

Ark Vol 13 C 1

Chapter 1

ACT 1 The Whereabouts of the Last Three Marvels

In the high seas between Schudenberg Kingdom and Bristania Kingdom, 'The Lost World=Seutandal' has emerged. There are numerous legends thriving in Seutandal so please enjoy a new adventure.

That was the message every user in New World saw a few days ago. Of course, users responded to this news hotly. New monsters, new hunting grounds and new dungeons! The emergence of Seutandal lit a fire in users who were always thirsty for new things. But it wasn't just users with warrior professions who were stimulate. It was easy to understand when looking at the history of mankind. The appearance of a whole new civilization could possibly upset the normal economy. It was similar to the great navigational era in Europe's history where things like tea, spices and silk came pouring in. The merchants in New World would not miss such an opportunity. All anybody could talk about in the merchant city of Giran was Seutandal.

"Let's go to the land of opportunity, Seutandal!"

"We can't be later than the other guilds, hurry up!"

Thanks to that, the passenger ferries on the East coast of the continent became crowded with users. While many warriors and merchants were flocking to Seutandal, Ark had actually left Seutandal and arrived in Giran.

'Phew, everybody here is distracted.'

Ark dusted himself off and looked around. The NPCs and users in every village he dropped in at would only talk about Seutandal. So many users flocked to Seutandal that the normally busy Giran felt empty. Ark realized how huge it was after arriving on the continent.

'Well, it's not a bad thing if people gather in Seutandal.'

Ark looked warmly at the users heading towards Seutandal. The hunting would decline thanks to the users flocking there. So far Ark had monopolized the dungeons in Seutandal and now he had more competitors.

‘But I can’t monopolize all the prey in Seutandal by myself. And the situation in Seutandal is now 180 degrees different from the previous month. More people gathering would naturally make it evolve faster. When that happens, the benefits would outweigh having the dungeons stolen by other users.’

Ark recalled what happened in the last few days in Seutandal.

‘Things have worked out better than I thought.’

Although Seutandal rising to middle earth was a big event, it was an even more tremendous event for the Baran clan. The world they knew for hundreds of years was changing. The Baran tribe elders were filled with fear and confusion of the unknown. Their reactions were natural. Although Asia was a new continent for the Europeans in the exploration era, to the natives they were just scary predators. Even though Ark only received 60 points in history class, he knew at least this much. So he quickly gathered the elders when Seutandal finished rising.

“Although Seutandal has finished rising, you can’t interact with the continent.”

“What kind of place is the continent?”

“It is a huge place many times larger than Seutandal. There is the Bristania, Sinus and Schudenberg kingdoms, with each kingdom having thousands and thousands of soldiers. In addition, the soldiers’ equipment is so developed that it can’t even be compared to yours.”

“T-then what will we do if they invade?”

“We’ve only just managed to prevent the threat of the Nakujuk.....”

The elders murmured with uneasy looks. Ark deliberately put on a serious expression and spoke once again.

"I definitely can't guarantee that there is no risk."

"Then isn't this a serious problem?"

"But the Baran clan aren't weak like before. Didn't you manage to defend against the threat of the Nakujuk? I promise. If everybody unites together then not even the kings of the strong continent would dare invade."

"Umm....."

The elders still looked worried.

"I see what you mean. But we don't know anything about them. We don't know how to communicate and build goodwill with them."

"There's nothing to worry about. If you don't understand then you should trust someone who does."

Ark grinned and replied. In fact, the Three Kingdoms couldn't afford to invade Seutandal. It was 100% that the ambassadors from the continent would be friendly. But there was a reason for him crating an uneasy atmosphere. It was in order to recommend Isabel who was the head of the Dark Brothers as the representative for Seutandal.

"Oh, that's right. There is such a way."

"Yes, we can leave it to the head of the Dark Brothers."

The elders were so anxious that they all unanimously agreed to have Isabel represent them. Shortly afterwards, Isabel led all of the Dark Brothers and moved them to Seutandal. They settled at Haman Fortress which was renamed 'Eastern Nation.' Isabel and the Dark Brothers were finally able to break from their stained past and achieve the new home that they so desired.

‘Then the contract with Isabel has been completed.’

Of course, Ark didn’t do this for Isabel’s good. Isabel promised to give Ark two rewards if everything finished perfectly. He could now receive the rewards since Isabel was appointed the representative of Seutandal. So while Isabel was settled in Haman Fortress, the continent’s delegation arrived in Seutandal. Although he would only briefly describe it, there were two reasons why the delegation came to visit the Baran clan instead of the Nakujuk. The first was that they were a chaotic race and the second reason was that the Nakujuk already tried to invade the continent. They boldly attacked the kingdom of Schudenberg. That’s right. It was the event where Ark sent 50 Nakujuk from the valley village to Selebrid. So the continent judged the Nakujuk as threatening monsters and only sent a delegation towards the Baran clan. Although Isabel was chaotic like the Nakujuk, her beauty made a good impression on the delegates.

“We want to become friendly with all three kingdoms. The Netherworld isn’t an evolved civilization like the continent but it has many resources that can’t be found on the continent. It would be beneficial to everybody if we develop a good relationship. If you want to interact with us then please allow us to send somebody to each kingdom. All future negotiation will go through our ambassador.”

“Yes, of course.....”

So the Eastern Nation was able to establish an official branch in each Kingdom. Isabel also had a condition for the Schudenberg Kingdom.

“I would like you to build the Schudenberg Kingdom branch in Lancel Village.”

The representative from the Schudenberg Kingdom showed reluctance.

“I don’t understand. Lancel is a mountain village that doesn’t have any adjacent villages and isn’t close to the Royal Road. Why would you install a branch in such a complicated place?”

“I understand your point but I’m sorry. But Lancel village has already entered an alliance with Seutandal.”

“Huh? How is that possible?”

"I cannot tell you all the details. Anyway, we have formed a connection with Lancel village which makes our relationship with the Schudenberg Kingdom even deeper. As a sign of friendship, we promise to trade more through Lancel village and give more benefits to the Schudenberg Kingdom than any other kingdom.

"If that's the case, there is no reason to refuse....."

The representative didn't fully understand the situation but accepted her proposal after scratching his head. There was no reason to refuse when they would gain even more benefits.

"Huhuhu, that's it. That's it!"

This was one of the rewards Isabel promised Ark. It wasn't necessary to explain again, but the centre of politics and diplomacy was bound to have commercial development. If Lancel village was designated as the communication place between Schudenberg Kingdom and Seutandal, a number of users of NPCs would rush there. Lancel village was only a mountain village but it would emerge as the new trade centre. Of course, the real estate would boom and Ark's Comprehensive Store would enjoy more profit.

'Now the items from Seutandal will be traded exclusively through Ark's Comprehensive Store to the Schudenberg Kingdom!'

Of course, Seutandal still had a low cultural level so there weren't that many products to trade. However, the Eastern Nation had already decided its capital city. And Isabel had already used her funds to build a variety of facilities around Haman Fortress. When the construction was completed and Seutandal's development increased, trading would probably become active. If Ark's Comprehensive Store monopolized the trade in Schudenberg Kingdom then obviously he would get a large profit.

"This is just the beginning."

Ark opened his contract with Isabel.

The head of the Dark Brothers, Isabel will negotiate to use Ark's Comprehensive Store in Lancel village as the trading post between Seutandal and the Schudenberg Kingdom. In addition, Ark will also get the rights to establish and operate a trading post in Seutandal.

The right to establish a trading post in the Eastern Nation! This was the second compensation promised by Isabel. Thanks to the trading post in Seutandal, not only could he trade with the Schudenberg Kingdom but Bristania and Sinius as well. Seutandal was still an undeveloped place with few trading posts. If he considered the future, the real estate price would increase tremendously.....

Maybe it would be impossible to maintain a trading post forever. But while he had it, it made the difference between heaven and earth. If he was a normal merchant then it would take a huge amount of time and effort in order to obtain the rights.

"Owning the rights to the trading post is like owning a goose who lays golden eggs. If I regain Silvana later on then I'll also get a share of the Continental Commerce Firm...."

Silvana, Lancel village and Seutandal was like a triangular linked trading connection. Ark's desire to control the markets of Schudenberg and Nagaran wasn't a dream anymore.

'I'm out of range of the Hermes guild while in Seutandal and it's also possible to recapture Silvana.'

When one piece of the puzzle fit then the other pieces would follow. In fact, until recently he had abandoned his plans to recapture Silvana because the Hermes Alliance's forces were more than he expected. But this incident wasn't a small blow to the Hermes guild.

'Sid told me they wasted 3,000 gold hiring mercenaries and now they're almost broke. Huhuhu, that Raiden wasted his money. Moreover, the Baran clan aren't friendly with the Hermes guild so they'll never set foot in Seutandal.'

He assumed that Raiden was hitting the ground and weeping by now. Ark didn't even have to mention all the equipment he took from Jewel's group. Therefore there was quite bit of discontent among the Hermes Alliance and Sid saw signs of division within the alliance.

‘Well, their strength won’t weaken that much but if there’s internal dissent then I don’t have to worry about them for the moment.’

Anyway, Ark considered all his problems amicably resolved. While everything was being put into order, the people around Ark also became more determined.

“The Nakujuk are still using the valley village as a base to threaten the Baran clan. We’ll stay at Haman Fortress until the Netherworld regains its stability.”

JusticeMan and the rehabilitation members said that they would stay at Haman Fortress.

“We’re going to train the Baran clan and gain some levels as well.”

“What did the Red Man say? I’ll won’t leave him along the next time we meet.”

“Train until we meet him again!”

The rehabilitation members said. Their one-sided fight against the Red Man had a huge impact on them. It was the same for Ark. Thanks to his time in Seutandal, Jewel and Duke weren’t a match for him anymore. Therefore Ark inwardly became cocky. Meeting the Red Man smashed his ego.

‘I still have a long way to go. I don’t know what he’s doing but no doubt I’ll see him again. I have to raise my skills enough to fight him!’

Now Ark’s goal was the Red Man. It was necessary to train even more to exceed his goal. Lariette also decided to stay at Haman Fortress. She was an office worker so playing the game with Ark made her quite tired. Although she regretted it, she couldn’t keep up with Ark’s pace.

‘Well, if I stay with the rehabilitation hyungs then we’ll often be able to meet.’

The one person who hadn't decided was Buksil. The one who settled his problem was surprisingly Ark. After quest automatically finished, Ark immediately went off to Magaro's laboratory. With the dimension now stable, the mirage was back to normal.

.....And Ark found a financial windfall.

He finally got his hands on a large amount of potions and scrolls. He found 200 advanced potions and 150 scrolls! Of course, they were items that he could sell in Ark's Comprehensive Store. But these advanced items had level restrictions. The minimum level was 200. Users around level 100 gathered at Lancel so the scrolls wouldn't sell even at half-price. Therefore Ark left the sales for Buksil at Haman Fortress. A lot of users flocked to Haman Fortress after Seutandal rose. They were mainly high level users. Supplies were needed in order to travel New World. He would be able to get a higher price if he sold the advanced potions to higher levelled players. In the end, Buksil was envious of the items but he became satisfied with selling them. His handling charge for selling Ark's items was 10% of the gross sales! He had difficulty with Buksil in the past but Seutandal wouldn't have risen without the [Banish] scroll. Therefore Ark calculated a large commission. He expected a large income so he could afford to be generous.

'Huhuhu, I'll soon get thousands of gold in my hand when everything is put in order.'

Ark managed to get 900 gold from selling his japtem. There were also the ores he received from supplying weapons to the Baran clan and the 20 items he took from Jewel's group. Now Buksil was selling his potions and scrolls. It was equivalent to 5000~6000 gold. That was equivalent to the amount of money he collected during his first year of playing the game.

'Now all that's left is to sell them. If everything is popular then the remaining lease money won't be a problem!'

Thankfully Ark now felt much lighter.

'As expected, Magaro's quest led to a lot of money!'

He gained thousands of gold from this quest alone. And that wasn't all. He still hadn't received full compensation from the Magic Institute. It was why Ark came to Giran.

“Okay, now shall I officially collect the full compensation for this troublesome quest?”

“Welcome Ark. I’ve been waiting for you.”

Shannen instantly welcomed him when he entered the Magic Institute. Shannen showed Ark into a room and looked at him with anticipation.

“My morning horoscope predicted that the person I was waiting for would come. So I just got a feeling. Yes, I think I’ll be happy with your news judging by your bright expression.”

“You really are a magician.”

Ark smiled and pulled out the books he collected from the laboratory. There were 200 of them. 150 of them were Netherworld related books that Magaro had borrowed from the Magic Institute when he left while the other 50 was his research materials. Ark considered them trash since he couldn’t sell it but to Shannen they were treasures.

“Oh, you did it. You really did it!”

As expected, Shannen praised his efforts while drooling over the items.

“Yes, so where did Magaro leave them?”

Ark explained the circumstances towards Shannen when he asked. Shannen sighed after hearing about Magaro’s death.

“.....That’s right, Magaro was remembered for his single mindedness. His tragic end came about from such a personality. Based on his research, he was attempting to raise the Netherworld back to middle earth but his attempts failed and he became like that.

Thank you.”

“No, there is no need for thanks.”

Shannen waved his hand and spoke.

“The Magic Institute has been stagnant for a long time. But now that the research materials of the Magic Institute’s greatest genius has been returned, the Magic Institute might be able to regain its lost glory. I’m thanking you on behalf of the Magic Institute.”

The Silver Arrow and Letter Movement that the Magic Institute created were actually based off Magaro’s drafts. After the genius disappeared, the technology for the Silver Arrow and Letter Movement was left incomplete and the Magic Institute became stagnant. But now the Magic Institute could use Magaro’s research materials. Shannen explained that they could use the research to fill in their incomplete gaps of knowledge in order to create new potions and scrolls. Ark had an ecstatic look as Shannen continued chattering on. The research materials had a larger effect on the Magic Institute than expected so he was expecting a larger reward. Fortunately, Shannen finally stopped the chatter and talked about what he wanted to hear.

“Now, it is time to compensate the benefactor of the Magic Institute. Please receive this.”

Shannen held out a scroll.

“This is.....?”

“It is a qualification to become a member of the Magic Institute filled out by the Grandmaster himself. The Master has already accepted you as a full member of the Magic Institute once the request was completed. I’ll tell you first but you’ll receive very special rights with this.”

Ark received the scroll and the information window appeared.

-You have received the ‘Magic Institute Member’ title from the associated Master.

He has recognized your service to the Magic Institute and granted you membership. The Magic Institute has an impact on the entire continent. Being a full member of this organization is an honour only a handful of people enjoy. This honour allows you to receive a variety of preferential treatment from the Magic Institute.

* As a title bonus all stats will increase by 5.

*Your friendship with the Magic Institute will increase by 200.

*Fame increases by 300.

A private warehouse and laboratory, and discounts on various magic items! It was an amazing reward for a magician. However Ark had no interest in magic. The +5 bonus to all stats was great. The compensation for the title was quite high. But it wasn't satisfactory compared to all the trouble he went through. Ark wanted a more substantial reward. To be frank, he wanted money.

"This..... Is that everything?"

"Oh, this reward isn't to your liking?"

"No, it's not that but....."

Ark showed some anxious gestures while Shannen laughed and nodded.

"Hahaha, I know. We've prepared a present to match the hero of the Magic Institute."

A young magician instantly approached when Shannen clapped his hands.

"Please guide this friend to the 15th floor."

The young magician had a shocked expression. Then he stared at Ark before saying in a polite tone.

“.....Come along.”

Ark got up to follow the magician before hesitating and looking back at Shannen.

“Oh, I have one more thing I’ll like to ask.”

“What is it? If it’s you then naturally I’ll help.”

“Can you make two Summoning Ports?”

“Summoning Ports?”

Shannen tilted his head like he had heard the word for the first time.

“It’s among Magaro’s research materials. Was it book 13?”

It was the reason Ark dropped everything and ran to the Magic Institute. It was more important than his ambitions for Hermes and completing the quest..... There was one problem Ark never thought of when Seutandal rose. Ark realized it 24 hours after Seutandal rose and he tried to summon Dedric and Razak who died in the fight against the Red Man.

-The summon command has failed (Area Restriction).

“Eh? What is this?”

A red warning message appeared stating that he wasn't able to summon his pets. He thought maybe 24 hours hadn't passed yet but it was the same after a few hours.

"Even though it appeared on middle earth, isn't it still Seutandal?"

Ark thought this and tried to summon them again on the continent. But the same message still occurred. Now Ark realised that the problem was more serious than he thought.

"W-wait? The reason I was unable to summon them on Seutandal was because we were in the same dimension. But now that Seutandal is a part of middle earth..... Huk!"

In other words, the Seutandal penalty was also applied to middle earth?

"What, what the? So in the future I won't be able to summon my pets?"

Ark's eyes darkened as he belatedly realised this fact. Hadn't he spend 1 year raising his pets? And now they weren't going to be there in the future.... It was too terrible to even imagine.

"N-no. It can't be!"

From then on Ark started to wildly look for a solution. And he unexpectedly found a way through Magaro's diary. Magaro's diary stated that he applied the Letter Movement technology to a portable object after coming to the Netherworld. The 'Summoning Port' was a similar object to the Letter Movement tower where the target was registered to a particular location and could be summoned with no restrictions. It was a by-product of Magaro's research to raise Seutandal. However, the Summoning Port only worked with contracted summons so he abandoned it.

"Phew, fortunately he is still helping me even after he died."

He realized once again that it was a game. An unexpected problem would always have a resolution to it.

"Anyway, if I accomplish this then Razak and Dedric can be summoned again?"

But there were still problems remaining. There were no Summoning Ports manufactured in Magaro's laboratory. He had the plans but rare magic ingredients, advanced magic and advanced alchemy was required to create the Summoning Port. Therefore Ark commissioned the Magic Institute to create it for him.

"Ahh, here it is. Hoo, such a method..... As expected, Magaro really is a genius."

Shannen made more exclamations as he browsed through the data and materials required for it.

"How long would you take to create it?" "There structure isn't that complicated so it should only take one day. I'll tell the workshop to produce it with top priority. But the necessary ingredients are quite rare so the price will be expensive. Let's see, it's 700 gold for 1 piece."

Ark felt breathless as his jaw dropped.

"C-can't you give me a small discount?"

"I'm sorry but it's difficult. As you can see, this requires a lot of rare ingredients. I've deducted the labour costs and this is just the price for the materials. If I added labour costs then it would be over 800 gold."

Ark knew that as he had also seen the blueprints. 'Eyes of Saraku,' 'Modified Breath,' 'Mana Power' and so on.....all the magic ingredients needed for the Summoning Port were expensive. In addition, if a normal users asked for it then they would've had to pay 1000 gold. He thought he could get a discount since his intimacy was high but Shannen wouldn't budge.

'Dammit, the income needed as a side effect of Magaro's quest seems like it is more than the reward.....'

As expected, living wasn't that easy.

'Two Summoning Ports will cost 1,400 gold. That is probably half of the revenue I've obtained from Magaro's laboratory. His anger felt like exploding when he thought about it but he had no other choice.

His pets were worth 700 gold to Ark. They were an indispensable existence.

'But I'm still lucky. If someone else had raised Seutandal then I would've had to search for a way and then spend 2,000 gold. Fortunately, I got the quest to look for Magaro's laboratory and found the Summoning Ports there. The value of the items in the laboratory will also cover the costs for the Ports.'

.....Thoughts like that were more beneficial to his mental health.

"I understand. I'll calculate it when I come tomorrow."

"Then we'll start working on it straight away."

Shannen smiled and headed towards the workshop.

"Come, follow me."

The young magician sighed as he approached Ark.

'Yes, I know. This is the Magic Institute's reward.'

In the past Ark had gone to the 10th floor. There had been items worth hundreds of gold there. But this time it was the 15th floor. What kind of items would there be? Ark imagined the Magic Institute's rewards and eagerly followed.

"It's really amazing. This is the first time I've seen the 15th floor. Naturally it is also the first time a foreigner has been here. No, I'm sorry. You're not a foreigner but a regular member of the Institute. Anyway, the 10th floor treasure is amazing so I can't even fathom how much the treasure on the 15th floor will be worth."

The magician spoke in a trembling voice as they appeared in front of the doors. He stared at Ark with an impressed and respectful look.

"I'd love to see it too but unfortunately I don't have permission. I'll wait here so please enter. As you know, there is only one choice. Once you select it, you won't get another chance even if you are a member of the Magic Institute."

"Did you hear that? Don't eat something selfishly this time."

Ssak ssak, ssak ssak ssak ssak!

Radun licked his tongue with an apologetic expression. Ark finally entered after giving the firm advice.

"Indeed.....!"

A sound of admiration naturally flowed from Ark's mouth. The number of items on the 15th floor were much lower than the 10th floor. Each type had only 1 item. But even with a glance, he could tell that the Magic Institute had put a lot of value into these items. As expected, it was like torture picking just one item. However Ark had experienced this situation before. Thanks to that, he had already decided in his heart.

"It must be a sword, a sword!"

It was the most expensive and frequently traded item! Of course, Ark had the very rare Gwisal's sword. Its attack power and performance were top of the line! On the other hand, the defense on his armour was quite low compared to his level. But it didn't matter. If he had to pick among all those items then a good sword would get him more money.

'I have to choose carefully. Of course, the value of most items would likely be similar. That's only when selling to NPCs of course. The price is different when selling to NPCs compared to selling to users.'

In fact, if Ark sold Gwisal's sword to a NPC then he would only receive 600~700 gold. That's because NPCs only think of it as a rare level 180 sword. However it was different on the auction site. Depending

on the buyer, he could receive between 1,000 and 1,500 gold for it. On the other hand, rare defense items would only receive a maximum of 1,000 gold. Although they gave a lot of defense, he didn't see the point of picking an item that would sell for 500 gold less.

'There's two swords, a one-handed and two-handed sword.'

This section also caused Ark conflict. It was the 15th floor so it was guaranteed that both swords would be high quality. They both looked wonderful to his eyes. The one-handed sword didn't have any special decorations but seemed to have great damage. Meanwhile, the two-handed sword had a glossy black surface that looked like the scales of a reptile. In general, warriors used shields so they preferred a one-handed sword. Naturally there would be many buyers so the price would increase. However, currently Ark was immersed in the charms of the two-handed sword. Also, his 'Drastic Measures' skill was one that could only be used with a two-handed sword.

'The one-handed sword is good if I only consider selling, but if the two-handed sword is similar to Gwisal's sword then it would be better. I'll be able to use it as much as I want and then sell it. And the rare two-handed sword has a higher chance of learning advanced skills than the one-handed sword.'

In any case, there was guaranteed to be a benefit no matter what he chose.

'Now, money or utilization.....'

He had to make a choice on which would be more beneficial. After worrying for a while, an item he had forgotten about flashed through his head.

'Oh, yes! Perhaps this will be useful.'

Ark took out a small copper coin. It was a 1 copper coin with scratches all over it..... Not long ago, a user visiting Ark's Comprehensive Store didn't have enough money and asked if this could be worth 1 gold. Ark honestly wasn't incline to agree, but it was the early stages so he accepted it to secure the customers. However, it was a very interesting item.

-Lucky Coin (Special)

Sometimes old coins that merchants carry around will become lucky.

With making a difficult decision, there is a 65% probability that this coin will predict a good outcome. But that is all it does. The merchant who blindly believed this coin decided everything using it and became bankrupt.

A 65% probability was quite vague. Although there was a benefit, there was also a 35% chance of receiving damage. However, Ark was guaranteed a benefit no matter what he chose. Then wasn't a 65% chance to get a better result worth it?

"If it's heads then I'll chose the two-handed sword while it's the one-handed sword for tails!"

Ark closed his eyes and threw the coin upwards. Then he caught it with the back of his hand and opened his eyes.

"Tails..... The one-handed sword?"

But Ark quietly frowned. It was a strange thing but the two-handed sword was definitely more tempting. Ark hesitated repeatedly before finally picking the two-handed sword.

"Isn't a coin just a coin? I've never believed in such things!"

The display cases closed with a mechanical sound after he picked his reward. At the same time, the information window about the two-handed sword flashed in front of Ark.

Promised Sword (Rare)

Weapon type: Two-Handed Sword

Attack: 40~50

Durability: 200/200

Weight: 45

User Restriction: Level 250, Advanced Sword Mastery skill

An ancient sword inscribed with complex magic symbols. The symbols engraved on the sword can't be decrypted using the current knowledge. However, the aura it gives off indicates that there is still an undisclosed hidden secret. There is also a space to fit something between the sword blade and hilt. It seems related to the sword's secret.

"Eh?"

Ark became frustrated at the sight of the information window. Attack was 40~50. It was the same as Gwisal's sword which had a level restriction of 180. In addition, agility and reaction rate in Gwisal's sword was more rare than the common strength and stamina option. And there wasn't even a special option attached to the sword. The only suspicious feature was the four sockets.

"Damn, was the coin's choice correct?"

The value of a sword was its attack power. But to be on the same standard as a level 180 sword? It was a level 250 rare sword but it would be difficult to get a decent price for it. People would pay 2 or 3 times more for a better sword. On the other hand, there would be a lot of curious looks. That's because there have been no socketed weapons seen in New World yet.

'Weren't socketed weapons common in the old online games? Then the performance should be able to be upgraded..... Yes, it is still too early to be disappointed. If you can socket items then the performance will definitely improve. Do you know? Wouldn't it be an awesome item if I filled the sockets?'

"That is your choice?"

"Yes."

When he exited and answered the magician's question, there was a ringing sound and the information window appeared.

quest has been completed.

-Your level has risen. -Your level has risen. -Your level has risen.....

He started the quest at level 120 and finally finished it when he was level 300! The amount of experience for all that time invested was enormous. He reached the limit after going up 10 levels. After completing the quest, Ark exited the Magic Institute to look at his warehouse and laboratory.

"Character information window!"

Character Name Ark Race Human Alignment Good +450 Fame 11,425 (+ 500) Level 314 Profession Dark Walker Title Cat Knight, Caretaker of the World Tree, Jackson's Hero, Great Adventurer, Magic Institute Member Health 5,005 (+150) Mana 4,995 Spiritual Power 200 Strength 602 (+28) Agility 829 (+55) Stamina 952 (+20) Wisdom 118 (+10) Intelligence 971 Luck 112 (+60) Flexibility 127 Art of Communication 66 Affection 57 (+10) Resilience 415 Special stat: Knowledge of Ancient Relics 138 * Equipment item effects Guardian Armour of the Merpeople: Water Attribute Resistance +100%, Penalty based on water is nullified.

Cat Paws (Gloves): Attack Speed +10%, Agility +15, Critical Hit +10%

Raccoons Pith (Helmet): Agility + 10, Wisdom + 10

* Set effect: Strength + 10, Agility + 10, Stamina +10, Defense +20

Warrior's Transcripts (Shoulder Blades): Strength + 3

Wind Spirit's Boots (Shoes): Agility + 30, Movement Speed +30%, Attack Speed +10%, 'Slide' available

Galgashi's Fur (Mantle): Cold resistance +100%, Agility +20, When health is less than 50%, 'Magic Protection' automatically activates.

Adelaine's Necklace (Necklace): Defense + 40, Affection +10, 'Blessing of the Sea' available

Resurrecting Spirit (Ring): Strength + 5, Mana recovery + 5%

Rarukan's Ring (Ring): Agility + 10, Attack Speed +10%, Critical Hit +8%, 'Dark Protection' available

Amulet of Vitality (Bracelet): Health + 50, Health recovers by 5 every 20 seconds

Gladiator's Honour (Bracelet): Strength, Agility, Stamina +10, Fame +500, Sword-based Skill Growth +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 to Fear, Darkness, Blind, and Seduction spells is increased by 50%.

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

* Shock absorption is increased by 20%.

* Poison resistance has increased by 50%.

* 10% increased attack and defense

* Skill points: 30

After finishing everything, Ark was now level 314. He had finished a few large quests after the battle against the Nakujuk. Now there's only two remaining quests remaining, and the Well, would be completed when he went to the Bristania Kingdom and the quest was only a matter of time. After Seutandal rose, there were some Baran members who returned while others stayed at Lancel village. Thanks to Galen's enthusiastic persuasion, the quest completion was at 95%. The remaining 5% would be filled quickly if Ark actually went out looking for residents.

'Shall I receive the Summoning Ports and then return to Seutandal?'

The problem was that he could only receive the Summoning Ports after paying the required 1,400 gold.

'But that's not all. I have to visit that place that Razak and Dedric had been forcefully recalled to. Hah, it is somewhat pathetic. All the money I'm investing..... Now I have to act like a home room teacher and visit the homes of my pets.'

Ark sighed and walked around. He never thought things would become so difficult after Seutandal rose. But he couldn't move manually across the ocean every time his pets died.

"It can't be helped. I can't just leave them alone. Once I have the Summoning Ports then I can choose a location. Kekeke, eh? What, what the?"

It was at that time. Ark suddenly felt like he was being sucked into a vacuum cleaner. After a few minutes, he appeared in a place with lots of gold coins strewn around. Ark sighed with relief and shook his head. It was none other than Ark's spirit world. If he came here then the culprit was obvious. Yggdrasil and Yuzuria were sitting nearby.

“What’s going on all of a sudden? Can you come into someone else’s spirit world without permission? I’m surprised!”

-Hehehe, I’m sorry.

Yggdrasil smiled with a spiteful face.

-I called a couple of times but you didn’t answer.

“Called?”

-Didn’t you feel it?

That reminded him that he felt his bag shake earlier. But he thought it was just his imagination so he ignored it.

But if it was the Sacred Branch then it was similar to a phone being set on vibration mode..... If they wanted to add such functions then they should’ve made a ringtone mode.

-Yggdrasil, there’s no time to talk about such things.

Yuzuria spoke in a curt voice.

Although Yuzuria looked like a young lady, she was actually the same age as Yggdrasil. But wasn’t Yggdrasil rejuvenated thanks to the newborn Popo? Yggdrasil nodded before opening his mouth.

-That’s right. Ark, I wanted to thank you once again for helping Yuzuria. But I’ve come to the conclusion that you’ve been tricked by the Red Man.

“Huh? Tricked?”

Ark's face became tense as the Red Man was brought into the conversation. The Red Man was a powerful enemy who was unable to be traced. In addition, the huge skyray that disappeared after the dimensional storm was over weighed on his mind.

-Actually, it's only after talking to Yuzuria that I know all the circumstances. In the past, the Red Man came down to the Underground World for the cursed dragon. But his purpose wasn't just to release Nídhöggur. His real purpose was to find a Sacred Branch.

"A Sacred Branch?"

-Yes, his purpose was to use it to revive Yuzuria. But at that time I passed all my power to Popo so he couldn't find it.

"Wait a minute. The Red Man's purpose was the resurrection of Yuzuria? Why?"

-That's what I'm going to explain.

Yuzuria raised her body after Ark made a confused expression.

-You've heard the circumstances behind why Seutandal sank to the bottom dimension? It's because I was drained of all my power stopping that horrible magic. But that's not all.

Yuzuria looked like she was going through her past memories.

-It's a stupid thing, but I had forgotten about it until Seutandal rose. The real reason I sealed Seutandal..... It was to seal the Dark Lord's strong aerial fortress, the Rwigenberg. If the Rwigenberg had remained on middle earth then the dark forces on it would have destroyed all the species in middle earth. The Rwigenberg had enough power to wipe out the torn middle earth.

"The aerial fortress Rwigenberg? Does it look like a giant skyray.....?"

-Yes, that's the body of the Rwigenberg where the Dark Lord's throne was. When the last magic was activated, the Rwigenberg was targeting Seutandal and I managed to seal it up with Seutandal in the dimensional gap. The Red Man's purpose was not to revive me, but to extract the Rwigenberg.

"Rwigenberg? Wait? Then the purpose of the Red Man is?"

-I don't know who he is but his goal must be the resurrection of the Dark Lord, that's the only thing I can think of. And now he will become more active after getting his hands on the Rwigenberg.

Ark's head started thinking wildly after hearing Yuzuria's description.

Now he understood the Red Man. The Red Man made a plan that had two purposes, the conquest of Seutandal by the Nakujuk and the retrieval of Rwigenberg. Thanks to Ark planting Yuzuria at Haman Fortress, he had blocked his plans for conquering Seutandal. But in the end, the Red Man still achieved his true purpose of recapturing Rwigenberg. That was why the Red Man mentioned that it was half a success.

'That cheeky bastard.....!'

His anger exploded at the idea. On the other hand, he was one step closer towards finding out the Red Man's identity. Even though he wasn't an NPC, Ark still thought the Red Man was a user related to the success or failure of the examination. No, he became even more convinced. He couldn't believe that normal users would have such incredibly high levels and skills and was proceeding with the scenarios in New World by themselves..... So wouldn't he be related to the game publishing company?

'I don't know but he might be the supervisor of the candidates and is scoring their examinations. I should try not to swear when I meet him again.'

Ark made a promise to himself. Anyway, if he was the supervisor then more information was needed.

"Do you know what he's going to do in the future?"

-I can't tell. And you have more important things than him to think about.

“Huh? What are you talking about?”

-This is the actual reason why we called you.

Yggdrasil spoke in a serious voice.

-Do you remember what I said in the past? That it's not possible to find the last fragment of Hero Maban's three marvels in middle earth.

“Yes, I do. It may be in a different dimension..... Eh? Wait? Different dimension?”

Yggdrasil nodded.

-Yes, it's exactly what you're thinking. I immediately felt the presence of the Three Marvels after Seutandal rose to middle earth.

“W-where is it?”

Ark ran up to Yggdrasil and asked. He hadn't been able to figure other whereabouts of the last Three Marvels. If he found it then he would receive enormous power. After the three fragments were collected then he could receive his 2nd stage profession. Then he might be able to fight against the Red Man. But Yggdrasil wore a slightly ambiguous expression.

-That..... I don't know the exact location. It's exactly 2,600 kilometres from me in Seutandal.

-Heung, are you familiar with Hero Maban? Apart from the raccoons, you're not familiar with any beast clans. Isn't that why you have to grasp the relics left by Hero Maban? It'll be wonderful if you are able to grasp the location without knowing the people who have it.

-Sheesh, don't talk like that.....

Yggdrasil stared at Yuzuria with an unpleasant expression. Ark listened to their conversation before quickly saying.

“Wait a minute. Then wouldn’t Yuzuria also know the distance of the Three Marvels?”

-I know that much. It is roughly 700 kilometres from my location.

“That’s it!”

Ark’s eyes brightened and he nodded.

The world trees probably weren’t aware of this concept but he could use triangulation. In other words, 2600 kilometres away from Yggdrasil. And it was 700 kilometres away from Yuzuria. If he drew a straight line from those two places then there were only two possible overlapping places. The place where the two straight lines overlapped was in a triangular shape. In other words, using the map he could roughly guess the location of the Three Marvels. Ark applied this idea to the map and found two locations. However, it was a place that hadn’t been displayed on his map (The Big Sea). It was an area on the other side of Seutandal.

-Huh, you..... You’re smarter than you look.

What? Smarter than he looked? Wasn’t it possible to learn this in primary school? However, there were no primary schools in New World and the world trees wouldn’t have been educated.

-Now that it is certain the Red Man is trying to resurrect the Dark Lord, someone needs to stand up to him. There are numerous heroes on the continent, but only you who has inherited Hero Maban’s legacy knows enough to thwart the plot.

Every word they spoke pushed him forward down the path. Well, good. It should be to this degree. Ark left the spirit world and returned to Giran.

“Now, his purpose has become clear. Anyway, The Red Man isn’t just going to appear obediently when I want him to..... Before that, I have to settle my summoning problem and find the last Three Marvels. Let’s go to Seutandal.....”

He moved forward at a vigorous pace. Suddenly Ark heard a loud ringing sound in his ears. Why was somebody disturbing him when he had just enthusiastically started moving? Ark was very annoyed and was tempted to ignore it. But it might be a call from the hospital so Ark exited the unit and picked up the phone.

“Hello.”

“Ah, is this Ark-nim?”

Hyun-woo frowned after he heard the voice on the phone.

The hospital wouldn’t know his game ID.

“So what? Who are you?”

“I’m Ho Myung-hwan and I work in Global Exos Planning Department!”