

Ark Vol 11 C 8

Chapter 8

ACT 8 Ark's Trading Business

"Galen ajusshi."

"Huh? This voice....Ark, is it Ark?"

Galen instantly looked away from a pile of documents when Ark entered the Town Hall.

"Why are you here I never heard that you came back?"

"I only arrived a short time

"Anyway, welcome home. No, shouldn't I say it's good to have you back? You're now a resident of Lancel. Don't you also share a stake in the village? Oh, do you want a cup of tea?"

"It's okay. I actually wanted to ask for a favour."

"A favour?"

"Yes, I'd like you to take in a few people."

The place Ark thought of when drawing the magic circle was Lancel village. It was weird to see people with blue skin in middle earth, but Lancel village was a place that would unconditionally accept 50 people regardless of their race or past. After going through the dimensional gate, Ark arrived at the training centre a short distance away from the village. He had a reason for moving them to the training camp. The Baran hadn't come over for the purpose of immigration. It was tradition for Lancel to prepare empty land for people to settle it but that didn't apply to the Baran. Then Ark thought of the training school. Since the 300 thieves had already graduated and went to the village, it was very quiet. So Ark wanted the Baran to live there for the moment. But there was still one problem. There were plenty of beds at the training centre. But people also had to eat in order to live. However, Ark didn't have enough

food to feed 50 people. And it was impossible to shut them up in the training centre without introducing them to Lancel village so he went to find Galen.

“Can you help me?”

“Hmm.....I can’t refuse since it is you asking. I also can’t ignore it after hearing that their village had been attacked by monsters and they have nowhere else to go. After a good harvest the village is overflowing with food.”

It was thanks to Ark finding the Sacred Soil and pouring it into the fields.

“So there is no need to worry about food. The town’s commerce has also developed a lot since you’ve been away. The town’s finances can afford to look after 50 people with no problem. I’ll decide once I’ve met them.”

Galen spoke frankly and stood up. Unlike the Netherworld where the weather was unpredictable, middle earth had normal concepts of seasons. And currently New World was in the middle of winter so the weather was quite chilly.

“The town has changed quite a lot since I’ve been here.”

Ark said as he looked around Lancel village. He felt like the village was truly developing now. Every time he visited, it felt like it was steadily growing. After the raccoon clan joined, the buildings in particular became incredible flashy and made it look like a theme park. And apart from the NPCs, there were also a considerable number of users.

“A rumour started to spread in the area so our number of visitors has increased a lot.”

“Rumour?”

Ark tilted his head to one side and Galen laughed before pointing. Despite the winter air, the Meow Elder Hassan was fast asleep on a rooftop. Users watched avidly as the tail moved or Hassan’s nose twitch while snoring.

“Kyaaa, look. Over there as well.”

“The tail is so cute.”

Hassan.....where was the Meow’s pride?

But it wasn’t just Hassan. A group of users was also gathered around the sawmill where the raccoon clan was working. They pretended to do other things while gawking at the raccoons.

“Why are people gathered over there?”

“You’ll understand if you keep watching.”

One of the raccoons grunted and lifted a piece of timber.

Bbeong!

The raccoon’s tail suddenly popped out. Although they usually transformed themselves into the guise of a person, when they were surprised or used a lot of power than their tails and short beards would pop out.

“Did you see? Did you see?”

“Kikikik! I saw it, a round tail. The short beard also briefly appeared.”

The users were waiting for such a scene. When the raccoon turned his head at the sound of giggles, the users immediately turned around and pretended ignorance.

“We thought that the raccoons would go unnoticed. But foreigners sometimes visited our village and spread it around. Anyway, now our village’s specialities are the Meow and raccoons. To the extent that some people visit from far away just to see them. Thanks to that, the Meow’s leather and the raccoon’s business are selling like hotcakes.”

Galen said with a happy smile. Ark was also happier. He wanted Lancel village to develop into the intermediary point between Giran and Jackson. It meant the village’s value would also increase. Ark’s share in Lancel village and his real estate would then be worth more.

‘Popo also had a considerable influence.’

Ark looked at Popo situation in the town centre. Popo’s effect continuously raised the value and development of the town. Apart from users, rumours of Popo drew NPCs to the village. The Meow, raccoon clan, rehabilitation thieves and Popo.....all of it meant Lancel village had a deep bond with Ark. He was delighted every time he looked around Lancel village. Although he wanted to look around the town some more, he had to solve the problem of the Baran clan first.

“Oh, is that them?”

Galen asked curiously when he arrived at the training centre. Ark had explained the Baran’s blue skin to him but it was strange seeing it in person.

“Yes, Bona. This ajusshi is the mayor of the village.”

“Ah, hello?”

Bona greeted humbly while bowing his head. Galen nodded with a gentle smile before suddenly retreating in astonishment.

Grrrrrrr.

“M-monster! Hik, over there? There too? There too? Ah Ark, what is going on?”

Galen screamed and pointed at the Hellhound next to Bona. After the trainers left, most of the monsters in the valley village returned to the wild. But among the 30 children, there were 3~4 who had the trainer ability just like Bona. Just like Bona, those children were given little monsters as pets to raise. So when they left the village, they brought the monsters by carrying it in their arms. Ark explained that to Galen whose eyes suddenly lit up.

“Hooh, hooh! They have the ability to make monsters obedient? They’re blue and have such a miraculous talent? This is great.”

Galen had the hobby of collecting unusual people.

“Good, very good Ark. As expected from you. Where do you find all these fascinating people? Okay, I’ll take in this people. I’ll take care of the residents to prevent any discomfort.”

“No, like I said these people don’t want to move here.....”

“I know that. Of course I know. You said they came here to seek refuge from the war? It doesn’t really matter. Naturally we will help. But are they truly attached to their homes? This is also a good place to live. Hahaha, I’ll say it in advance but I hate people who discriminate against race the most. If they decide to settle here then they’ll receive a job, welfare and even a house. How about it? Would any of you want to live here?”

.....Galen didn’t pay any attention to Ark’s words. He was like a businessman trying to entice the Baran clan with his promises. Then Bona approached Ark and murmured.

“Ark hyung, this ajusshi is quite scary.”

“Well.....he’s not a bad person. He just has a strange hobby.”

Ark muttered while awkwardly smiling.

Dududung, and the quest information window popped up.

- quest has been updated.

You have brought the children of the Baran clan from the Netherworld to Lancel village.

They've only fled the chaos of the Netherworld and don't want to migrate here. However, Galen's goal is to develop the village so he would want to accept this unusual species as a part of the village. There is a possibility that some of the Baran would want to become residents of Lancel village.

You have found settlers with special skills.

Among the residents of the Netherworld, there are children of the Baran clan with the ability to tame monsters.

This is a very unique ability so if the children settle in Lancel village then it's 'Distinctiveness' and 'Rarity' will increase. Distinctiveness will affect the industrial value of the village while rarity will affect the value of the village. You'll have to incite them well if you want the children to become residents.

'Eh? The Baran clan can also become residents?'

Ark read the information window with shocked eyes. In fact, Ark also thought of this quest when gathering the Baran clan. Thanks to the thieves being rehabilitated, the achievement rate was 90%. There was only 10% so he needed to gather settlers somehow. However, Beseutyu shoved a nail in that idea by saying it was just a temporary evacuation.

'But isn't the valley village completely occupied by the Nakujuk? They'll have to find a new home even if they return to the Netherworld. And there are likely to be a lot of orphaned children!'

Even if he only delivered half of the 20%, this long quest was likely to finish. In addition, the town's industry and value would also increase.

"Yes Bona. This is an incredibly nice place. The residents are very kind and it is very safe. Now it is now cold because it is winter, it will be a very nice place to live in spring. Galen ajusshi is also welcoming you. If you ever want to live here then just mention it anytime."

Ark changed his attitude and immediately tempted the Baran clan. And Galen just laughed and nodded.

"Hahaha, that's right. You recognize it as well."

"If the Baran clan feels comfortable living here then please consider it."

Please trust hyung-nim!"

"We will receive you like a family."

"You can call me uncle from now on."

At the end of his words, Ark grasped the hands of the Baran children and smiled. When the thieves graduated, some of them left but most of them stayed behind. And the thieves possessed their own past pains. They called Ark hyung-nim even though they were older than him. Well, the bandits had eventful lives similar to a drama. On the other hand, there are quite a few children orphaned in the Baran group. It might turn out surprisingly well. Of course most of the children who lost their parents would want to heal the wounds in their heart not adapt to a new environment, so it would probably take some time.

'Now that the problem of the Baran clan is solved.....'

"Bona, how long will it take to solve the password on the scroll?"

".....It should take a few days."

"Okay, please work on it. Hey, don't just stay here and follow me."

Ark stroked Bona's head before ordering Buksil to follow him.

"Dedric, you return to the Netherworld."

"Come to think of it.....isn't it possible to return here?"

Dedric who had been dozing on Ark's shoulders asked with amazement. Yes, it wasn't possible to recall his summons in the Netherworld but now they were in middle earth. There was no reason for them to stay in town. Besides Dedric had felt quite melancholy after not being able to return home for a while.

"It must be great, that guy got to go home....."

He had watched enviously as Razak died.

"Hahaha, I'm finally able to return. Master, don't call me unless it is urgent. Understood?"

Dedric quickly returned to his home in the Netherworld. Then Galen had work to do and they returned to the Town Hall.

"I have to go. I would love to stay but the village has been so busy lately I've barely had time to look after my store. Let's go and have a drink later."

So now only Buksil and Ark remained.

"That.....is it really alright?"

Buksil looked around the street with uneasy eyes.

"What?"

“I.....that.....I’m chaotic..... Coming to town.....”

“I told here, here is okay.”

At that time, the guards patrolling the village approached and Buksil panicked and hid behind Ark. A chaotic player was most afraid of a village’s guards because they would be sent to jail if caught. However, Ark said there was no need for such worries in Lancel village. As long as he was with Ark.

“Eh? Ark hyung-nim, when did you come back?”

“A little while ago. I had some errands to run.”

“Why didn’t you contact us? By the way.....the pig like guy hiding behind you.....”

‘T-they noticed. I’m screwed!’

Buksil trembled as he saw the guards frown. But the guards then smiled and nodded.

“A freshman?”

“He’s not a new student but someone who I am educating.”

“You still have a lot to suffer.”

The guards tapped Buksil’s shoulders as they muttered.

“There will be a lot of work so hang in there. Hyung-nim won’t treat you too badly.”

“Huh? Huh? Huh?”

“So hyung-nim, we’re going back to patrolling. If you have time then please visit the guards’ lodgings.”

Buksil was stunned as the guards left him and Ark. He never heard of a chaotic player being encouraged by guards.

‘Looks like it was because of Ark.....why kind of human is he? The village mayor didn’t even hesitate to accept 50 refugees. The villagers all recognize him.....and now the guards greeted a chaotic player?’

Ark was a very strange human. Buksil thought this as all the residents came to visit Ark. Shop owners, guards, construction workers.....not just Buksil but all the users visiting the village also looked at Ark with puzzled eyes.

‘It’s slightly inconvenient that there are so many users.’

Ark also felt awkward feeling all those gazes.

‘I should go visit my house and see what the extension looks like.’

Ark walked towards it with a sense of expectation. Then he suddenly heard a cheer from the side. He turned around and saw that users and NPCs were gathered in the centre of town. And a familiar woman was standing on a small stage. The woman had cat ears and a tail, it was the Meow shaman Jana. The cheers subsided when Jana closed her eyes for a while. And.....Ark witnessed an unbelievable scene. Jana’s body started slowly moving as the sound of an acoustic guitar was heard. Then a dim light appeared wherever the cat moved.

Nyang, nyanyang, nyanyanyang, nyang, nyang, nyang.

It was the dance of the Meow priestess! After the cat dance ended, the crowd cheered and threw a bouquet of flowers.

“The best!”

“That artful motion of ears and tail!”

“Oh, it never becomes boring even after seeing it a few times!”

“Damn, I’m impressed. I’m grateful I came to look after hearing rumours in the Sinus Principality!”

“Jana-nim, please look over here!”

‘What the hell is going on?’ What’s with that dance and those people?’

Ark looked at the scene with astounded eyes. Jana bent down to pick up the bouquet when her nose suddenly twitched.

“Omo, this scent is.....?”

Jana grinned widely and turned her face.

“As expected, it’s Ark. Hohoho, he came back nyang!”

Jana rushed towards Ark. Then like a cat seeing its owner after a long time, she wound her tail around and rubbed her body against him.

“Heung, heung, it’s been a while nyang. You’ve become even more awesome nyang. Did you see me show just before nyang?”

“Show? That was a performance?”

“Hohoho, this body is already a celebrity nyang.”

Jana twiddled her ears around and bragged. Not so long ago, some users saw her dance and admired it before spreading rumours around. Thanks to that, she became a hot topic among cosplay enthusiasts and many fans came to see her show. Thanks to Galen's request, she performed several shows a day.

"But what's with that way of talking?"

"Hohoho, these words nyang?"

Jana confidently smiled and thrust out her chest.

"Elder taught me nyang. I didn't realise that men would go nuts over it nyang. It is very effective nyang. Now Jana is the most popular nyang. Nyahahaha!"

That old cat, thinking of an idea like this.....

"Now the world sees the beauty of my ears and tail nyang."

.....How is it? Are you now a little more attracted nyang? Are you going nuts nyang?"

.....Not at all, he was just a little embarrassed.

"Tell me what you think anytime nyang. Cats are quite stubborn nyang."

Jana spoke towards Ark in a really sweet voice. Ark felt breathless as his jaw dropped. Why? Because the members of Jana's fan club were shooting death glares at Ark. No, it was to the point that they almost challenged him to a duel.

"Hey!"

It was at that time. A young lady walking suddenly shrieked. The screaming woman shoved through the crowd and pushed Jana.

“You naughty cat! Why are you causing an uproar every time you wag your tail?”

“Sheesh, I smelled a noisy kid and she appeared nyang.”

“Who’s a kid? Oppa, you don’t have to be so nice to someone like her. She just messes things up!”

“What nyang? Hey you! What did you say nyang?”

“Bah! Every day being surrounded by men.... Oppa, you should’ve visited your house first when you came back to town. Or contacted me beforehand. Do you know I had to find out after hearing gossip?”

The girl Roco pulled Ark’s arm. Since the rehabilitation group stopped making hunting for the Slime’s Immortality Pill, Roco had spent most of the time in Lancel village. Then she heard that Ark had come back.

“Sheesh, what an annoying girl.”

Jana glared at Roco and then waved to Ark.

“Come visit me when you get tired of a child like that nyang. A cat doesn’t care about the past nyang.”

“Shut up you erotic cat!”

“Hahaha, what does a little girl like you know about erotica nyang?”

He truly had no room to talk between the two women. Then he felt death stares in the back of his head as Roco dragged him away.

'If you have a girlfriend.....if you have a girlfriend.....if you have a girlfriend.....'

It was the curse message sent by Jana's fan club.

"Here is Oppa's new home."

Ark's eyes widened at the end of Roco's words. Ark had given money to the raccoon clan to expand his house while he was in the Netherworld. Of course, there wasn't a mail system in the Netherworld so Sid had to pay the prices. Ark asked the funds Sid owed him for the debt to pay for the expansion. But the money didn't come from his wallet so Ark had half forgotten about it. When he saw it, his expanded house was beyond his expectations. It was like the TV show where the shabby cottage had been transformed into a stunning two-storey house. A small but vibrant garden in front of the house and even a balcony on the 2nd floor.

'This much is definitely enough.....!'

No wonder why the raccoons he met before mentioned that there wasn't even a penny left. They didn't just extend the house but also changed the foundations. It was definitely good to make friends with NPCs.

"Oh Ark-nim, is that your house?"

Buksil's jaw dropped as he sent it an admiring look. Owning a house! That was a merchant's dream. But Ark was a warrior type profession not a merchant so it was surprising that he would own a two-storey house. Roco tilted her head to one side and finally noticed Buksil.

"Eh? That person is?"

"Let's enter while I explain."

Ark entered his house. The good looking interior was styled very well. The raccoons had also gifted him with several pieces of furniture. Thanks to that it didn't feel bare and empty. Ark entered the house and explained what happened in the Netherworld to Roco. Since they've met or talked on the phone during that time, there was no need to explain everything. However Ark felt strange while describing it to Roco. It wasn't something he intended. But he realised that he never mentioned Lariette while talking about the Netherworld. Although he often stayed in touch with Roco, he never thought of her as a girlfriend. In addition, Lariette was something else. But strangely he didn't feel right mentioning Lariette to Roco. A man was indeed an unknown animal.

'Well, it's good to avoid useless misunderstandings.'

Ark scratched his head and asked about the present situation.

"Where are the rehabilitation hyungs?"

"Last night they managed to finally get 12 Slime's Essence. I headed to Lancel first since I heard Oppa was coming back..... They'll be going to Jackson now."

Jackson? Why there?"

"JusticeMan originally left Jackson to build his reputation in the Evil Silrion. However, various things happened so that he couldn't participate in the Evil Silrion. Thus he decided to go back and explain it to Lord Jackson.

"Jackson.....It's been a long time since I was there."

Ark became nostalgic as he thought of Jackson. Jackson was a special town for Ark. He spent most of his newbie days there. In addition, the Lord sent soldiers to help when Ark was in a crisis. He utilized Lancel as his base for various reasons, but in the game he felt like Jackson was his real home.

"Sid?"

“Sid oppa is coming to Lancel.”

Anyway, he saw most of the people he needed to see in Lancel village.

‘But what now?’

He was lost for what to do after he suddenly came back to Lancel from the Netherworld. It isn’t possible to go anywhere until Bona deciphers the scroll and hunting around the village was impossible. The monsters were around level 100 while Ark was level 282 so he wouldn’t receive any experience from hunting. In addition, the level difference was so huge that he wouldn’t be able to obtain any items. It would just build up his fatigue.

‘But I can’t stop playing.....ah, making I can make the medicines?’

Ark could use the spare time to raise his Herbal Decoction skill. Herbal Decoction required certain conditions to be fulfilled before the skill proficiency would rise to advanced. He needed to make 100 to increase it by 1. Since he had been busy hunting, he could only make it in his spare time.

“There are a huge number of herbs around Lancel village. I’ll make Buksil gather the ingredients and raise his Ingredient Foraging skill at the same time.’

Then Ark suddenly thought of something.

‘Wait? Aren’t there a lot of users here compared to the Netherworld? So I don’t have to take the herbal medicine. Herbal Decoction makes medicines that don’t have an expiry date so it can be carried for a long time. Then can’t I make the herbal medicines then sell them?’

Ark’s spirit felt refreshed. In fact, Ark hadn’t been thinking of its marketability when making the herbal medicines. At the moment he could make effective salves, tonics and herbal teas. The salve had a low rating so it couldn’t treat anything beyond the intermediate level while the tonic had to be taken for a long period of time in order to increase the stats. The herbal tea had peculiar effects but there was no draw for a user to buy it. But Ark overlooked one thing. All his thoughts about the items were based on his level. A low level user must hunt for low level monsters of course. And the abnormal conditions caused by low level monsters had a lower ranking. High-level users would require more advanced

medicines to get rid of higher abnormal states. However, a beginner level state could be fatal for a low level user. Didn't Ark almost die many times when low levelled because he was affected by an abnormal condition? Eventually the Remedy became precious to low level users. That also applied to tonics and herbal teas. Taking the tonic for 30 days would increase the damage by 1, but that one point could have an enormous effect at low levels. In addition, low level users were still raising their production skills so they would be thankful for the effect of the herbal teas.

'And there are a lot of level 100 users around Lancel village. That means that Lancel village is the perfect place to sell such items. Why didn't I consider it until now?'

Herbal medicines required ingredients so it could be sold for much cheaper than alchemy potions. For low level users trying to save money, clearly the herbal medicines would be a better option. If Ark made money then wouldn't the commercial value of Lancel village increase even further?

'I thought of a good way to make money.'

However, there was one problem. It wasn't possible to sell low level herbal medicines for an expensive price. If he only engaged in business for one or two days then it wouldn't be lucrative. Compared to Giran, opening a street stall in Lancel village was a lot different. In order to make a huge profit, he would have to sell a huge variety of items in large quantities.

'So it is necessary to have a store and a part-time salesman!'

Ark looked around his extended house and smiled. He owned a two-storey house in Lancel village so there was no need to worry. And the part-time salesman Ark required..... It needed to be a merchant who mastered the relevant transactions and accounting skills. And Ark knew of one such merchant. The hobbit Sid who was tied to him with a slave contract.

'But Sid is my connection to the trading post in Silvana. I won't gain any profit from tying him to a place like this. It would cause larger damage. Then the remaining merchants.....'

Ark smiled slyly and asked Buksil.

"Buksil, have you been in touch with your brothers?"

“Huh? Yes, that.....”

“Tell them to come here right now.”

“W-why?”

“I’ll introduce them to a good job.”

Ark laughed as he got up from his seat. Ark exited the house and immediately went to the town hall. In order to open a shop in the village he had to get permission from the mayor first.

“You want to set up a business?”

Galen became startled at Ark’s words.

“Yes, I think I need to open something in order to settle down properly in the village.

“Hmm, it’s not a bad idea but it won’t be easy.... Well, it’s not that hard to give permission if you really want to do it. But even though you own a house in the village, you need to possess 3% shares in the village before you can open a shop. Did you know that?”

Of course he knew. If a foreigner was able to easily own stores then there would be those sorts of shops in villages all over New World. A normal user would normally only be able to obtain 2% shares in a village. In other words, without contributions a user wouldn’t be able to open a store no matter how much money they had. Presently Ark had 2.5% of shares in Lancel village. Thanks to Galen’s promise, he could now increase it to 5% after expanding his house.

“How much to raise it by 0.1%?”

“200 gold.”

“Huh?”

Ark who had been rummaging through his bag exclaimed with shock. The price had increase by 80 gold from the 120 gold he used to buy his original shares. However, it wasn't that bad. The shares becoming so expensive meant that Lancel village was developing at a much faster pace than Ark expected. And Lancel village was still developing. Once he released the shares and sold it to users, he would definitely see a profit.

‘Okay, thanks to my bank balance I can afford to spend the money here.....’

Currently Ark carried 4,000 gold! Ark worried for a while before boldly handing Galen 3,500 gold. It would definitely become profitable so there was no reason to hesitate.

“So an extra 1.5% share and the store permit is 500 gold. Here's 3,500 gold.”

“Huh, you seemed to have received a lot of luck on this trip.”

Galen muttered at the sight of the money. Anyway, he received a certificate from Galen and a new information window showed up.

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Your shares in Lancel village have risen to 4%.

Once you have 3% shares then you are able to own a private store.

A player operating a store will affected the commercial business of the village. If your trade flourishes and the village thrives then more contribution points will be added and your upper limit on the shares will increase. However, if your business suffers a huge loss then it will decrease the reputation of the

village. When this happens, your upper limit will go down and you might be deprived of your shop permit.

Currently owned shares in Lancel village (Owned/Upper Limit): 4/5%

Money was important whether in reality or in the game. Anyway now he had obtained the qualification to open a business. Ark visited the raccoons and asked them to remodel his house into a store. They easily agreed to create shelves and compartments inside the house. It cost 100 gold. After 10 minutes he only had 400 gold remaining from his original 4,000 but his heart was filled with pride.

“My store!”

Tears gathered when he saw the sign ‘Ark’s Comprehensive Store.’ His house, his store.....people who hadn’t saved their pennies in order to obtain a house or a store wouldn’t be able to understand.

Sometimes in life you could recognize a someone similar with just one glance. While Ark was in the midst of preparations to open the store, Sid finally arrived in Lancel village. And the moment Sid and Buksil met, they instantly understood each other.

‘That dwarf merchant, Ark-nim is also taking advantage of him.’

‘That hobbit merchant, he’s also been exploited by Ark.’

They didn’t even have to ask. They were people who suffered underneath Ark.....

The people with experience understood each other too well.

“Did you suffer a lot?”

“No, there is.....”

Sid sighed as Buksil clasped his hands and rocked on his feet. They stood facing each other before suddenly embracing. It was like meeting a friend after parting a long time ago, like they were deer licking their wounds. Although they were weak, the two merchants swore to someday plunge a dagger in that devilish person who exploited them.....

“Hey Sid. What are you doing?”

“Ark-nim!”

Sid automatically moved away when he heard Ark’s voice. No matter what he thought in his head, Sid’s weak body reacted first.

“Did you get what I asked you to find?”

“Of course.”

Sid quickly took out the unicorn horns from his bag.

“Ayu, it was nothing. These days it is so difficult to find unicorn horns that the price has increased to 1,050 gold. But who am I? If Ark-nim is in a desert then wouldn’t Sid go to collect ice for him? You asked me to buy 4 for 4,000 gold. Hehehe, now the loan price settlement.....’

Sid twisted his hands with an expectant look. Ark narrowed his eyes at Sid’s attitude. He knew Sid’s character. For a merchant to not show any dislike after going so far in order to receive a loan settlement was strange. But Sid had definitely bought the unicorn horns. And he already checked that the price rose to 1,050 gold on the auction site. Roco was also firmly clenching the rehabilitation group’s finances. The main reason Roco was in Lancel village was to receive the items and settle the payment with Sid.

“I’ll pay you right away. But the gold and items in your bag must be equal to the loan amount.”

“Ah, Ark-nim knows that as well.”

“Was it 4,000 gold?”

“Yep!”

Sid's eyes brightened as Ark motioned to Roco to take out her wallet. Then there was suddenly a cold smile on Ark's face. In fact, this was Ark's trap. Ark knew about the loan schemes of the Merchants guild. He had picked up the knowledge while travelling with Sid. At that time, Sid mentioned that the interest for a loan was 5%. In other words, Sid received a loan of 4,000 gold so the interest would be 200 gold. Yet Sid never even mentioned it. It meant Sid had no problem not receiving a handling charge for the 4,000 gold.

'I knew something was strange. I don't know where but he must've somehow purchased the unicorn horns for a much cheaper price. Ha, has that child grown that much? He even dared try to trick me?'

“Please show me the credit note issued by the Merchants guild first.”

“Huh? W-w-w-why?”

Sid panicked and stuttered.

“You might not know, but haven't I decided to operate a store? But I can't operate it using a guessing system. I have to check it and record it well after each transaction. If you buy things with a credit note then how will I know you haven't taken anything? I want to confirm that you borrowed 4,000 gold.”

“T-t-t-that.....”

“.....Do you want to die?”

Ark murmured in a low voice before Sid tearfully extended his credit not. It was recorded that he had spent 3,404 gold in an auction in Giran. He had bought it for 851 gold instead of the 1,000 gold he told

Ark. He stared at it for a long time as the silence ticked away. Well, his profession was a merchant. Doing everything possible to receive a profit was worthy of praise. He didn't want trouble before the opening of his business so Ark pretended to tolerate it.

"You bought it cheaper than I thought. Well done. Here's 3,404 gold."

Sid had swelled up with anticipation and released it with a sigh as he accepted the money. Then he had a thought and quickly calculated the interest.

"Ah Ark-nim, the loan interest....."

"What?"

Ark's face twisted as he glared at him. He'll say it again but Sid trying to gain profit was worth praising. But only if Ark wasn't his opponent.

"What the? Why were you silent when I offered you 4,000 gold before? However now you're mentioning it? Are you trying to scam me? Huh? Do I look like I'm easy to trick? If you keep on mentioning it then I won't let the problem go. Do you want me to become serious?"

".....Of course I will have to take care of it. Hahaha, of course."

"Ah, is that what you meant? Hahaha, then I'm thankful."

Ark laughed and tapped Sid's shoulder. Of course, the payment Ark received from Roco included interest so it was 4,200 gold. He paid Sid 3,404 gold while the remaining 796 gold obviously went into Ark's stomach. He only had 400 gold left after all the preparations for his store so he needed this gold. And Sid was forced to increase his debt by 200 in order to pay off the interest. Fortunately Isyuram forcefully gave Sid 100 gold but there was the 40 gold handling fee for the auction so $200 - 100 + 40 = 140$. So 140 gold still remained intact. He had crudely tried to use a shrew plan but it ended up backfiring on him. Isyuram to Sid, Sid to Ark.....in the end the pinnacle of the food chain was Ark.

'Hah, it's not my problem.'

Buksil sighed and watched the gloomy Sid walk around the corner. He didn't know what happened but he could tell that Sid had been struck by Ark. It was at that time. He heard some marvellous voices from behind him.

"Hyung-nim!"

"Oh, Sapjil! Ulmeok!"

Buksil turned around with a wide grin and shouted. Buksil contacted Sapjil and Ulmeok and now he greeted them with tears. It was a poignant moment meeting for the first time after separating in the Netherworld. Buksil's face clearly showed signs of suffering and he was wearing shabby attire.

"Ack, how has that guy been treating you?"

"Hyung-nim, you must have suffered a lot."

The three little pig brothers embraced each other with tears streaming down their faces. Then Sapjil suddenly looked at Buksil. His eyes blinked a few times before he winced and retreated.

"Ah, Hyung-nim.....this feeling.....c-chaotic....."

"Oh, you saw it? I'll tell you what happened."

Buksil sighed and tried to explain. However Ulmeok just flinched and retreated from him.

"No, I'll tell you the circumstances. It was actually revenge.....Sapjil?"

Sasasasak.

“Ulmeok?”

Sasasasak.

Whenever Buksil approached, Sapjil and Ulmeok immediately avoided him.

“Hyung-nim, I’m really sorry.” But no matter how it happened, you’re still chaotic.”

“Sob. Hyung-nim, you’ve become a bad guy in the meantime.”

“You, even you guys...!”

Buksil had believed in his two brothers and received a large shock from their attitude.

“Ya, why are you lingering over there? A chaotic player can’t be hanging around when my store is opening soon. Don’t wander around and get caught by a hunter. So you should shut yourself up somewhere until it is time to go to the Netherworld.”

“Even Ark-nim is treating me like this?”

In the end Buksil was crushed as well and ended up standing gloomily next to Sid. Sid and Buksil, these two merchants would continue to receive misfortune thanks to Ark.

Anyway all the necessary preparations were finished. The interior had been changed and he even recruited a merchant as a salesman. Of course the two merchants didn’t want to be salesmen in a small mountain village’s store. But Ark managed to convince Sapjil and Ulmeok to stay until Buksil’s chaotic status was removed. And the next day, ‘Ark’s Comprehensive Store’ opened its doors.

“Now, I’m going to start raking in the money starting from today!”

Ark exclaimed after putting something up at the entrance. It was the 'One thousand visitors.' It was an item that allowed stores to receive an extra 3% value on their goods. Originally he thought to give it to Sid but now he used it directly for his own gain!

The grand opening of 'Ark's Comprehensive Store' in Lancel village!

It sells all items ranging from japtem to magic items!

Also selling unusual but inexpensive items that don't exist in middle earth!

Feel the efficiency of the herbal medicines only sold at Ark's Comprehensive Store!

Recommended for those who want to become a master at foraging! Herbal Tea: 1~3 silver

An innovation price for a remedy to treat abnormal states! Salve: 10~15 silver

Eating this food will make you become stronger! Tonic (30 days): 2~5 gold

Limited sale of 30 items to commemorate the opening of the store! Nadingka's fruit: 2 silver

Ark started his business with the herbal medicines as his main product. But he didn't get an explosive response from the low-level users like he expected. The biggest problem was that Lancel village was much larger than in the past. The larger scale of the village meant there were 3 more general stores. In total there were 12 shops. And all the stores were concentrated at the entrance or in the centre of the village. On the other hand, Ark's store was in a residential area. There was no large population flow there so it was impossible to do business.

'What, this is? At this rate will I lost my investment?'

Ark watched the empty store for two days with impatience. There were quality items. The salves had the same potency as potions while being 50% cheaper while the tonic would be helpful in improving the stats of level 100 users. But what did it matter if the products were excellent? How could users try it if they didn't even know about it?

'As expected, I have to advertise the business. An idol is the best for effective advertising.'

So Ark visited the Meow section and requested Jana's help. With the usual Ark adoration Jana gladly accepted.

"Hello nyang. Everybody, do you know my wonderful boyfriend Ark? Nyang nyang, in fact he opened a store in the residential business. He has really good items to sell so please use it frequently in the future nyang."

Jana promoted the store to her fan club after she danced.

.....It had an effect.

-That bastard, get lost.

-I hope all your items are destroyed!

Curses and profanities were immediately written on the walls of Ark's Comprehensive Store. Ark decided to significantly modify his advertising strategy.

'Unbelievable. How the hell can I gather people.....?'

Ark frantically thought of new marketing strategies.

'Wait? Isn't there an easy way to get people to buy good items? Raising the price for low level users would be a burden so shouldn't I go the opposite way? I'll hide the store instead of advertising it.'

Ark instantly implemented his plan. Ark's influence on the NPCs of Lancel village was enormous. So he couldn't not take advantage of it. Ark put the sign and product list away and met with the Meow, the raccoons and the reformed thieves as he roamed the village. Then a strange rumour started to spread through Lancel village behind him.

"Hey, did you hear the rumour?"

"Yes I heard it. The one about the huge effects?"

"I've received an introduction so let's go check it out."

The Meow, raccoons and thieves gathered in groups of 2 or 3 and whispered together. Whenever the users approached them, they would panic and hurriedly shut their mouths. Users started to show curiosity once rumours of their strange actions spread. In RPG games, sometimes players would find a secret shop. Those stores weren't available everywhere and sold unusual goods. All the users were game enthusiasts so they immediately thought of a secret store when they saw the NPCs reactions. The users would sometimes raise their intimacy with the NPCs to obtain the information, eavesdrop or even threatening the NPCs. And shortly after.....

"Hello!"

"What product are you looking for?"

Ark welcomed his first guest. The warrior glanced around at the items on display. Leather, bone etc.....all the japtem he gathered from the Netherworld was on display. However, the warrior wasn't disappointed. He received information from a NPC that everything was disguised.

"Hmm hmm, I heard there were rare items only shown to people introduced here."

"Huh? Uh, where did you hear such talk.....?"

Ark's tense expression completely convinced the warrior.

“A person I know introduced me. So can you show me?”

“But it’s a secret so if can’t just show it to anyone.....”

“That won’t be a problem. I won’t spread any rumours so just show me a little bit.”

“Hah, it can’t be helped. I understand. I’ll show you as long as you don’t go anywhere else to buy it.”

“Yes yes, I understand.”

“Then first take a look at this note. It lists the inventory of items only sold to ‘chosen’ people. Don’t say the names and just secretly write what you want and the quantity.”

When Ark spoke secretly, the warrior pretended ignorance like a hero in a spy movie and read the piece of paper. It had in depth information about the items and how to use them. If he were given this paper on the streets, the warrior probably would’ve thrown it away without looking at it. However, the warrior was tempted by the ‘secret’ and read the piece of paper several times.

“I didn’t know there were such items. Give me 10 of this and this.”

“Oh, but those items don’t have that much left in stock.....”

“I’ll pay one silver more.”

Ark sighed and pretended to fret so the warrior became impatient and promised even more money.

‘Huhuhu, it is a success!’

Ark laughed as he watched the warrior carry out the goods he received. The ‘secret’ was the core of his marketing campaign. And being the first to know the secret was the original charm. But after a while.....anyone could know the secret. At first they would probably feel a sense of superiority.

However, they won't be able to feel that sense of superiority if they didn't tell anyone. The people who looked for Ark's Comprehensive Store were the same. They all nodded when Ark asked them to keep it a secret. But soon users would go to their friends and say 'that guy sold this to me.' And the surprised friends would confirm the effect of the items while the original buyer's face would say 'Huhuhu, how about it? I know this secret shop.' It was a domineering expression on his face.

The marketing was a great success! Although everyone knew about it, the users thought they were the only ones to know and secretly gathered in Ark's shop. And every time they would buy 10 or 20 after Ark mentioned that the items were almost sold out. Thanks to that the herbal medicines suddenly ran out.

'Wow, it's not a joke? All these ingredients supplied by Buksil have run out?'

The ingredients supply couldn't keep up with the sales so Ark visited the Baran at the training centre. The Baran gathered sap so most of them had the foraging skill. Ark shared japtem with them since they didn't have the concept of money and the Baran started gathering ingredients from around Lancel village. A new rumour started to spread that NPCs with blue skin similar to smurfs were living in Lancel village.....

Anyway, thanks to that Ark's 'secret' store became famous.

'Now my store is on track. But it's not there yet. Including the house, I invested approximately 4,000 gold into this business. I have to maintain this state for several months in order to make a profit. Well, Lancel village now has a mailbox so I can easily supply the goods.....'

Since the business became so good, Ark suddenly faced new challenges.

'I can't be preoccupied with the sales. I also have to connect with Sid's trading post in Silvana and engage in large transactions. But I have to rely on Sapjil and Ulmeok. Leaving the shop to them is a bit.....'

Yes, Ark wasn't satisfied with it just being the secret store in Lancel village. He had the intention of connecting with the trading post in Silvana when he created the store. Connecting to Silvana was the first step in establishing a trade route between Silvana and Lancel which was Ark's grand dream. However, Ark couldn't become a merchant and stay at the store in Lancel village. But he was worried about entrusting it to Sapjil and Ulmeok.

‘A trustworthy person.....’

Then Ark suddenly heard Roco’s voice in his ears.

“Kids, what are you doing now?”

“Isn’t the turnover rate for that one the best? Pile it up on the outside.”

“Look at this dirt. Is that what you consider cleaning? The attitude is a problem you should get rid of.”

These days, it was routine for Roco to stay in the store and nag Sapjil and Ulmeok whenever she connected. Ark snapped his fingers as he stared at Roco.

‘That’s right, why didn’t I think of that?’

She was too close so I didn’t notice. Roco had experience after handling the finances of the rehabilitation group and 300 thieves. Although she wasn’t as strong in profit or loss as them, Roco had a firm controlling grasp on Sid, Sapjil and Ulmeok. Additionally, he could always take to Roco on the phone and get a grasp on the situation in the store and provide necessary instructions. Indeed, she was the best choice for a store manager!

“Roco, would you like to become the store manager?”

“Store manager?”

“Yes, there will be numerous times when I’ll have to leave and I can only entrust it to you.”

“I’ll do it. I accept!”

Roco shouted when Ark finished talking.

“The pay is.....”

“You don’t have to worry.

Oppa’s money is my money.....’

Roco laughed as she twisted her body. A fantasy was already playing in Roco’s head.

“Oppa, I’ve earned all this gold!”

“Oh, indeed you’re the only one I can trust. My burning love, my darling!”

“Hohoho, let’s build a house of gold on that blue meadow.”

“Hahaha, let’s eat as much cotton candy as we want!”

‘Hehehe.’

Roco drooled while imagining things. Sapjil and Ulmeok winced and retreated.

“W-what’s with that woman? Why is she drooling while laughing?”

“Clearly her mind has gone away. Hyung-nim, we have to work for her?”

“A devilish owner, crazy manager.....why do we always.....”

“Sob, Hyung-nim I’m scared.”

Sapjil and Ulmeok cried as they embraced each other and trembled with fear. Anyway, Roco was appointed as the general manager for Ark's Comprehensive Store.