

Ark Vol 10 C 5

Chapter 5

ACT 5 Locate the Laboratory

“Damn!”

A dim light appeared at the totem as a magician appeared. It was Jewel who had self-destructed in the Abyss of Despair. Jewel checked her information window and clenched her teeth.

“That damn bastard Ark.....I’m going to pay him back several times!”

The self-destruct magic was critical against enemies but it was also lethal to Jewel. Although she dealt a tremendous amount of damage in a wide range, she received 3 times the death penalty. In other words, she lost 90% experience and all stats -3. Although she already knew such details, tears gathered when she actually saw it.

‘Dammit, it will take so long to recover that 90% experience.....in addition, how can I recover the 18 stats lost before levelling up?’

All this was because of Ark. If she hadn’t been tricked by Ark then she wouldn’t have needed to use that skill. If Jewel realised how much her self-destruct ended up helping Ark then she probably would’ve exploded again. Nevertheless, ignorance was bliss. So Jewel just furiously waited until the other members had resurrected. Duke rushed up to her and said.

“Jewel, where is that Ark bastard now?”

“Damn it, how should I know?”

“What do you mean? Check with Mana Perfume.”

“Of course I’ve already tried it. But there was no reaction.”

“What? He removed the curse?”

“What other explanation is there? He must’ve been carrying a [Curse release] scroll.”

“.....What now?”

Duke asked with a serious face but Jewel didn’t know. The group dedicated to killing Ark sighed. Then Beseutyu who had been lingering nearby ran up to them.

“Ah, look, it is you guys....!”

“Eh? The old man who gave Ark the quest?”

“Please. My grandson, please rescue my grandson!”

“What is that?”

Beseutyu grabbed Jewel’s arm and begged.

“You’ve already heard what happened. You guys appeared after Ark who just left. He said that he went to the Abyss of Despair and ran away when he saw it was hopeless. After seeing you appear at the totem, I know that you fought against the Nakujuk until the end. You’re different from Ark.”

“That’s right. That bastard Ark is no match for us.”

Jewel snorted before nodding.

“My hunch was correct. Yes, I knew I could trust you. Since you’ve returned, I must request this of you. Would you not go back to the Abyss of Despair?”

Jewel and Duke looked at each other after hearing Beseutyu's words. They exchanged looks for a while before Jewel spoke.

"That's right. Indeed, if we were all wiped out then he would have no chance. I understand. It won't be an easy opponent but we'll save your grandson."

"Thank you, thank you!"

"But where did Ark go?"

"Why.....?"

"In fact, we suffered serious injuries while fighting the Nakujuk to rescue your grandson because he stole our equipment and fled. We can't forgive such a lousy bastard. After rescuing your grandson, we want to find him and make him pay for his sins."

Beseutyu gnashed his teeth at Jewel's explanation.

"Such a dirty thing.....I knew he was strange. That's why he refused to wait for you and just ran off. I know. I heard him say that he would go to the city beyond the northern mountains."

"Was a mount used?"

"No. There is no reason to lend a mount to the person who abandoned my grandson. He went on foot so he shouldn't have gone too far. After saving my grandson, I'll allow you to borrow the skyrays and chase him."

There was a cold smile on Jewel's face.

"Duke, did you hear that? He went to the city on the other side of the mountains."

“Okay, everybody get ready. Let’s depart.”

“Eh? You guys. What are you saying? Then my grandson.....?”

“Who cares!”

Jewel pushed Beseutyu out of the way.

“Your grandson has already been eaten by Tamura.”

“I have no interest in continuing a quest which already failed.”

“I’m more concerned with Ark. Now, let’s go!”

Jewel immediately used ‘Quick’ magic on the group. Their movement speed increased by 20% thanks to the spell and there was a billow of dust as they rushed towards the north.

“Grandpa, are you okay?”

After a while, Bona ran up from where he was hiding nearby.

“Bah, they’re bad people just like Ark-hyung said.”

“.....They have no honour.”

Beseutyu snorted as he turned to watch them disappear.

“That’s what they get for trying to annoy Bona’s saviour. There is no city beyond the mountains, only the territory of the main Nakujuk clan. They will end up suffering.”

“But the way, did grandfather find what Ark-hyung was looking for?”

“Of course. Well let’s return. Ark said he would be coming back now.”

Beseutyu and Bona smiled before returning to the village.

“Now it is safe. They have left for the northern mountains.”

“Thanks for the good work.”

“I acted just like you told me to.”

There was a wily smile on Ark’s face after Beseutyu’s answer.

‘Now I don’t have to worry about those guys. They’ll soon discover that they made a mistake, but without the help of magic they won’t be able to find me easily.’

Thus one of his worries disappeared. Now the only thing left was to find any clues related to Magaro. Ark looked expectantly at Beseutyu who smiled and nodded.

“I’ve found the information you need.”

“Something related to Magaro?”

“Yes, he came here approximately 100 years ago. Well, read it yourself will be faster than me explaining. It’s been translated so you can read it.”

Were the resources recorded using a special cipher to maintain secrecy? It was probably a countermeasure to ensure that users couldn't abuse their knowledge of the Netherworld. Since Ark was entitled to the information, Beseutyu translated it onto a scroll and passed it to him.

'I can finally discover the whereabouts of Magaro!'

Ark unrolled it with anticipation. It was recorded in first person format, just like a diary or letter.

.....He introduced himself as Magaro.

Magaro was an unusually polite and sincere person. It surprised me that he crossed from middle earth. I heard that people could pass freely between middle earth and the Netherworld a long time ago, but I thought it was just a legend or myth. But he proved that middle earth existed and that it was a much more advanced civilization. He was very clever. Although he only saw the flora and fauna here for the first time, within a few days he was able to understand their attributes and how best to use them. He taught us how to refine the sap of plants in order to heal wounds and how to live a more abundant life by raising cattle.

However, he was forced to leave the village after a month. He came to the Netherworld for a 'special' purpose and he needed more research materials for that purpose. I informed him about the 'Forest of Life' in the eastern wilderness where he could find those materials. He could obtain everything he needed from there. Unfortunately, I never saw him again.....

'.....That explains it.'

Ark noticed some strange associations while reading the document. When he saw the sap refinery, the first thing that came to mind was the Magic Institute's alchemy lab. The standard of the equipment was very different but the structure was somewhat similar. He discovered the reason after reading the record. Magaro was a genius alchemist so he taught them how to use the sap.

'As expected from the alchemist Magaro. But I still don't know Magaro's secret purpose which is the reason he came to the Netherworld.....'

It definitely smelled like money.

“I was also surprised after reading this record. I didn’t realise that the person who taught us how to use sap and herbs came from middle earth.”

“Where is the Forest of Life?”

“I’ve never gone there directly, but if you head to the eastern wilderness on the south-east side then you should find it.”

Then he opened up the map and indicated the area with a red dot. The location was close to the snowy mountains that Ark descended down.

‘It will take me a few days if I move in a straight line. But at least I know the location.’

Ark stored the map and asked.

“By the way, did you find any information about the Red Man?”

“Ah, you mean that?”

Beseutyu shook his head.

“I couldn’t find any information about that person.”

“Really?”

Ark was only a little bit disappointed. In fact, he hadn’t expected anything. He had received a quest to find Magaro’s laboratory. It was possible to receive information related to this because he received the quest. That’s because the clues for the quest were intentionally placed from the beginning. However, the Red Man had nothing to do with this quest. And Ark didn’t know what he needed to investigate. He only had a vague thought of finding the Red Man. If he didn’t know what he was looking for then there

was no way he would receive a clue. Above all. He really needed to determine if the Red Man held the 'key' to passing the entrance examination.

'It can't be helped. There's nothing for me to find at the moment.'

Ark finished collecting the information and packed for a new trip. He re-examined his equipment and stopped by the general store to barter for useable medicines. By that time Lariette and Buksil had finished resting and connected to the game.

"Ark-nim, I'm not late?"

"Yes, you came right on time."

"Where are you going now?"

"The Forest of Life in the wilderness to the east. The distance is quite far so we should leave quickly."

When Ark seemed like he would leave straight away, Beseutyu spoke in a worried voice.

"Hmm, can you leave tomorrow morning?"

"No. I've rested so it doesn't matter if it is morning or evening."

In fact, evening was the best time for a Dark Walker to travel.

"Then how about you take a skyray and go?"

Lariette was so surprised that she flinched and turned pale.

'S-Skyrays? Ah, Ark-nim...."

“Thank you but it is fine. I’ll walk this time.”

Lariette sighed with relief and laughed when Ark refused. But Ark didn’t decline just because of Lariette.

‘The skyray moves faster but that’s all.’

There were still a lot of ingredients that he hadn’t seen in the Netherworld. He would miss those opportunities if he flew on the skyray. In addition, he confirmed that there were quite a few wild skyrays in the east when he travelled to this village. If he flew on the skyrays then a battle was inevitable.

‘There are too many variables in aerial combat compared to ground combat. When returning from the Abyss of Despair, it was difficult to defeat four or five skyrays while protecting Lariette and Buksil. So I would rather walk even if it takes longer. Well, it’s not like anything is urgent at the moment.....’

“Then we’ll be going.”

“Please feel free to drop by. You are always welcome.”

“Ark hyung, Lariette-noona, please make sure to come back when your business finishes!”

Bona chased them to the entrance and shook their hands.

“Okay, I understand.” Now, let’s go.”

“Yes.”

Lariette smiled and nodded. Ark turned his head without thinking and looked at her. The sun had started to set and it dyed the surroundings red. It was dark but light, it felt regretful but his heart was also beating fast.....it was like she was standing in a mysterious space. Her whole body was dyed in a mysterious light and made her even more beautiful. It was difficult to express in words as elusive emotions rose in him.

'Travelling in the Netherworld is unlikely to become boring.'

'Something.....this isn't something.'

A mysterious world with a woman who longed for adventure! It was like a movie where the protagonist had a fateful encounter with the heroine and they ended up exploring and fighting monsters together, with the hero sometimes saving the heroine. After overcoming numerous adversities, the two protagonists finally found the treasure and began a relationship with each other. Wasn't it a dream that all men would aspire to? Although they hadn't reached the ending, Ark was lost in the sweet fantasy after exiting the village with Lariette.

But reality wasn't that superficial. Ark's reality was not that superficial.

Ark sighed and looked at his colleagues eating a meal.

"Ah, this is really good?"

"It really is. Ark-nim is also good at cooking."

"Really? It's delicious?"

Dedric was ravenously licking the pot like a pig. After he refilled the pot, it was once again emptied as they continued chattering.

"Master, did you hear that? Another serving of this."

It was a ridiculous situation. He had made dishes from the ingredients collected. In addition, Ark had lost 50% of his health but he wasn't even able to eat one spoonful. The pot was emptied yet he wanted another serving? And in such a demanding tone? Ark had a bitter taste in his mouth at the sight. No, he really wanted to punch him. However.....

"I'm sorry. We ate everything without leaving anything for Ark-nim."

When Lariette spoke, Ark's fist which had been heading towards Dedric suddenly changed into patting his head.

"Ah, no. You should eat well. Hahaha."

"Yes, don't worry about it. Master's hobby is feeding others."

Dedric smirked at his words. And the naive Lariette just nodded.

"So your original hobby was cooking?"

"Huh? Ah, yes....that's right."

Ark awkwardly smiled before whispering to Dedric.

"You, you bastard! Are you afraid for your future?"

"What?"

Dedric just whistled as he stared at the distant mountains. Something.....his instincts sensed that something was happening. Although he behaved for a while, that fellow was once again starting to behave hatefully and he even became worse than before.

'Damn, I made a mistake. If I knew this would happen then I wouldn't have called him the number 2.....I forgot that he was a child and that it would go to his head.'

But who could he blame? This situation was due to his own mistakes..... Ark sighed again and looked through his bag. Then he poured a few ingredients into the pot with tears in his eyes.

‘How much money are the ingredients I poured into this pot worth?’

Ark replayed the past events in his head. In the beginning.....everything was good when they left the valley village.

“Omo, look at that river. It is a rainbow of colours.”

“Have you seen this? If you blow the flowers then the wind will blow it back into your mouth. Hohoho.”

“That looks like a human face but it is creepy.”

Lariette explored the area with childlike excitement in her eyes.

“Please be careful. It is a monster that will attack anything that approached.”

“Huh? Really?”

Ark laughed at Lariette’s amazement and added.

“Hahaha. It won’t attack unless you approach so it’ll be okay.”

She had arrived in the Netherworld before Ark. However, she appeared in the Hagel Forest surrounded by the dead and didn’t have time to explore before being captured by the Nakujuk. So she was curious and excited about everything. Ark also enjoyed watching her. And he explained everything that she developed an interest in. For someone.....it was quite enjoyable having a girl interested in his words. Monsters appeared occasionally but it didn’t matter. Ark had already faced these monsters several times while heading to the village from the snowy mountains. The level was higher but no more than two appeared at once. In addition, Ark’s level was much higher than before. After killing hundreds of Nakujuk in the Abyss of Despair and completing the quest, he was level 256!

“Buksil, take it well.”

Ark whispered to Buksil before drawing his sword. Then he used flashy movements to dispose of the monsters. The video was shooting, but how could he fight normally in front of Lariette?

“Wah! It’s fantastic! You took care of those strong monsters so easily……”

Ark’s nose rose in the air at Lariette’s interjection.

“It’s not a big deal.”

Ark said with fake humility. After Lariette’s reaction, Ark immediately began to exaggerate his actions. Ark was generous when cooking food and pretended not to notice when his pets made a mistake. He couldn’t be an unpleasant person in front of her. So Ark’s normal behaviour was stopped by Lariette’s presence. It was indeed a pleasing scene when he recalled it.

But the good memories with Lariette only lasted until then. He was so entrance by Lariette then the trip through the wilderness passed without him noticing. They soon reached the south were the wilderness changed into dense forests.

“The forest continues from here. It seems to be a checkpoint which will lead to the Forest of Life. This is my first time here so I don’t know what the monsters will be like. Dedric, reconnaissance.”

“Understood. Master.

Dedric flapped his wings for the first time after several days. However, he couldn’t make it a few metres before he started gasping.

“What the, what happened?”

“I don’t know. Somehow I became very winded?”

Ark glanced around but couldn't spot anything unusual.

Could it be.....? Ark looked uneasily at Dedric's body. He finally noticed that Dedric was subtly different from normal.

'What the? When did this child.....?'

While showing off his cooking skill to Lariette, Ark had used barrage of ingredients. But Lariette was not a glutton. More than half of the meal remained every time so his pets and Buksil would eat the rest. On the other hand, only one or two monsters appeared at the same time in the wilderness. So he didn't need Dedric to scout or fight with him. As a result.....it was like Dedric received a holiday as he continuously partook in holiday foods. In other words, the excess nutrient intake and lack of exercise meant that he became bigger. It was also true for Razak and Buksil. Buksil.....well, he looked even more like a pig while Dedric's bones also thickened.

'Oh my god, why didn't I notice until now?'

Lariette had distracted him. Anyway, Ark finally noticed what was happening and became astounded.

Kikikiki! Kikiki, kikikiki!

The branches suddenly shook and they were surrounded by a mass of red pupils.

'Monster! There's around a dozen of them!'

"Buksil, Lariette-nim, step back! Dedric, Razak, defense formation!"

"Oh, it is hard.....understood Master."

Clack clack.....clack clack clack....

His summons replied in relaxed voices and took their stances. He wanted to say something but there was no time. A significant number of monsters had come running from different directions. The Kurun was a monster that looked like a combination of a monkey and a wolf. Ark relaxed a bit after confirming the Kurun's information. They were only level 200. Although he was surprised that there were a dozen of them, without the dark attribute bonus he would still be able to handle them by himself.

"Okay Lariette-nim, please buff me!"

"Yes! Heavenly Light, Immortal Aura, Pure Sword!"

Lariette's buffs increased his various stats.

"Now, you will be sliced in an instant. Elemental sword, Fire attribute!"

The sword was engulfed in flames when he used the skill.

Ark's body then shot like an arrow towards the Kurun.

Flash-!

The Kurun screamed as they were suddenly wrapped in flames. Ark used the momentum to continuously attack until the Kurun's health had decreased by half.

'Okay, this is enough to deal with them.'

Ark smiled with satisfaction. Of course, Ark's health has decreased after attacking the Kurun. But then Lariette used recovery magic and a situation he couldn't predict occurred. Some of the Kurun who had been attacking Ark shrieked and turned to attack her.

'What the? Why all of a sudden.....whoops!'

Ark suddenly realised what was happening. It was a familiar situation for anyone who played online games. Numerical numbers for a monster's 'Fury' existed. If two users beat up the same monster, the system would attack the one who dealt more damage. There was one exception.

Recovery magic. Although the magic didn't deal direct damage to the monster, it's aggro gauge would increase considerably. Therefore, warriors in the party would have to time the use of 'Provocation' to coincide with the moment a priest used recovery magic. The most important part of fighting in a group was 'aggro management.' Ark had spent a year soloing so he never got the hang of it. Occasionally he fought with Roco but the rehabilitation members were there to tank.

"Kyaaak, please help me!"

"Huk, move it! Hiik!"

Ark rushed towards Lariette and Buksil who were in a crisis. Buksil was a merchant and Lariette just changed jobs so both of their health decreased. In fact, the Holy Knight had less recovery magic than a priest and were inferior in combat compared to warriors. But they had higher combat capabilities than a priest and could use magic to recover. Since it was the best profession in the Holy attribute series, the Innocence Knight received bonus stats based on their reputation. So although she was level 160, her actual stats were over level 200. But the problem was that she had originally been a magician.

She was wearing a cloth robe..... Since she had been in the Dawn Blade guild, it was a pretty good magic item but it had low defense. She was also inexperienced in melee combat. When the Kurun ran up to her, she was too busy escaping to counterattack.

"T-this is.....Dedric, use taunt to disperse their attention!"

"Eh? Understood. Ya, you bastards, over here!"

Two Kurun rushed towards Dedric after he used taunt. Dedric flapped his wings and tried to run away.....but he could not. Dedric who had gained weight gasped as he flapped his wings and staggered after being hit in the back of the head.

.....Ah, he really was playing around.

“Dammit! Razak, take your defensive stance and protect both of them!”

Clack clack clack, clack clack clack clack!

Razak’s fat bones clattered as he ran forward. Even though Razak gained some weight, he was still better than Dedric. He was a bit slow but managed to get in front of them in time. Thanks to that, Lariette and Buksil didn’t collapse. But Razak couldn’t block all of the Kurun’s attacks even in his defensive stance. Once again Dedric and Razak weren’t able to deal with monsters higher than them. Razak was around level 150 after evolving while Dedric was only level 130. His summons were able to fight with level 300 monsters due to a combination play that they perfected through many trial and errors with Ark. They would just die if Ark wasn’t there. It was even worse once their flesh became plump.

‘Dammit.....of all times to be fat.....!’

Ark cursed as he gave up on the Kurun with 50% health and ran towards them.

“Ma-Master, please help!”

Dedric rolled on the ground like a ball of fur and called for help. Ark snatched Dedric and instantly used ‘Dark Dance.’ He moved like a ghost and used the chain skill of Dark Blade and Dark Strike on the Kurun. Despite the intense and continuous attacks pushing the Kurun back, the situation became even more bleak.

His pets, Lariette and Buksil were all in a critical condition. Ark also only had 50% health left after attacking the enemy. On the other hand, the Kurun had their health decreased by Flash but none of them had died yet. The ones with low health retreated and started throwing stones.

‘I can narrow the distance and attack with Flash and then retreat using Dark Dance but.....’

Ark started to realise how unstable his party was. Buksil couldn't help in battles in the wilderness but he was good at luring monsters in dungeons to the desired place. However, having too many enemies in a wide open place like this turned out to be a weakness of their group. Ark wasn't a warrior so he couldn't wear heavy armour with high defense. 낯다. So he had to reduce damage in fights by evading. But he couldn't use those methods if he had to protect people. If he avoided the attacks then it might hit Buksil and Lariette. That was why he needed a warrior in the party!

‘Damn, I have no choice but to hold on.’

Ark took out most of the flying stones with Riposte. During that time Lariette had recovered her health to 60% using recovery magic.

“Lariette-nim, please concentrate your recovery magic on Razak from now on. Razak, use your defensive stance to protect Lariette and Buksil. Hold out for a minute!”

Clack clack clack, clack clack clack clack!

Razak held out his shield.

“Sprint!”

Ark shot off like an arrow through the flying stones. Then he used Flash on the Kurun as soon as he entered in range. Once, twice, three times.....his mana was running out by the Kurun started collapsing one by one.

“Now it is time to finish this. Blessing of the sea!”

Ark used Adelaine's Necklace to restore his mana and once again used Flash. He exterminated the remaining Kurun after using Flash a few more times.

“Huk huk huk, I barely won.”

Ark gasped as he ran out of breath.

After checking his health, he saw that he only had 5% left.

Since Lariette used her recovery magic, Razak wouldn't have been able to hold out if the Kurun concentrated their attacks on him. Therefore Ark took most of the attacks by the stones while using Flash.

When it was over, Lariette and Buksil came running over to him.

"Phew, the crisis is over."

"I'm sorry. We were just a hindrance....."

"No, it's okay. Let's take a break first. We don't know when a monster will appear again so we should restore our health and mana when there is a chance."

Ark started to set up a camp. Both Ark and Lariette had run out of mana.

'We had such difficulty against a group of level 200 monsters.....'

Ark sneaked a peek at Dedric and Razak who were lying on the ground. Dedric and Razak both realised that they had made mistakes. Ark became annoyed at the sight but just shook his head.

'No, there is a more fundamental problem.'

Yes, he knew that neither Dedric and Razak would be able to handle dozens of Kurun just yet. Nevertheless, the reason they struggled so much and almost died was because they had to protect Buksil and Lariette. If it was just Buksil then he didn't need to worry that much. But now there were two of them. The situation was different. Ark needed to concentrate on attacking while protecting those two. It was a significant burden on Ark who was not a warrior and couldn't wear heavy armour.

‘This is a surprisingly serious problem. There were level 300 monsters in the wilderness and now level 200 monsters suddenly appeared. This means that most of the monsters move in groups. If there is a dozen at the beginning of the forest, that number will probably increase as we move further in. If there is more than a dozen then I won’t be able to handle it.’

The same was true for Razak. If they attacked only Ark then he could handle it, but if they concentrated on Lariette and Buksil then Razak would only be able to last for 1~2 minutes.

‘There must be a way.....’

Ark blew out a sigh while looking serious. After worrying about it for a long time, he clenched his teeth and made up his mind.

‘Yes, it really can’t be helped.’

“Lariette-nim.”

Ark went over to Lariette who was still restoring her mana. After a moment of hesitating, he opened his mouth.

“I think it is dangerous if we enter the forest blindly. If there are a lot of monsters then I won’t be able to block everything. Buksil is a merchant but since Lariette-nim changed to a knight, if you raise your defense then it will decrease my burden by a bit.”

“I know that too.....but I only have items for mages.”

“I know.”

Ark nodded and stuck his hand into his bag. That’s right. If Lariette wore armour and raised her defense a little bit then it would decrease the burden on Ark. She was still lacking close combat skills, but if her defense rose then her would be decreased slower. However.....even if he was determined, his body

didn't want to move. Cold sweat dripped down his face as his hand remained in his bag. But Ark was a man of his word!

“Please receive this!”

Ark closed his eyes tightly and took out an item. Lariette and Buksil looked at Ark strangely while he was sweating.

Battered Half-Plate

Armour type: Iron armour

Defense power: 0

Durability: 0/0

Weight: 10

User restriction: Level 100 and over

The half-plate armour can be seen everywhere. This one is so old that mould has started to form on it. No matter how great the craftsmen, they would not be able to repair this armour. You can attempt to sell it but you probably won't receive that much.

It was an item that clearly wasn't great once checked in the information window. The gloves, shoes and shoulder blades that were taken out afterwards was also similar to the armour.

‘What the? He hesitated so much to give me items like these?’

Those were Lariette's and Buksil's thoughts.

'Huk, if I sell all of these then I would get at least 1 gold.....if I sell it as a set then I might be able to get 4 gold.....'

Tears gathered at the thought of 4 gold flying away. 4 gold was 40,000 won. It was like grabbing a shovel and digging for 3 hours. One thousand won might appear. Of course, Lariette was a special person to Ark. But that was different. If Ark was just playing for fun then he wouldn't care about a few japtem.....no, even magic items wouldn't matter. However, Ark had a definite goal. To make money!

Thanks to that one goal, he couldn't even afford to lose 1 copper. It was a big decision for him to give up some japtem.

"Yes.....t-thank you."

Lariette couldn't bear to say no and received the armour set. In fact, the cloth armour that Lariette was wearing had pretty good defense. Alan had spent money and obtained it for her. The cloth armour had better defense than the armour that Ark gave her. A higher quality! But something called profession attributes existed in New World. In other words, if it wasn't restricted to profession then a magician could also wear metal armour. However, there would be a job penalty inflicted and they would not receive the full defense. That was why magicians wore cloth equipment despite having a lower defense. If knights wore a robe then they would have a 40% penalty in defense. But the items Ark gave was metal armour. It was a trivial item but it would be able to increase the defense.

'That's it. It is valuable but my burden so lessen a little bit.'

But Ark miscalculated. Once she wore armour, Lariette seemed to mistakenly think that she was a knight. When the monsters appeared, she stepped forward while holding her japtem sword. However, her battle sense was really bad.

"I'll help you!"

"Oh, no.....it is not necessary....."

“Ack!”

“Lariette-nim?”

Lariette blindly swung her sword and instead of hitting the target, she swung to wildly and fell onto the ground. So Ark had to stop fighting and rush to protect her. But that wasn't all. Because she was a magician for so long, she didn't understand how to fight as a knight. When Ark swung his sword, she would also swing hers and almost damaged him.....it was truly a disaster. At least Lariette would focus on recovery when wearing a robe but now she was too busy trying to fight to support Ark. Therefore every battle was difficult. Ark was worn out. But it wasn't possible to approach and tell her off.

“I'm sorry. I haven't improved have I?”

What could he possibly say to such a lovely face? Ark smiled painfully while sweating.

“Ah, no. You've worked hard.”

“.....My satiety went down to 60% because I moved too much.”

“.....Eat this rice.”

There was nothing more to say. When the battle started, Ark had to try not to die and when it ended he was forced to feed them. But now there were 5 mouths. He had to make servings for 5 people everything a fight ended so his ingredients were quickly running out. There were many times when Ark had to skip meals to go around and gather ingredients. Furthermore, once the situation repeated then Dedric started acting up.

‘Eh? It is strange. Normally Master would've already punched me so why hasn't he said anything?’

The plump Dedric finally snapped his fingers.

‘Aha, now I get it. That Master, his weakness is that girl. It is embarrassing that he is so attached to Alan’s woman. And now he can’t tell me and Razak off. Huhuhu, this is a chance to pay back all my sorrow! I’m going to show him how fearful I can be!’

When it was time for a break, Dedric transformed into a young boy and stuck close to Lariette. Then he started to harass Ark just like a mother-in-law.

“Hey, Master. What is this? I told you I wanted to eat meat dishes!”

He just kicked the pot and complained when more servings were cooked.

‘How dare this child act like this.....!’

Furthermore, it wasn’t only Dedric. Buksil also started acting cocky once Ark was compliant.

“Ark-nim, somehow you’re not appearing too good on the screen lately? Was the exertion too much for you?”

Buksil placed his pig foot on Ark who was kneeling down to boil the soup and chattered on.

‘Do these bastards think they can treat me like this?’

Curses rose in his throat. His heart really wanted to kill something right now. But he couldn’t curse and strike at a young boy and a pig in front of Lariette.....no, he just had to fix the habit stealthily.

‘No. It’s not something I can endure!’

So his happy trip had turned into hell in a few days.