally, the group left the area of Cairo.

It was time to move to a new area. And Ark still remembered the promise to meet Shambala at the arena in the capital.

He was involved in events that he never considered and was delayed but he still remembered.

“But I have to visit Giran and report my quest to the Institute of Magic.

“Well, since Giran has a gateway it shouldn’t be a problem. I understand.”

“So we set off together.”

At the end of Ark’s words, Roco was glad.

“Is this the first time that everyone has travelled together?”

“Yes, well, how lovely that you and Ark get to go together just like you wished.

“Jjak-tung oppa!”

Roco shouted with a red face.

Fortunately, Ark’s face was also red for no reason. A refreshing wind blew from somewhere.

‘It’s good. I’m glad that I am able to laugh with people who are like family.’

Experiencing a spar

Ark and JusticeMan's party left Cairo. They were headed towards the capital of Schudenberg Kingdom, Selebrid. This was because some time ago, a spokesman announced the full content.

"Attention all citizens of Schudenberg. Finally Bristania, the Sinius Principality and the Kingdom of Bavaria are no longer at war. The three countries have signed an armistice. This long war has fortunately ended peacefully with no confrontations!"

"Wah ah ah!"

The NPCs and users cheered at the unexpected news. There were three human kingdoms present in New World. The relationship between the Bristania, Sinius and Schudenberg kingdoms were poor. Because Schudenberg and the three kingdoms bordered each other, it wasn't easy for users to cross the borders. While the NPCs in New World thought of it like a cold war state, it made the users uncomfortable. Other users and even friends started in the other kingdoms but they could not meet. In addition, most of the border area had been designated as off limits. However, the Armistice Agreement was signed. This meant that you could adventure in more areas. The spokesman raised his hand to calm the crowd and spoke again.

"We'll inform you of the gist of the Armistice Agreement. People are free to trade with everyone in the Three Kingdoms. If you cross the border to trade, you must be granted eligibility and a special tariff of 5% applied."

After he spoke for a long time about the boring contents of the agreement, he

stopped and paused for a bit.

“But this is the most important information of the Armistice Agreement. So far, the border region of the three regions has been prohibited from battle. The three powers have declared a vast area of frontier to be cleared.”

“Frontier?”

“That’s right.” Everything in this area would be opened to all foreigners.”

The users’ opened their mouths as the spokesman’s explanation continued. This was an easier summary of the spokesman’s words. The official name of the triangular border region of the three kingdoms was Nagaran. Not too long ago, a minor skirmish developed between the three armies resting at the border. However many events have occurred in recent years, such as the Jackson event quest and other incidents all over New World, so they came to the conclusion that the war should end. The Armistice Agreement was signed after soldiers from all three armies retreated from Nagaran. As a result, there was a large area that was left empty. The kings of the three kingdoms thought about how they should use this blank area. Because once the soldiers left, there would be a lot of space. They finally came up with the solution of foreigners. The foreigners were strangers who pursued their own lives free of the calculation and interest of the three kingdoms. The reason that Nagaran was opened to foreigners was simple. When many foreigners occupied Nagaran, their powers and interests was judged to become a military buffer zone. In addition, if foreigners occupied the land and poured money into it, then the three kingdoms would also profit. The leaders were quite satisfied with the good idea.

However, even if they were called Kings they were still NPCs. They believed that they had thought of it themselves, but it was a scenario that had been prepared for

New World.

<Episode II: Pioneering age of the foreigners> had begun.

“If you’re a part of an outstanding warrior guild, then you will be given the chance to occupy a castle. In addition, the foreigners that occupy a castle would receive a formal Barony from the three Kings!”

Following that, the spokesman explained the rules of the siege. The rules on how to occupy a castle were simple. In the upper part of Nagaran, something called the Throne of Governance existed. If the first user that sits on the throne is a guild leader then they will become Lord of the castle. They also had to maintain their status for three days in the game, which was 24 hours in real time, while fending off attacks from other guilds. If successful, the Lord can activate the castle’s defences which operate within a certain sphere of influence. The state of being a Lord wasn’t permanent. The user that occupies the castle has to accept another challenge at least once a week. When they are defeated, the three kingdoms would deprive them of their power. They also had to pour money into developing their castle when they couldn’t know if they could keep it.

Anyway, a buzz started among the users after the spokesman’s announcement.

They could be an owner of a castle! This was a huge event. It wasn’t a funny game anymore. If someone went back through the past Korean games that were unprecedented hits, owning a castle was seen for the first time in the game O. Occupying a castle would provide huge wealth and honour to a guild. It was to the extent that after ruling for 1 year, they would be able to own a house. How much more would the money increase in New World, which was a new generation of game. The possible benefits obtained would be terrific. And the spokesman even explained this. Once someone becomes a Lord, they are given the right to implement and collect a tax. If they intend it, they could even confiscate a user’s assets. Of course, it was also easy to rule with tyranny and then have to protect the

seat from other users. But anyway, for that area, the authority of the Lord was close to infinity.

‘I can’t consider it when I have to pay attention to Ark.’

Alan gripped his fist tightly. Alan had just received a call from Andel.

He had used 1,500 gold to buy 15 assassins and sent them after Ark. His plan didn’t go so well. How the hell was he accompanied by 15 assassins level 120 and still not finish Ark? In addition to all the items wasted, he came whining to him.

‘Stupid bastard!’

It was difficult to find the Dark Brother and commission a job. Alan risked his fame points and he also invested a lot of money so far. After he hired 15 people, his fame points dropped a lot. But wasn’t the result more helpful to Ark? Of course, a good reason for that was Andel. He also never thought that the rehabilitation group would interfere or the appearance of a NPC. But nevertheless, the decisive problem was Andel’s stupidity.

New world wasn’t that simple online game that Andel thought it was. The assassins would move better under proper directions from the client. In other words, if the client doesn’t move properly than the assassins couldn’t exert their power. The user’s level wasn’t the most important thing.

‘As expected, I shouldn’t have trusted him!’

Andel had become the reason for his investment loss. Even when he died, Andel didn’t admit it but his skills were inferior to Ark’s.

‘Even the organization couldn’t deal with Ark and his teamwork. And with the presence of the NPC troops then it had become more difficult. He must be stepped on before he passes the company’s entrance examination. If possible, I have to find him before it is too late……’

Then Alan shook his head.

“No. I can’t miss this opportunity because of Ark.’

In fact, Alan already knew the information about <Episode II: Pioneering age of the Foreigners> beforehand. In reality or the game, there is nowhere that is impervious to bribes. The Holy Knight Alan was one of the few users that could access the cathedral. The action of the Three Kingdoms was heard through a NPC with high intimacy at the cathedral that he bribed.

“They have already decided to open Nagaran to the foreigners. But if you went ahead then the cathedral would later support you. Do you understand?”

Not long ago, a bishop in the cathedral had called him and secretly told him that. Although it was open to foreigners, the NPCs with authority also desired power over that area. Because they couldn’t do it directly, they would have to align with the user who has control over Nagaran. The three biggest guilds and the royal families were probably making similar moves. Since then Alan had stopped all work and focused on building his guild. While the entrance examination wasn’t important to Andel, Alan was different. He had a reason to join Global Exos. Therefore, Alan believed that occupying power in New World was enable him to pass the condition of the entrance examination.

‘The system meant that it wasn’t easy to occupy the castle, but once it is occupied the guild can establish a huge tax and raise its power. The opportunity is now. The users would soon flock to that area and stay up all night to siege the castle. I have to gather all my strength and move before a powerful guild occupies it.

Alan’s eyes shone.

‘Even if I didn’t get anything out of it, the Dark Brother organization will still regard Ark’s party as an enemy. Because 18 assassins were killed……I’ll leave Ark to them. And when I raise my power I can step on Ark anytime I want.’

Alan made a decision and immediately moved to the guild office. A week ago, he had invested a huge amount of money into the guild ‘Dawn Blade.’ Alan filled the majority of the guild with candidates from the exam. They were stronger and higher level than the users who just enjoyed the game. He secured them in order to occupy the castle. That alone should give a strong impression on the personnel from Global Exos. Alan looked at the beautiful elf magician waiting in the guild office and said.

“Lariette-nim, I’ve been waiting for you to arrive.”

“Yes, I have heard.”

“This announcement would certainly have a decisive influence on the company’s entrance examination. And Lariette should receive a similar score to me as the guild’s sub-master.

“Always……I’m thankful.”

“Please only follow me. Because I will certainly make you pass.”

“……Yes.”

Lariette was burdened and softly replied while avoiding his gaze. Lariette clearly felt troubled by Alan’s sudden approach. Ever since the Jackson event…….

‘No way……Don’t tell me it’s because of Ark?’

Men also had intuition when it came to women. Lariette clearly had a good impression of Ark. When the idea entered his head, Alan angrily furrowed his forehead and didn’t speak for a moment.

‘Yes, you’re not that different from other girls. Once I’ve got everything in the world then you’ll be begging for my affection. Yes, everything revolves around me in this world. It isn’t possible to leave me until I’m dissatisfied.’

Alan’s mantle flapped as he turned around.

“Gather all the members of the Dawn Blade guild.”

The beauty that was responsible for Global Exos reception desk let out a sigh. She was also taking the company's examination under the name of Lariette.

However, she was sighing more often these days.

'Alan's becoming increasingly more oppressive. Initially he was a kind and friendly person……..'

Of course, passing the examination was her reason for playing the game. But that wasn't her only purpose. She was one of those users with a pure mind who wanted to just enjoy New World. That was the reason she was with Alan, who played the game more actively than anyone else. She could afford to play the game with Alan, who was an attractive colleague. But since then Alan had changed. Her colleague had suddenly become overly domineering.

When someone came to be an examinee, he had a system that passed over. Then he would use his power to control their general funds. On the other hand, it they didn't listen to him then they would be kicked from the guild. He seemed to play the game just thinking about how to obtain a high score in the entrance exam. What had made Alan so impatient? It was something she couldn't understand.

'Among all my colleagues, the recent evaluation of Alan isn't very good. People should be gathering to enjoy the game. The two thousand people that gathered…….this wasn't how I wanted the game to be like……'

"Hey, pretty girl. Why is your expression so dark?"

At that time, one guy who was waiting approached and spoke.

When she looked up she saw that it was someone from the planning department of

Global Exos, Ho Myung-hwan.

“Ah, it’s nothing.”

“If such a pretty girl sitting at the desk has a gloomy face then my motivation will drop.”

“It’s not a big deal.”

When Kang Mi-su attempted a smile, Ho Myung-hwan handed her coffee before talking again.

“If you’re worrying about the company’s entrance examination then it isn’t necessary. You have a friend called Alan yes? The Planning Department is already paying attention to Alan. His evaluation is quite high and as his partner yours is as well. If you keep it up then you’ll surely pass.”

“Thank you.”

“You don’t have to thank me.”

Ho Myung-Hwan scratched his head before walking away with a cool laugh.

At that time, Kang Mi-su remembered something and asked.

“Do you happen to know anything about Ark-nim?”

Ark?”

Ho Myung-Hwan sounded puzzled.

“I’ve never heard of him? You know him?”

“Yes, a little bit……..”

“Hmm, I know every Id that the Planning Department is paying attention to…….I’ve never heard of him so it is possible that he hasn’t been playing an active part in the game.”

“But I heard that he made a considerable achievement in the event quest?”

Kang Mi-su said with an expression that indicated she didn’t understand. Yes, apart from Alan most people also know Ark’s name. During the event quest, wasn’t he the user that was responsible for the success of the plan to blow up the scorch cannons? Therefore she couldn’t understand how the Planning Department couldn’t remember his Id. Kang Mi-su explained this to Ho Myung-hwan who tilted his head.

“Really? Strange. That is certainly enough to deserve attention……..There are 2000 candidates so someone might have missed it. I understand. I’ll check it again.”

“Please.”

“Oho, Miss Global Exos Kang Mi-su is asking after a guy. Do you have a man on your mind? I’m jealous.”

“It’s not like that.”

“Ha ha ha! Okay, okay. Don’t twist your face so much. Well I’ll look into it.”

Ho Myung-Hwan rattled off a joke before heading off. Kang Mi-su looked at his back with a complicated expression. Of all the people who was at the interview, Kim Hyun-woo…….No, Ark. Why did his name suddenly pop up? She honestly didn’t know. But Ark seemed to show a different form every time they met so she was nervous about his existence. Yes, I was just feeling nervous. That’s all it is.

“What is this? If you want to sleep then you should sleep at night……”

Hyun-Woo rubbed his swollen eyes as he listened to the complaints.

Then Gwon Hwa-rang farted and squeezed his head.

“This guy, what happened to the game? You were playing the game with me. The game connection suddenly died so I came to check on you but you were only

sleeping?

“I told you. I had so many things to do in the Underground World that I never slept much.”

“When I was your age, I stay up all night for over a week.”

“Were you a super robot that was designed by the country?”

“Anybody could do it. It’s just about their mentality.”

“So I must have a weak mentality since I keep falling asleep.”

Ark pouted his lips. Gwon Hwa-rang smiled and replied.

“Anyway, we had time to meet up before Hye-sung connects to the game again. Since there is still plenty of time for me to introduce someone to you. In fact, I’ve tried to introduce them before but it was difficult since they were busy.”

“Introduction? Is this like a group blind date?”

“Don’t speak nonsense and wait a moment. You have to come.”

A ringing sound was heard as one man entered the cafe and looked around. He was a 30 year old man around 170 cm tall. Wearing a sleeveless t-shirt, baggy shorts and dragging their slippers, they looked like third rate gangsters. He surveyed the

cafe before approaching Gwon Hwa-rang and flopped down beside him. Hyun-woo moved as he looked at Gwon Hwa-rang. Gwon Hwa-rang was an ex-detective. While doing that, he met and associated closely with the rehabilitation members, but there were many others that felt different. When Gwon Hwa-rang walked passed, there were many delinquents that complained. After seeing his appearance, Hyun-woo could understand their feelings. Fortunately, Gwon Hwa-rang remembered to welcome him.

“Why are you so late?”

“Aigoo, Hyung-nim. Didn’t I join hyung-nim just like you asked? Once you gave up being a detective your fate improved. Since the early evening, those young guys have been writing in that notebook, so should I call the National Police Agency to take them away?”

“Stop playing. The police will only stop the hoodlums when you aren’t able to anymore.”

“I bet the profit is better for the police.”

The company smiled and answered as they looked at Hyun-woo.

“Is that your friend?”

“Yes, ah! This is Hyun-woo. Greet him. He was a junior at an athletic university. This is Lee Myung-ryong. Before he was a detective, he was a delinquent.

“Good to see you. I’m Lee Myung-ryong. As you’ve heard, I used to be a delinquent before being a detective.

Lee Myung-ryong smiled and extended his hand.

It felt like holding a stone which was to be expected since looked like a hoodlum.

“I’m Kim Hyun-woo.”

Hyun-woo shook his hand before looking at Gwon Hwa-rang. But why would he interrupt his sleep just to introduce a policeman.

“Hyun-Woo, you said that lately you’ve been constantly exercising?”

“Yes I do it for 2 hours in the morning.

“Yes, that’s why your skills are a lot more proficient in the game. But there is a limit to just exercising. Because the National Police Agency he works for is near your house, you can train at the NPA gym now.”

“Yes? But ……”

Hyun-woo said with a puzzled expression. Certainly it felt like his movements didn’t change that much these days. There was obviously a limit to exercising alone. Well, after exercising his physical strength also increased so that might be enough for an ordinary person. However, Hyun-woo applied taekwondo to the game. So he had a greedy desire to increase his skills even more. But why was it suddenly the NPA gym? Since he never heard about it in advance, Hyun-woo

looked at Lee Myung-ryong with confused eyes. Lee Myung-ryong's face tightened as he played no regard to Gwon Hwa-rang.

"It's not a burden. At the NPA many civilians come and go just like a normal gym. There is also a guy who was once a member of the taekwondo national team. Although his nature might be dirty, you can learn taekwondo directly. Have you heard of the representative who had to step down because of violent incidents?"

"Are you going senile? How can you say such a thing in front of the kids?"

"Anyway, it won't be a problem to use the gymnasium? I'll stop coming if anyway at the NPA gym says something."

"Jeez, it won't be a problem. But as your hyung-nim, you should know that the NPA gym is a lot different from your normal neighbourhood gym. It doesn't matter what your character is or if you are a friend of hyung-nim's, if you play around then we won't take it lightly……."

Lee Myung-ryong looked at Hyun-woo with doubtful eyes.

"Kukuku, you haven't heard. Although he comes from an athletic university and looks trivial, he is a surprisingly adept pupil. In the old days, didn't I tell you about a guy who landed a spin kick on my jaw? He is that guy."

"Ho-oh, that friend? The one who was on the streets looking for a fight?"

"Fight? Don't be ridiculous. Really. That was a long time ago. It was to such a

degree that I would be frightened by his approach. When compared to now, it was truly a different person. It was like a cage."

"Ah, ajusshi!"

Hyun-woo shouted angrily with a red face.

It was the event where he flew at Detective Gwon Hwa-rang who made even terrorist organizations tremble and kicked his jaw! It was something he would never forget. Shortly after his father's traffic accident, Gwon Hwa-rang had visited Hyun-woo who was wandering for a while. His mother wanted to talk to him. That was Gwon Hwa-rang's first words.

However, before he could finish the words Hyun-woo sharply turned around and kicked Gwon Hwa-rang in the jaw. Any other victim would think of a lawyer to get some compensation.

Gwon Hwa-rang just turned as he stumbled. However, after a moment Gwon Hwa-rang just laughed with a pleasant expression.

……..Hyun-woo remembered it from here. After that, he fainted while being beaten into the ground and woke up in front of the intensive care unit where his mother was lying. He honestly didn't know if the tears he shed then were tears of penance or because of the pain he was in.

'Was that the first time since I was born that someone made me faint because of the blood thirst? Was that why I was afraid to approach?'

When Hyun-woo stared at him in dissatisfaction, Gwon Hwa-rang pretended ignorance and just looked away. Suddenly, he felt sharp eyes on him. It was Lee Myung-ryong, who was styled as a third rate delinquent.

“Ho-oh, this guy was the one who kicked hyung-nim’s chin?”

“No, it was just an accident. Ajusshi was just compliant.”

“He just received it? This guy? Is that a joke?”

Lee Myung-Ryong’s mouth lifted as he nodded.

“Okay, stand up. The gymnasium is empty so I have to see it for myself.”

“Yes? But I really……..”

“What guy would whine so much? Follow me!”

Like most delinquents, Lee Myung-ryong had a straightforward nature. Hyun-woo was eventually dragged with violence to the police gym. When he first arrived, he thought it was quite a nice gym. It was stocked with different types of exercise equipment and the changing rooms and shower facilities were also cutting edge. Hyun-Woo looked around with amazed eyes when Lee Myung-ryong spotted a locker and threw a uniform at him. Lee Myung-ryong then changed into a uniform.

“Try it on. The size should mostly fit.”

“Yes?”

“Is the child just going to come here and then leave tastelessly? If you’re a martial

artist then you should join. Ah, you might be surprised but it is a prohibited matter in this gym. Even a guest can't do it. It isn't done. If you do then it is the death penalty! So hurry up and quickly change."

The South Korean detective had trampled on his human rights. Therefore, Hyun-woo changed into the uniform and quickly stood up while looking at Lee Myung-ryong. Next to him, Gwon Hwa-rang was just looking from a distance away. Lee Myung-ryong scratched his chin and said.

"The NPA gym doesn't have any rules or anything like fouls. Two people fight, and if one person is knocked out and can't continue any more than the battle ends. If you understand…….Begin!"

Lee Myung-ryong who had narrowed the distance suddenly popped up like a ball. In a flash, his foot tried to sweep him onto the floor. Hyun-woo was frightened and quickly backed up a few steps. However, before he could get in a blow Lee Myung-ryong changed his posture and aimed for the temple. He was reflexively able to bend his upper body in order to avoid Lee Myung-ryong's attack who quickly moved a few meters away. His movement was like a demon's.

"Ho-oh, you are okay. It is enough to see the form, just like hyung-nim said."

His attack failed twice but Lee Myung-ryong said it in a pleasant voice. In fact, Hyun-Woo was also amazed. Lee Myung-ryong's kick was at a level of speed similar to pro wrestling. Hyun-Woo who had a little bit of instruction in taekwondo couldn't even be compared. It might have been a coincidence, but he also avoided the subsequent attack on the chin. And Hyun-woo was able to use his form to avoid the attacks twice.

‘The movements learnt in New World can also be applied to reality!’

He had no idea until this day. Ark used the evasion techniques that were useful in New World. Not only were techniques in real life passed onto the game, but the game also teaches techniques that could be used in reality! The instincts learnt in the game and reality was mixed. But in fact, it was an obvious result. In a virtual reality game, the user’s brain was used to move the characters. Although different brain waves were amplified by the computer, it was no different from the way your body moves in reality. What interested him was the fact that skills from the game could be used.

‘I thought I would get hit by Lee Myung-ryong’s attacks after I was unable to avoid the Kanggeul’s vine attacks. But I avoided the Kanggeul’s attacks on unstable ground. If the strong opponent was on a mat then it would be easier to avoid.’

Hyun-woo kicked the mats a couple of times and nodded. Anyway the sparring had begun. He had to try his best to win since it already started! Hyun-woo started do some steps while breathing clearly. Increased tempo, increased tempo, until Hyun-woo suddenly accelerated and suddenly kicked forward.

“Look at this guy. He attacked immediately without looking? Contrary to what he looks like, he’s quite good!”

Lee Myung-ryong kicked lightly while swapping between his left and right foot. But that was the movement that Hyun-woo aimed for. Hyun-woo gave a sharp cry and he rotated and stabbed forward with his feet. He felt a heavy weight passing to his toes.

‘Success!’

Hyun-woo turned as he felt an exhilarating feeling. At that moment he stumbled and his eyes widened as he looked at Lee Myung-ryong. Sweat suddenly slid down his spine.

Lee Myung-ryong had stopped the foot by blocking with his thick forearm. However, that wasn’t the reason sweat was flowing. He had never been impressed by ordinary people, but something was flickering in Lee Myung-ryong’s eyes. It was difficult to express in words what the feeling was. It felt like his body was being cut by a sharp knife! Hyun-woo knew from experience. A really scary man wasn’t a man who had a muscular body. The voice also doesn’t have to be loud. Immediately……..the person had poison in his eyes. It was the eyes of a person who had chosen and experienced more violence and pandemonium in their lives. It was often present in the eyes of military personnel.

‘Dangerous!’

At the same time, a warning message popped into his head. Hyun-woo immediately retreated as he took a couple of steps back. And he didn’t move. It was the instinctive behaviour herbivores used to escape from a predator. However, Lee Myung-ryong rushed in before he could move his body into the ready position. It really was like a predator rushing forward!

“…….!”

Was it 20 years ago?

It was the K-1 period where martial arts contests bloomed. However, it received criticism and soon degenerated into a spectacle but as a result the UFC greatly

advanced the development of martial arts. A line of clear victory or defeat was drawn which focused less on the spirit and mind and more on a systematic and scientific method. That's right. Martial arts greatly developed using that period as a foundation. However, that was only the technical side. They used that time period as the foundation for the development of withdrawal. Dangerous techniques were banned from mixed martial arts competitions……..in other words it was the most effective technique in practicing. However, he didn't learn from a gym that taught those practical skills. It wasn't easy for him to tell which techniques weren't supposed to be used. Therefore, the martial arts appeared like the canines of a large predator. However, in modern times there weren't many places to learn actual practical techniques left. Among them, the police SWAT team learned it directly while battling life and death during the day and the night. And Lee Myung-ryong was the head of the SWAT team! Unlike a game, Hyun-woo was experiencing taekwondo where real blood spilled. The technique was an excessive standard move. But the anomaly was that too perfect techniques came pouring out.

Furthermore, each one aimed at the jugular so it felt strange that he survived the attacks! When he blocked with his arm, it felt like the bone was being hit by a hammer.

'If it hits a vital spot then I'll die!"

It was the bloody attack that naturally made sure that death would be associated with it.

But that woke up Hyun-woo's stubborn character.

'If I don't stop him then it isn't possible to end this!'

Hyun-woo ground his teeth together and put power into his shaky legs. Strike! The opportunity for Hyun-woo to attack only came once. Hyun-woo kicked his feet

and struck like a hurricane while he had the chance. And when Lee Myung-ryong began the movements to use a sidekick, he quickly moved his feet.

“Dark Dance!”

It was the footwork from the Dark Dance that he learned not too long ago. When Ark’s movement became complicated, Lee Myung-ryong showed the intention to rush forward. Meanwhile, Hyun-woo avoided Lee Myung-ryong’s attacks and sprung forward like a rubber ball. He expended all his power on a knee kick!

Lee Myung-ryong’s eyes flinched. The footwork he used wasn’t present in taekwondo so he couldn’t anticipate it. However, he lived in a world where unexpected situations could become a bloody violent battlefield. Lee Myung-ryong called off the movement by stopping his body and falling towards the floor with both arms thrust out. Then his body twisted and he kicked out. Another name for it was the windmill! Lee Myung-Ryong’s heels smacked Hyun-woo’s chest. Hyun-woo was thrown to the floor.

“Heok!”

It felt like one of his ribs was cracking under the shock. Gwon Hwa-rang who was watching from the side jumped up.

“Hyun-Woo! You bastard, you’re insane!”

Like an afterthought, a look of whoops flashed on Lee Myung-ryong’s face.

“S-sorry. I unconsciously went too far…….are you alright?”

“Yes, it’s bearable.”

Hyun-woo took a deep breath and stood up. His chest hurt but the feeling was quite refreshing. Sparring……..How long has it been since he tasted this sensation? In addition, Lee Myung-ryong’s skills were a few levels above the instructors that had previously taught Hyun-woo. No, it felt much stronger than the martial artists who fought on the TV. Hyun-woo knew that such an opportunity to spar with someone so like that wasn’t common. Moreover, he would sincerely try to hurt his opponents……Hyun-woo grinned as he wiped at the sweat on his forehead.

“With you be teaching the technique for that windmill? I never saw that on TV. Let’s start again.”

“Oho, look at this guy.”

Lee Myung-ryong eagerly shook his shoulders but flinched as he saw the angry face of Gwon Hwa-rang. Then he sighed and shook his head.

“No, that’s it for today. Even if you can stand it for the moment, it will hurt quite a lot tomorrow. Grab a poultice and put it on the swollen area before leaving. And don’t forget to come to the gym when it is time to exercise, I’ll be here from 5 a.m. to 7 p.m.

“Yes? Then you’re going to directly teach me?

“Yes, so go have a shower and leave for the time being.

“Yes!”

Hyun-woo nodded and bowed before heading to the locker room with an excited expression. Lee Myung-ryong looked at Hyun-woo’s back before saying in a serious voice.

“Hyung-nim, did you say that he stopped training for 5-6 years?”

“That’s what I heard.”

“His age is twenty-two?

“Yes.”

Lee Myung-ryong laughed at Gwon Hwa-rang’s answer.

“Kkukkukkuk, he’s the real deal. Just like hyung-nim said, it may be possible.”

“When I brought him to you. I had forgotten this but his skills had become better from what I saw before he played the virtual reality game. I didn’t know if you would take him……..It was to the extent that I didn’t even know. He was raised well.”

“Leave. I will positively raise him.

Gwon Hwa-rang and Lee Myung-ryong laughed as they faced each other. There was a look of mischief in their eyes. When he exited the gym, Gwon Hwa-rang had a car waiting.

“Come in. I’ll take you.”

“My house is only a few stops away isn’t it?

“Stop talking nonsense and enter.

Gwon Hwa-rang forcefully pushed Hyun-woo into the car.

The spare with Lee Myung-ryong seemed to have taken more out of him than he thought. Even if it wasn’t so, Hyun-woo who had been dragged out while sleeping because tired and slept for a moment. But when he opened his eyes at Gwon Hwa-rang’s voice, had he arrived at the wrong place?

“Ara? Where is this place?”

“Get down. Someone you know will be appearing soon.

“Yes? But what…? ”

“So I’m going.”

Hyun-Woo was left astounded as Gwon Hwa-rang drove away.

‘What on earth? Meeting someone I know?

“Eh? Hyun-Woo oppa?”

At that moment, Hyun-woo hadn’t known what to do.

Suddenly, a woman stopped in front of the convenience store with an awestruck expression. It was a familiar voice……..Jung Hye-Sun.He remembered that she told him she attended night classes to get into university when they were working part time at the convenience store. Hyun-woo hadn’t known where it was, but Gwon Hwa-rang was probably aware. That was probably why he dropped Hyun-woo off and suddenly disappeared.

‘Damn, I thought it was a raccoon but instead it was a bear?’

“What are you doing here? It can’t be……..did you come to meet me?”

“Ah, well……..”

Hyun-woo scratched his head as he opened his mouth. Hyun-Woo wasn’t a bear. Even though he never said it, he didn’t want Jung Hye-sun to think that. Of course, he didn’t hate Jung Hye-sun. He just wanted their relationship to continue as siblings. However, if he told the truth in such a situation then he wasn’t a man.

“Are you hungry?” Rice…….did you want some?

Hyun-Woo opened his mouth as Jung Hye-sun looked embarrassed. But he quickly smiled and opened.

“Oppa shouts?”

“The limit if 6000 won.

“8, 000 won. I know a good tonkatsu place in the neighbourhood.

“Um, okay. I’ll shout you coffee from the vending machine.”

“Hohoho. I understand. I’ll let the house branch fade instead. The road at night is beautiful and scary isn’t it?”

Jung Hye-sun used the opportunity to grab Hyun-woo’s arm. Using the element of surprise, this guy……..he felt like a woman in a movie. This may be a little bit dangerous.

The Evil Silrion Arena

‘Huumm, it is very vague.

Ark sighed as he messed around with a dark red key. Travelling with JusticeMan and the rehabilitation group, Roco and Sid took longer than expected. Roco took a break when she had to work at her part time job. When Roco wasn’t there, the party had to stop to set up a camp while Ark concentrated on hunting, but with Roco they could just ignore the monsters and head straight to Selebrid. The party was finally able to reach Giran on the third day. While Roco was away, Ark reported to the Giran Institute of Magic.

“Hopefully I’m not too late.”

Shannen welcomed Ark with a face that indicated he had been suffering a lot.

“Yes, did you find what was requested?”

“The Heartsoul Bead was found.”

“Ooh, is that true?”

“But there is a little problem.”

“A problem? What’s the matter?”

“The Heartsoul Bead broke so the magic is gone.”

Ark explained the situation calmly. He encountered the monsters that had been changed thanks to the beads and it broke during the fight……he didn’t tell them that through the raccoon clan’s sacrifice, Nídhöggur was sealed underneath Subarutalp. The reason was that Yggdrasil had asked him to keep it a secret to preserve the stability of the Northern Continent.

Shannen blew out a sigh and looked depressed.

“…….If that was the situation then it can’t be helped.”

“I’m sorry.”

“No, it is better to control it before its influence spreads even wider. I hope you don’t mind that the Magic Institute will take care of the rest.”

Shannen shook his head in case Ark tried to reject it.

He had done everything to search for the Heartsoul Bead so that there would be no political problems. The Magic Institute was worried about those ‘facts.’ Nobody knows how the Heartsoul Bead could affect the continent. In the end, the Magic Institute taking responsibility for any disaster caused by the Heartsoul Bead was avoided. However, if the Heartsoul Bead broke then it was a different matter. The Magic Institute was partly responsible for the loss thanks to improper care. But at least they could avoid any of the predictions of the disasters that would have occurred.

“We will bear responsibility for not managing the Heartsoul Bead properly. But the problem for the Magic Institute is the power that had disappeared. For the

moment, we will make up an excuse for why we can't show the bead to the royals and the other guilds……..anyway good job. My eyes were definitely correct."

"I hope I didn't betray your expectations."

"Of course, rewards and achievements would follow."

Ark was glad as Shannen continued talking. It was a linked quest that had the difficult of the quest increased to +C. When the quest was completed, he immediately gained 4 levels. The dissatisfied feeling when he didn't receive any experience for the Lore Quest was quickly solved. However, Ark wasn't satisfied with just that. First the Heartsoul Bead made him search for a group of thieves, before leading him to Kairote and then the Underground World, with a total time of one month spent on it. He didn't go through all that trouble just to increase his level. Ark stared with greedy eyes as he waited for Shannen's next words.

'Maybe I can gain access to the Magic Institute's treasure house once again.'

However, Shannen's only reward was an old key.

[The Dimensional Key of Magaro (Special)A long time ago, the genius alchemist Magaro left this behind as his legacy. Magaro was a genius that could be counted on the fingers of one hand, despite the long history of the Magic Institute. He was well known for his unique ideas and eccentricities as well as his genius.In his later years, the challenge that the genius was interested in was the organisms that lived in other dimensions. Magaro vanished while hiding the materials he kept at the Magic Institute to study.After that, no one knew his whereabouts. The fact that no one knew whether he was dead or alive was more painful. However, the key was delivered to the Magic Institute under the name of Magaro several years later.]

“What is this?”

“Why, didn’t you previously tell me that you were interested in the biology of your creature?”

It was the time when he was looking for a way to end Snake’s metamorphosis. Of course, the problem was solved and Ark forgot that he had even asked the question. But it seemed like Shannen didn’t forget.

“After that, I looked for materials in the library but couldn’t find anything. Then I remembered about the key. In fact, the Magic Institute doesn’t really have a lot of information related to biodiversity. When Magaro went missing a long time ago, he took all the books related to that subject. If you seek out his laboratory then you can gain the knowledge that you wanted to know.”

“But……”

Was this a joke? He almost died and suffered to complete the +C rank difficulty quest and the only reward was information about creature biology? Ark made a dissatisfied expression and began to open his mouth.

“It is not just a book. Magaro lived in the prosperous time when magic was flourishing. Yet he was still one of the top five alchemists on the continent. In particular, he was a genius at inventing new ideas. The scrolls and magic sold at the Magic Institute were all made from ideas that he produced. Obviously there would be amazing magical knowledge piled up in his laboratory.”

Ark quickly closed his mouth. He could smell money from Shannen’s words. He

had no interest in acquiring different knowledge. But if the legacy of the genius magician in his laboratory was still intact. Who knows what might be in there? With any luck, he could find new magical items or learn a new skill.

“Where is the laboratory?”

“Do you remember how I said Magaro went missing?”

Shannen shook his head and added.

“After that, the Magic Institute gathered many magicians and tried to visit the laboratory.” But after decades of finding no traces, it was abandoned. Even the key has been forgotten by now. Along with the legacy he left behind.”

“……”

“I wasn’t the only one who decided to give you this key. It is the key to the laboratory where all of Magaro’s research was kept. Although the location hasn’t been discovered yet, it is an important asset to the Magic Institute. It wasn’t easy for my heart to give it to a foreigner.”

“What do you mean?”

“At a meeting of the Magic Institute, Grand Master decided to give you the key. The Grand Master decided that if you solved the robbery case then you would be given Magaro’s key.”

Shannen was the president of the Magic Institute's branch in Schudenberg, while it had a separate rank for the highest magicians. The chief of the Magic Institute in Bristol was a Grand Master.

"I don't understand. I've never even met the Grand Master. If the key is so important then why are you giving it to me?"

"The magicians have faith in you as a person. They wouldn't have decided to leave such a thing in the hands of a trivial person otherwise. Why waste thousands of warriors searching for it when you could use just one."

Isn't that a separate thing? Ark did not believe those words. People should work for it themselves if they wanted something. However, in mediaeval times thoughts like Shannen's were common. It was similar to when Arthur became a king after he pulled out the sword from the stone. And New World was based on the medieval times. He could understand Shannen's rationale on a theoretical basis.Anyway, his words were like the language of a shopkeeper who would say things like 'these clothes fit you perfectly,' so Ark nodded his head.

"So this key will give me a clue?"

"Nobody knows. But you are already managed to do impossible things twice. You created a miracle in Jackson and managed to regain the Heartsoul Bead with just a small clue. So we judged that you would be able to handle it and entrust the key to you."

Then Ark found himself offended from a part of Shannen's words. Shannen 'gave' the key to him a while ago but now it was only 'entrusted.' Although the difference

was small, he trusted his intuition.

“This compensation isn’t so simple is it?”

Ark asked with narrowed eyes at the smile on Shannen’s lips.

“You’re insightful as expected. That’s right, the key is the compensation for settling my request, as commissioned by the Grand Master of the Magic Institute.”

“Commission?”

“Yes, after the genius Magaro disappeared the Magic Institute lost all access to his research. It is a legacy that the Magic Institute can’t give up on. So I want to ask you to please look for the laboratory. Of course, I don’t know how difficult the work will be. No, definitely not. Although it might be hard to believe, but trust in your talent and development. Therefore, we’ll recognize your right to all the goods in the laboratory. How is it?” Will you try?”

Shannen offered him another linked quest. An alchemist was a profession that could create scrolls and various magical items. If it was a genius alchemist, then it could be assumed that there would be many items piled up in his laboratory. If the Magic Institute gave him all the rights to it……

‘It is a quest with a huge reward!’

“I understand. It might take a while but I’ll do it.”

Ark nodded and soon the quest was registered.

[Genius Alchemist’s laboratory.Shannen has told you about a genius alchemist that went missing a long time ago. He has asked you to find Magaro’s laboratory. When he disappeared a long time ago, he left no clues to his whereabouts. This is expected to be a difficult quest. However, if you manage to find the laboratory you will receive the absolute trust of the Magic Institute and receive appropriate compensation.<Difficulty: ???>

<Quest restriction: Friendship with the Magic Institute is more than 200 points>]

When he completed the Heartsoul Bead quest, his friendship with the Magic Institute went up by 100 points. When he rescued the crew of the event quest, his friendship points were raised by 50 for each crew member. Thanks to the 200 points, he received the quest for the genius alchemist’s laboratory.

‘If a friendship of 200 is needed for the quest then I’ll definitely receive compensation.’

“And that Red Man you previously spoke about.”

“Yes, did you find anything?”

Ark fixed his posture and asked again. The Red Man, an unidentified NPC who tried to use the Heartsoul Bead to revive Nídhöggur. It was probably the most important NPC for the Global Exos entrance examination……..the unknown person. However, he was unable to find any clues in the Underground World. Before leaving for Cairo, he had asked the Magic Institute about the Red Man but

they had no answers.

“Even the Magic Institute’s information network couldn’t discover anything about his identity.”

‘Of course, it wouldn’t be that easy to obtain information about him.’

While Ark was disappointed, Shannen said something else.

“But the Magic Institute also wants to discover how the Red Man is connected. Although I’ve said it before, for some reason there is an ominous feeling. We’ll continue to collect information using the Magic Institute’s networks. Perhaps we will come into contact with some new information.”

He had received the Magic Institute’s promise of cooperation. And Yggdrasil even offered to use its roots that stretched throughout the continent to look for the whereabouts of the Red Man.

He had a huge information network at hand.

‘When it is to this degree, my information isn’t delayed compared to other users who rely on organizations. It was even a possibility of finding the way to pass the entrance examination faster than other users.’

“While you are looking for the Red Man or Magaro’s laboratory, occasionally send me a progress report. We will set up a transfer mailbox in your name.”

-Ark has established a ‘transfer mailbox.’

It will become more comfortable to receive and send mail and items.

An unforeseen bonus was added. Ark had considered establishing a transfer mailbox. However, it was postponed because it require 50 gold to register.

‘If I had wasted money to establish it I would’ve cried.

Anyhow, just like that Ark got a new quest. Before leaving the Magic Institute, he was suddenly reminded of something and asked.

“Do you have any information about the flora and fauna that inhabit the continent?”

“We have a few materials I think. Do you need it?”

“Yes, I think it would certainly help.”

“Really? But the Magic Institute prohibits any material being taken out…….all right. Therefore you can browse and mail a copy to yourself. Therefore you can browse and mail a copy to yourself.”

“Thank you.”

Ark bowed and exited the Magic Institute. He required data on flora and fauna because of the ‘Shining Slime Essence’ recipe he created in the Underground World. Therefore he had the idea to use the wide information network of the

Magic Institute. Anyway after he joined his colleagues again to head to Selebrid, he couldn't help feeling somewhat tricked. It was a laboratory that the Magic Institute had stopped searching for. And the only clue was the key. He also didn't know what to do or where to go.

'Damn. What the? What if he failed to find the lab after all? It would mean that completing the +C rank quest was useless because all he received was the key……..'

"Oppa, what are you doing?"

Then, Roco's voice was heard from in front of him. Ark quickly woke up from his thoughts and made Snake eat the key and then shook his head.

"Eung? Forget about it."

"Do you know how many times I called? Were you zoning out again?"

"No, I was just having other thoughts…….but why?"

"Didn't you see the system window?"

"The system window?"

"We arrived at Selebrid."

At Roco’s voice, Ark belatedly looked at the system window.

The map information that was previously in the eastern area had changed to Selebrid.

“JusticeMan ajusshi and the oppas are waiting. Come quickly.”

Without even waiting for an answer, Roco pulled him by his arm.
Just……after being tricked by JusticeMan, he had reluctantly been forced to have a date with Roco. She had become casual with Ark, which was why she was able to interlock their arms. But deep down, Roco’s attention didn’t feel unpleasant. He was dragged by Roco to the hills to the south where the rehabilitation group was waiting.

“Ark-nim. We’ve finally arrived. This is Selebrid.”

Sid pointed down with an overwhelmed face.

Ark cried out without thinking.

“Ah…….!”

At the heart of the forest at the bottom of the hill, a huge fort city stretched out.
Selebrid……..Indeed, the capital of the Schudenberg kingdom was on a different scale.

Huge white walls reached a height that was 3~4 times that of a commercial city. It was neatly organized into different compartments, with the market, auction house, cathedral, guild office and various other buildings showing a colourful appearance. But above all, the beautiful streamlined shape of the city was what attracted Ark’s

attention. It was at the moment that he truly felt like he arrived in the Schudenberg kingdom.

"……We've finally arrived."

It was only one week after they left Cairo.

"Everybody make sure to meet here again after 1 hour."

The party was scattered in front of Selebrid's gate.

"Oppa, I have to go to my part-time job. I'll log on at 11 o'clock this evening.

"Ark-nim, I have report my merchant exclusive quest that I received in Giran."

Roco logged out while Sid walked to the business district with a jangling noise. JusticeMan led the rehabilitation group to the tavern. The tavern was the place that multiple players used to gather information from NPCs.It was to gather more information about the thieves threatening Lorenzo.

‘I still have some time before the promise to meet Shambala. In the meantime, what should I do in Selebrid?’

In fact, Ark and Shambala had never clearly made an appointment. When Shambala left Jackson, he had one-sidedly left a note to meet at the arena. That was nearly a month ago. Yet Shambala talked about the next month. October hadn’t ended but he had arrived after 29 days. Ark had established the transfer mailbox. Then he made sure the NPC confirmed that Shambala was registered. Fortunately, Shambala was registered as a customer of this mailbox. Ark immediately sent a letter to Shambala. The content was that they would meet at the front gates of Selebrid on the afternoon of the 29th.

‘There was no reply so it is possible that he may have left for other areas……..’

Ark spent some time looking around.

-Wow, great. Look at those buildings. The people here must be freezing!

Popo exclaimed with shining eyes. He had only lived in the Underground World, so the appearance of Selebrid was an amazing sight for him. In fact, Ark was the same. Selebrid was a different area where level 50~70 players gathered compared to Giran. There were thousands of users, but there were many above level 80 and even above level 100. His eyeballs rolled back. Until now, he had been hunting around Giran so Ark couldn’t imagine seeing so many users that were level 100.

‘It isn’t easy to get past level 100.’

The region also had NPCs that sold high level items. The types and number of stores were less than Giran's, but each sold only high level restricted items! The armour sets that could be sold at the best value in Giran were only sold at the intermediate level in Selebrid. The items on sale by the users were also at least level 80.

"Ara? That's the shoulder!'

Ark stopped walking in front of a flea market stand. Among the armour sets, there were also pieces that could be worn on the shoulders. However, the shoulder items were still not common in New World. The NPC had insufficient awareness so the shoulder piece wasn't treated well, and the drop rate from monsters was also atrocious. In addition, the lowest restriction on wearing it was level 80. It wasn't even possible to see it in Giran. But there was quite a lot of high level shoulder armour gathered.

'Leather shoulder blade. The option was quite good, with a defense of 25.'

When he saw the new equippable item, he automatically swallowed saliva.

'The price is 300 gold. That is quite expensive but it would be a good defensive armour to have……'

But now Ark was broke. He had used all his money investing in items from Cairo, so he only had a few gold left in his wallet.

'Well, after Sid finishes clearing out all the items then gold would come rushing in again. Until then, there is no time for shopping. It is almost time for the

appointment so let’s go back to the gate.’

Ark guessed the time and returned to the gate. The gate was crowding with thousands of people coming and going. Then someone tapped his shoulder and after he turned his head, there was a user wearing a black mask.

“Hey, you’re late.”

“Shambala!”

Ark grinned widely and shouted.

Fortunately, he had checked his mailbox.

“You left it until the last day of the month……..isn’t that terrible?”

“I’m sorry, I was a little busy.”

“Although you went to all that trouble, I’m afraid it might be for nothing?

“Why? Do you have other business?

“No, it’s not……..”

Shambala scratched his head.

“Actually, I’ve already signed up for another tournament.”

The reason that Ark and Shambala arranged to meet in Selebrid wasn’t simply to look or talk to each other. It was only to compete, because they wanted to see each other’s skills in front of spectators. However, Shambala had already applied for another match before he checked the mailbox.

“Another fight?”

“Yes, the fight is starting tomorrow.”

“When it is finished then we can have a drink.

“But it doesn’t finish with just one battle, it is a tournament system this time. The progress of the games would take over three days in real time. And if I cancel the tournament application then I can’t apply for another fight.”

“I can’t participate in this contest?”

“It is possible. But this fight won’t be fair.”

“Fair?”

“The game I’m participating in is 2 against 1.”

Shambala and Ark thought for a moment. The reason why Ark wanted to meet Shambala was to formally fight against him. That was also true for Shambala as well. However, Ark already found more meaning in meeting Shambala than he previously had. A proverb was handed down in martial arts. If one practices one hundred times more than they thought, then a single encounter was ten times better than that practice. It was indeed the truth. Sometimes the instructors of martial arts would teach mental training, and people would go home claiming it was a waste of time It was all silly talk. What are martial arts? In the end, the thing being honoured was the techniques. If you looked at history for the period where martial arts were flourishing, was it the Warring States Period? But that context doesn't fit as recently people claimed that it was the technique that beat the opponent. So he'd rather train his body and mind a thousand times than just rely on technique. A former member of the taekwondo national team and current SWAT team leader, it was at Lee Myung-ryong's insistence that Ark master both.

……Well, after a while he waited for the next words.

Anyway, the key to building martial arts skills was practice. That was the reason Ark was looking forward to sparring with Shambala. Shambala was proficient in Kung Fu. By sparring him, he would obtain more than if he just fought ordinary monsters or users. Just a few nights ago he had received severe training from Lee Myung-ryong. It was common that if he spent one day practicing, he would have to lie down for the next few days……..it was so severe that after the first 2~3 times, Ark was frightened to visit the gym. However, suffering through such training instilled confidence in Ark. Ark had wanted to test the results though Shambala.

'Three days…….it wasn't a short time, but it was a special opportunity.'

Ark nodded and replied.

“I can’t complain since I was very late. Okay, I’ll wait. If we don’t take this opportunity then who knows when the next chance would be.”

“What will you do in the meantime?”

“I will probably just go hunting in this area.”

While he was thinking, Shambala opened his mouth and said something else.

“Instead of exiting the city, why don’t you try the tournament?”

“The tournament?”

“Yes, you should become familiar with the arena. Is it your first time? Contestants who are unfamiliar with the arena would tend to lose in their first exhibition match. That would make it difficult when you fight against me. If I fully explain it then it would become too long……..Now, you should come with me to look at it.

Shambala suddenly pulled Ark. After crossing the busy streets of Selebrid for 10 minutes, they finally arrived at a large amphitheatre that looked just like a roman colosseum. The field was quite popular as there were huge crowds flocked around the area. Shambala made his way through the crowd as he explained.

“This is Selebrid Arena, the evil Silrion.”

“There are quite a lot of people.”

“Naturally. In one day, dozens of fights are held on the evil Silrion stage. And every competition has prizes that you can’t get anywhere else, and sometimes the supplementary prize will give rare items. In order to get the jackpot, it depends more on your luck and skill than your hunting ability.”

It wasn’t just a simple match. The Evil Silrion arena was a speculative market that combined the odds of gambling. While the fight of user against user was unable to be manipulated, monster against user or NPC against user were ways for the spectators to make money. And just like horse racing, the dividend was determined and the prize money was given based on that. Because of odds were high, users and NPCs in the Evil Silrion arena instantly became celebrities.

“Now, it’s here. It is better than me explaining it a hundred times. The procedure is simple. Before you go out for a match, you should determine the compensation and prizes. However, each match has different rules so you should read the explanations, then after you select a tournament then you should hand in an application form to the NPC.”

Ark looked at the flyers that Shambala was pointing to.

He carefully read all the rules for the Evil Silrion arena on the flyers.

The first match held in the Evil Silrion was divided into two. The match ends after a single fight and among the players that won, a gambling system was used to determine the final winner of the prize. It was a single match against an NPC or PVP and those users who obtained certain qualifications could apply. However, for the PVP single match there was no prize.

Of course, in addition to PK, there was also the PVP duel system. However, the duel wouldn’t be fair because it didn’t account for the level difference. On the other hand, the Evil Silrion match was a fair fight because it was subject to level

restrictions. In addition, even though there is no reward for the fight, they could accumulate ‘honour’ points which could be used to appeal to various NPCs. If their honour accumulates then it would also affect their quest system. The single match was also used for pure fun and games. But the tournament that most users were excited to join was the one where NPCs participates with a large number of users. The tournament was divided into solo, pair, party and guild and prizes or rare items were given as supplementary prizes. It was the tournament that was connected to enjoyable gambling.

The 231st tournament individual match.Participation restriction: Level 70 ~ 75 Warriors.

Game system: Items prohibited.

Winner’s prize and Supplementary prize: 100 gold and a Glory gauntlet.

Registration date: Closed competition! Currently in progress.

The 147th Party Tournament.Participation restriction: Level cap of 50, limited to 10~12 people.

Game system: Items prohibited and level equalized (All participates fixed at level 50).

Winner’s prize and Supplementary prize: 500 gold, Rare vision (random)

Registration date: Deadline imminent! On the 31st at 5 p.m.

‘Hum, it is fairly decent?’

Ark glanced at the leaflets with curiosity. Attached to the leaflet was a picture of the supplementary prize. There wasn’t a detailed explanation, but just looking at the item it could be seen that it was an item of considerable standard.

‘But since the reward is the supplementary prize, it won’t be so easy?’

The number of people who usually participated in a tournament was 100. Using the tournament system, there were at least seven chances to win. While the tournament was ranked high among most levelling systems, the winning average wasn’t high. The outcome depended on your real skills. Such a condition meant that winning over 100 people wasn’t an easy task.

‘The basic rule of the Evil Silrion. After a user applies for a match, they can’t apply for another one for 72 hours. If there wasn’t such a restriction, I would blindly apply for every match.’

“How is it? Is that a tournament that you would like to fight in?”

Shambala asked from beside him.

“Let’s see, I’m still not sure yet. I have to look around a little more.”

Ark shook his head and turned to the other flyers. Then, Ark looked at a tournament flyer that attracted his interest.

“Ara? Surely it can’t be……..?’

Ark pushed people out of the way as he ran towards the flyer.

The 186th Pairs tournament.Participation restriction: Level 100 restriction. Must

be 2 people.

Game system: Consumption items prohibited (However, skill relevant items are excluded). Level equalization (All participants fixed at level 100).

Winner’s prize and Supplementary prize: 200 gold, Magaro’s secret map.

Registration date: Deadline imminent! 6 p.m. today.

‘Magaro’s secret map!’

Ark was surprised to the extent that goose bumps rose on his body. Magaro! A few days ago he had received the <Genius Alchemist’s Laboratory> quest from the Magic Institute and wasn’t that where the name was discussed? But now that name was on a secret map……..?

‘Magaro might have written the map and indicated the location of the hidden laboratory!’

Shannen had given him the key and said that fate would guide him to the clues. Of course, those words were certainly true. Although it was a bit vague, this was a part of the common game system used in other games. In other words, specific quests are created only after clues that relate to the quest appear. There was also only one quest item made as a measure to prevent it from disappearing. Ark had also expected this quest to proceed that way. If he had the key, then he was sure to have a chance encounter with the clue. But this opportunity wasn’t perfect. In New World, it wasn’t possible to complete a quest just by relaxing and thinking that because it is a game, things would happen. They would have to devise the method and personally go look for the clue. In the end they might finally catch a clue. That would determine the success or failure of the quest. But in a place like this, he had never expected to find a clue in this way.

“What happened suddenly? Did you find a favourite supplementary prize or something? Eh? What the?”

Shambala turned to the flyer with an awestruck expression.

“You……..no way, you’re interested in that supplementary prize?”

Ark nodded. Then after looking around, Shambala pulled Ark somewhere else. Shambala stopped at an area a little bit away from the Evil Silrion and spoke in a low voice.

“What is the reason that you need that supplementary prize? What the?”

“I cannot say anything more. Just that it has to do with a quest that I received.”

“Quest? So, you’re also associated with the genius alchemist?”

“How do you know?”

Shambala scratched his head.

“Sheesh, this is getting complicated. Okay, let’s just lay it out there.”

“Okay.”

“In fact, I got a genius alchemist related quest.”

“Where? From the NPC of the Magic Institute?”

“Magic Institute? No, I got it from a quest item.”

Shambala pulled a book out of his bag.

At various points on the old book cover, someone had written ‘the Diary of Magaro.’

“After I had no contact with you the other day, I left Selebrid. The supplementary prize I desired was taken so I had no business anymore. I hunted the undead at an ancient burial site for several days and received this. At first, I thought it was a common history book but when I picked it up the status was confirmed. After using the identifying skill, this came out.”

“The information?”

“I don’t know, there were a bunch if ciphers written. I only understand this part.”

Shambala turned to the final chapter.

After a lifetime of dedicate work, the problem I’ve been studying has finally entered the last stage. I seek the infinite knowledge of the world’s secrets. Now I will open the last door of the secret. However, these days I feel anxious. There are many moments where it feels like someone is staring at me from the darkness

with eerie eyes. It is probably just superstition……..anyway, I will never abandon my research. I will also convey the secret that I found to people. If I cannot return then this diary would be prepared. This diary contains everything that I have found. However, it is not complete. Now you will need to find another clue to figure out where the connection will be.

‘A connecting place!’

There is no doubt that it refers to Magaro’s laboratory.

“When I read this part, the <Mysterious Diary> quest was started. Magaro was a genius alchemist who wrote this, so I was thinking that the hiding place would probably be in a rare location. Therefore, while searching for information about Magaro’s hidden map in Selebrid, I took part in a few fights. Perhaps the magician’s lair on the map will contain the cipher to decipher the text in the diary.”

Shambala looked at Ark.

“I explained what I found. Now it is your turn. What is the information that you know?”

“……I got a Magaro related quest from the Magic Institute.”

“What? The Magic Institute?”

“Yes, the information that I have fits your reasoning. I still don’t know everything yet. But I can say with certainty that the diary and map alone would not complete

the quest. Snake, Magaro's Dimensional Key!"

A long black snake spat out a key.

"This is Magaro's dimensional key that I received from the Magic Institute. After examining the information, I can guess that all three items, the key, diary and map must be gathered to find the laboratory.

"Damn it, we must obtain the map don't we?"

Shambala's face contorted as he became upset. The situation had strangely twined together. But the Magaro related quest couldn't be shared. Of course it was possible to share the items, but only one person could complete the quest and of the three items necessary, 2 were already split between Shambala and Ark. If one of the two people don't give up, it would be impossible for both of them to complete the quest. Shambala thought for a while before peeking at him.

"I would be fine it you had it……..although it is not that close between, say us?"

"I'm sad."

"If you make your snake eat it, then even if I kill you then I wouldn't be able to receive it."

"I also won't die politely."

Ark grinned and replied.

Then Shambala nodded his head and made a suggestion for compromise.

“Okay, so it is simple. Here’s the deal, it is urgent that we get our hands on Magaro’s secret map. Because even if we quarrel among ourselves, it would be no use if it enters someone else’s hands. Do you agree? But I cannot guarantee that you would win. But if you and I join hands then it is different from talking.”

“Join hands?”

“Yes, there is still time remaining until the tournament starts. And to ensure fairness, the mechanism means that you can change partners before a match.”

“But your partner?”

“Those guys don’t need to concern you. The application deadline was running out so I just dragged some junior that I knew. However, you would have a much higher winning percentage than him. I, since then I have recognized your skills. I assure you that you can also believe in my abilities. If I pair with you, then we’ll surely be able to win.”

“Thank you.”

Shambala’s proposal was quite convincing. Ark had experience with fighting many users at the same time. However, not many users showed the same skills as Shambala. Ark too. When it was the same level, then Ark had confidence that he wouldn’t be defeated by anyone.

With such a pair! Winning was a certainty.

“Okay, you and I will become a pair and win fairly…….What’s next?”

“The situation is simple. Once you obtain the secret map, you will have all you need to put the clues together. The remaining problem is that there is a clue that you and I would have to share. The simple solution is that you and I should fight.

“Then the person who wins takes everything?”

“That’s right.”

Shambala nodded with challenging eyes. Ark faced Shambala with his mouth closed. If he had received such a proposal in Jackson, it would have been difficult for him to accept. When he calmly compared it, the battle power that Shambala showed at that time was a level above Ark. However, Ark had grown a lot more confident. In addition, a few days ago he had met his master Lee Myung-ryong. Like the earth at the end of a drought, it would suck in water quickly. The same goes for Ark. After he met his teacher, his skills were only going upwards.

‘I will use the remaining time for training and only log in on the third day when the tournament starts……there is also a chance against Shambala!’

Even if the circumstances weren’t in his favour, there was no way he could reject it.

As long as Shambala was holding Magaro’s diary, there was no way to obtain it other than killing him. With Andel it was a revengeful situation, but Ark didn’t

want his relationship with Shambala to be like that. In addition, even if he attacked Shambala viciously then it would lead to the same thing. If so, he would rather accept the offer to team up and win fairly.

“Okay, let’s do so.”

“Great decision. Then follow me.”

Shambala and Ark headed back to the Evil Silrion. And Shambala made his junior give up and replaced it with a new member application.

“Do you want to replace the member for the 186th Pairs Tournament?”

“Yes, my name is Shambala and the replacing member is Ark.”

“Of course, Shambala has finished the qualification verification process……..now let’s check Ark.”

Character Name	Ark	Race	Human
Alignment		Good+250	
Fame	1875	Level	123
Profession		Dark Walker	
Title		Cat Knight, Caretaker of All, Jackson’s Hero	
Health	2065 (+50)	Mana	1930
Spiritual Power	100	Strength	274 (+15)
Agility	314 (+15)	Stamina	404 (+10)
Wisdom	43 (+10)	Intelligence	367
Luck	44	Flexibility	35

Art of Communication	33	Affection	55 (+ 10)
Special stat: Knowledge of Ancient Relics	98		

Equipment item effects

Guardian Armour of the Merpeople: Water Attribute Resistance +100%, Penalty based on water is nullified.Cat Paws: Attack Speed +10%, Agility +15, Critical Hit +10%Raccoon's Pith: Agility +10, Wisdom +10*<King> Set effect: Strength + 10, Agility + 10, Stamina +10, Defense +20Improved Norad Boots: Movement speed + 15%, Evasion + 10%

Adelaine's Necklace: Def + 40, Affection + 10

Resurrecting Spirit: Strength + 5, Mana Recovery + 5%

* All abilities will increase by 40% in the dark* You have the ability to hide in the darkness (20 minutes duration. Cancelled when you get into combat)* Resistance Fear, Darkness, Blind, and Seduction spells is increased by 50%.

* You can bring out the true abilities from all types of tools.

When Ark had exited the Underground World he was level 116, after the Heartsoul Bead quest he was level 120 and when he travelled with the rehabilitation group, he obtained an additional 3 levels and became level 123.

The eligibility limit was level 100 which he passed easily.

"You're qualification is good enough. I will immediately put in the file that a contestant was replaced. Shambala and Ark are 14th. Therefore, you will fight in the seventh battle of the tournament. The tournament date is the day after tomorrow at 11: 00 a.m. so if you are 30 minutes late to the waiting room then you will be eliminated. Any other questions?"

“No.”

“Then I wish you luck.”

Shambala and Ark left the Evil Silrion.The day after tomorrow at 11 a.m. was tomorrow morning in reality. The time was sufficient. After he explained the situation to JusticeMan’s party, he stopped by the gym before sleeping and sighed in relief.

“I have to tell Captain Lee Myung-ryong to teach me as much skills as possible.

When he returned to the gate, the party had finished their business and gathered.

As soon as he saw Ark, JusticeMan shouted.

“Damn, it seems to be taking a lot longer to find the thieves than I thought.”

“Why?”

“I heard a rumour that the war near the border was finished so everyone would be returning. Thanks to that, the thieves have become too scared and are hiding. I have to look around for them for a while. While the arena is also important, our purpose is to rehabilitate these guys.”

The biggest problem for JusticeMan and the rehabilitation group was the realization of justice.

Sid had also found some work to do.

“I think I have to go to Nagaran.”

“Nagaran?”

“Yes, it is the name of the border region that an uncle told me just now. After completing the merchant quest, I received information about it. All the current player guilds are flocking to that area. There is an event that is taking place there? At any rate, the price of the potions during the guild fight should skyrocket tremendously.”

Although Sid could be trivial sometimes, he also thought with a merchant’s brain. Sid’s eyes flashed with determination as he said.

“Nagaran 50%…….no, I’ll be back with a 60% profit! Ouhuhuhu, don’t miss it. When I come back, we’re all going to be rich!”

“Ooh! We’ll be anticipating it Sid!”

JusticeMan and the rehabilitation members cheered. At that time, Shambala went forward and asked Sid.

“Are you a merchant?”

“Yes, but why?”

“How many days will the trade route take?”

“Nagaran is close but because of some business, it’ll take no more than 4 days.”

“Well that’s great. Can you take this instead and write a contract?”

The thing that Shambala proposed with the content of his appointment with Ark. Ark and Shambala did not have any time to check each other’s skills in the last month. Because they had to rely on the ability of the partner in the pairs tournament, even if they beat each other in a single match, they weren’t sure the item would be given. So, a contract would be drawn up which gave a third party the item beforehand, who would give it to the winner.

“The contract details that Ark’s item would be given to Sid. And whoever wins the single match will be given the item by Sid. If one of you refuses to fight, the remaining person would automatically be the winner, Ark, do you really have to do this?”

Of course. If Shambala hadn’t said anything then Ark would have. Therefore Ark and Shambala gave Sid the quest related items. Therefore, the future of the party was decided. Sid headed down the trade route towards Nagaran, while the JusticeMan group headed south to search for the thieves.

But, there were also eyes watching them from an alley.

“They are the gang who killed our members.”

“Go contact headquarters.”

A person whose face was hidden by a black hood took out a document and vanished. On his chest was a red handprint, the Dark Brother organization. Their bad relationship hadn’t ended yet. But it wasn’t only NPCs spying on the party. Several users were secretly talking about Ark and Shambala in the alley opposite to the Dark Brother’s.

“Are you certain about those guys?”

“Yes, a little while ago I definitely heard the word related to Magaro’s legacy.”

“Then they already have the rest of the clues?”

“Sheesh, are you sure these guys are connected to the clues?”

“What if?”

“Because they are also participating in the tournament, I’ll watch the situation a little bit more.”

The users said then secretly slipped away. So……..As soon as he arrived in the capital, the events surrounding Ark had begun. Of course, Ark didn’t know any of that.

“Then I’ll meet you before the tournament.”

“Manage your condition well. If you doze off while fighting.”

“Don’t worry. I am used to controlling my condition.”

Ark exited the connection after arranging the appointed time with Shambala.

Then Hyun-woo who had returned from being Ark immediately left for the police gymnasium.

“Ha! I want to ask for strong training for several days?”

Lee Myung-ryong was so happy he couldn’t express it in his face so he just nodded.

“Yes, since I am off duty today than it is no bother. First, do 200 push ups, now!

The spartan style training lasted for 4 hours. Hyun-woo’s body went through such harassment that Lee Myung-ryong said.

“Kukuku, it should be like this every day. I’m creating a Superman.”

“Can’t I be satisfied with Batman?”

“If you’re a man, then it’s Superman.”

Hyun-woo felt the need to cry. However, Hyun-woo clenched his teeth and stomached it. Now it was the beginning. It was forwarded by three days then there was no time to rest. Shambala was strong. When the pairs tournament ended, there was an even stronger opponent that he had to test his skills against. Hyun-woo was starving and fainted straight away after leaving the shower. When he woke up, 8 hours had suddenly passed.

‘Huck, isn’t the tournament starting in 30 minutes?

In a hurry, Hyun-woo went to the unit and connected to New World.In reality, the game……as Hyun-woo became Ark, he heard Shambala shouting in his ear.

“Damn, why are you only coming in now? The time limit to register is tight!”

“I’m sorry. I guess I was too tired to hear the alarm.

“Please be careful next time. Because there is not time, let’s go immediately.

Shambala pulled Ark as they ran towards the Evil Silrion arena. At this time, neither of them could imagine the events that would occur. And from the Evil Silrion in Selebrid to Sid who had left for Nagaran…….the event with a lot of entangled interests began to surround Ark.

Ark’s eventful adventures would begin now.

TO BE CONTINUED