

Ark Vol 13 C 2

Chapter 2

ACT 2 Management's Special Target

'What's happening all of a sudden?'

Hyun-woo looked around with nervous eyes. It was 11 a.m. and the cafe was empty because it was before the lunch hour. The reason Hyun-woo was at the cafe at this hour was because of the phone call he received a little while ago. The person who called was Ho Myung-hwan from the Planning Department of Global Exos.

"I can't talk to you over the phone. Let's meet up. Where's a convenient place for you?"

Ho Myung-hwan called him out without any explanations after confirming that his ID was Ark. It had been 1 year since he joined the company's entrance examination and started New World. Global Exos had never contacted him once. In fact, he had been feeling quite restless about that point. After all, they were candidates for the entrance examination. Shouldn't someone from the management level have contacted him at least once? Nevertheless, there had been no contact. If he interpreted it in a good way then it meant there wasn't any problems with him. If it was bad then it meant the company wasn't interested in him. There could also be a happy medium. That was why Hyun-woo was in his present location.

'Suddenly meeting this way.....'

The sudden contact might be a good thing or a bad thing. Was it related to a business matter? At that time, there was an audible jingling sound and someone entered the cafe. It was a young man in his mid-20s with a stocky physique. He looked around restlessly until he saw Hyun-woo sitting near the window and approached.

"Are you Ark-nim?"

Hyun-woo replied with a serious expression.

“Ah yes, I’m Ark.”

“Nice to meet you. I’m Ho Myung-hwan who called you.”

Ho Myung-hwan handed over a business card like it was a familiar behaviour.

“I’m sorry. I don’t have any business cards.....”

“It’s okay. Ark-nim’s telephone number is registered on my computer. Your real name is Kim Hyun-woo right? But I’ve read your reports so the name Ark is more familiar to me. May I call you Ark-nim?”

“Yes, I’m comfortable with that so it is fine.....”

Hyun-woo was now just as comfortable being called Ark as well as his real name. Just like most first meetings, it became awkward after the greetings were over.

“But you look a little different from my imagined image.”

“Huh?”

“I’ve seen Ark participating in New World twice. The first time was in the finals of the Evil Silrion and the second was a video posted on the official site some time ago. Both times you looked like a muscular black wolf. So I involuntary imagined a muscular user.”

Although he hadn’t gone to the police gym for a while, Hyun-woo had been consistently exercising. However, Hyun-woo learnt taekwondo and hadn’t built up his muscles like a bodybuilder. Of course, he had a muscular body from the exercising but it wasn’t obvious with his clothes. He also couldn’t ignore his lacking diet on the effects of his exercise. But that wasn’t why Ho Myung-hwan said it was different from his imagination. The Ark in New World that Buksil captured seemed like a lively and eloquent speaker. Compared to Buksil and Lariette, he was able to make the elders of the Baran clan succumb with a few words. However, he seemed to have an introverted nature after meeting in person.

‘Well, it’s not uncommon in online games for the personality of the character to be completely different from reality.’

Sometimes a quiet person would completely change when they grabbed the steering wheel. Online games were similar. When a reticent person connected to a game for the first time, they might become completely talkative or specialized in PK.

‘There are also people like that. By the way..... Why is he vaguely familiar?’

Ho Myung-hwan tilted his head to one side as he looked at Hyun-woo’s face. Obviously this was his first meeting with Hyun-woo. But somehow he was slightly familiar. Was it the overall silhouette or atmosphere? He wasn’t able to grasp it so he just asked.

“Have we ever met somewhere before?”

“Huh? Met somewhere?”

“No, you just look somewhat familiar.”

“Well, this is the first time we’ve met. The only other possible time was when I went to the Global Exos interview.”

“No, it wasn’t then..... I’ve seen you somewhere very recently.....”

Yes, Ho Myung-hwan had seen Hyun-woo. Not as Ark who turned himself into Dark Wolf, but the real Hyun-woo. The incident he was trying to remember was when Hyun-woo’s fight scene was captured on a video. Ho Myung-hwan thought that he was the same user who defeated Valderas in the Event Quest and made Ho Myung-hwan search for him. However, the phone quality wasn’t that great and the distance too far so Ho Myung-hwan wasn’t able to see Hyun-woo’s face. Thanks to that, Ho Myung-hwan couldn’t recognize Hyun-woo even when they were sitting across from each other. The only clue that connected the two of them was Hyun-woo’s report on the Event Quest and that had already been disposed of. Ho Myung-hwan had looked at that video more than a dozen times. So although he couldn’t see the face, he felt like Hyun-woo was somewhat familiar.

'Something seems to be stopping me from remembering..... Where did I see him? I think it was important.....'

But Ho Myung-hwan did not pursue it further.

Bururu.

'Huk, what, what the?'

While Ho Myung-hwan was looking through his memories, he suddenly started shivering and felt cold. He didn't know why, but he felt like he shouldn't pursue it further. His animal instincts had sent him a warning. This was dangerous! If he took one more step into the forbidden box then it would be irreversible! He was struck by such a fear. The person who had instilled such fear in Ho Myung-hwan was none other than the captain of the number 1 SWAT team, Lee Myung-ryong.

Ho Myung-hwan had been looking for the main character of the video and received a hot baptism from Lee Myung-ryong who misunderstood the situation. It was a threat to his life that he had received for the first time since he had been born! How many times had he been plagued by nightmares after that day? Thanks to that, everything related to the video was now a trauma for Ho Myung-hwan. Therefore Ho Myung-hwan never imagined that Hyun-woo was the main character of the video. No, he had completely forgotten about the video after that day. Nevertheless, the sight of Hyun-woo seemed to trigger the trauma so he slammed a brake on those thoughts. The mysteries of the human body were truly amazing. No, the truly amazing thing was the amount of trauma that Lee Myung-ryong implanted..... This was the reason that even violent gangsters would run when they heard the name Lee Myung-ryong. Ho Myung-hwan shook his head quickly and got rid of his anxiety.

"I'm sorry. I guess I made a mistake."

"Are you not feeling well?"

Hyun-woo asked in a concerned voice after seeing Ho Myung-hwan suddenly sweating.

"Let's see? It doesn't seem like a cold..... Hahaha, don't worry about it."

'Why do I have chills all of a sudden? Is my body a little weak these days? Do I have to start taking energy pills?'

But Ho Myung-hwan didn't know the real reason why he was feeling chills. Because the memories of that day and the video had been completely sealed. It was sad but under the threat of predators, herbivores had the ability to forget in order to live. Ho Myung-hwan cleared his throat in order to change the atmosphere.

"Hum hum, now what was I saying?"

"You haven't told me anything yet?"

"Ah, is that so?"

Ho Myung-hwan scratched his head before looking through his bag. Hyun-woo watched him for a while and hesitated before speaking.

"I'm a little curious. Have you contacted any of the other original candidates?"

"Huh? What do you mean?"

"The entrance examination has started over a year ago. In the meantime, I've never received one email from Global Exos. They never said anything even after I've sent in my monthly reports. Did that happen with everyone?"

"T-that is....."

Ho Myung-hwan looked a bit embarrassed at Hyun-woo's question. But after a moment, he grinned politely and nodded.

"Yes, that is the company's policy. We wanted the candidates to play freely without feeling the burden of being in an exam. I can't tell you all the details since it is confidential, but solving the challenges set by

us is the core of the examination. If we contacted the candidates then they would have no choice but to feel burdened.”

It was a lie. It wasn't already strange hiring new employees based on the game results. In addition, candidates taking the test were paid 1.5 million won every month. It wasn't a large amount of for person but there were 2,000 people! The cost for 1 month would come out at approximately 3 billion won. No matter how high their annual sales, even Global Exos couldn't invest that much money on a simple test. Global Exos initiated such a strange test because their project was more important than hiring new employees. The true purpose of the test was to find what the game developer Park Woo-seong had hidden..... To be more precise, it was to find all the keys to the lock on New World, in other words the master code! For now, no one knew what form it existed in. All they knew was that Park Woo-seong sent Global Exos an email stating it was related to the 'ultimate goal of the game' before disappearing.

That was why Global Exos was willing to spend all that money on an examination test. They only chose 2,000 people from all the ones that applied. The screening criteria was not based on their education background or previous history. Global Exos just looked at the candidates 'online gaming experience.' Gamers were more likely to find the master code for New World than businessmen. So even if the person only had a middle school education, as long as they were experienced gamers then they were invited to take the test. While Hyun-woo was faking his resume, he half-jokingly wrote down that he had '10 years gaming experience' so he was confident with games. But Global Exos were unable to watch over every step of this project. So from the beginning, the Planning Department had close contact with the candidates classified as the top ranking. On the other hand, they completely ignored Hyun-woo who was classified in the eliminated category. He would probably still be in the same situation if it wasn't for Buksil's video. Anyway, Hyun-woo now emerged as a viable candidate thanks to his actions in Seutandal. In such a situation, there was no need to offend him. As a viable candidate, the Planning Department desperately needed Hyun-woo's friendship and cooperation. Fortunately, Hyun-woo believed him.

“That's right. Then why have you contacted me today.....?”

“It is thanks to the mid-test check of the examination.”

“Mid-test check?”

“Yes, one year has passed since the examination began like you said. But the period isn't that important. As the director discussed in the first interview, the company is placing a lot of time and funds into this test.”

"I'm aware of that."

"One year isn't important, it could be 2 years or 3 years depending on the progress. But a year has passed and management has deemed it necessary for a mid-test check."

"I still don't understand what you are saying."

"I'll explain it simply. We mentioned that acceptance would depend on whether the candidate meets a 'special condition' in the game. So it's not an exaggeration to say that everybody is in the same boat. But certain levels and standards is still required to meet the 'special condition.' It's not like a lottery where the candidate could just meet the special condition."

"Well I guess not."

Hyun-woo nodded. It was natural when considering the format of the examination. Like Ho Myung-hwan said, some people might just coast along in the game in order to receive free money. If the examination assessed the understanding and application in the game, it was natural that a few checkpoints had to be cleared to reach the goal. Of course, Hyun-woo's thinking and Global Exos' was slightly different. Global Exos was just guessing at where Park Woo-seong hid the master code. So their viewpoints were different but they were still trying to achieve a similar goal.

"During this time, the Planning Department has been going over the candidate's reports. Depending on their level, quest advancement or gameplay, 50% of the original group will be eliminated. You can think of it as the first test. All the candidates that have passed the first test will receive increased support."

Ho Myung-hwan smiled and spoke.

"And Ark-nim has passed the first test."

"R-really?"

Hyun-woo raised his head and exclaimed.

“Of course. Ark-nim is the one who raised Seutandal and started episode III. Is that all? The video taken of you by Buksil has received over 300,000 hits. Isn’t the video also being broadcast as a special story on the game exclusive TV spot next week? There is no reason why a candidate who achieved such things would fail the first test. No, it just makes your application look even better.

“Huh? That video will be aired on TV?”

“Of course. The station has already paid for the copyright-related costs.....”

“The broadcast station is even paying money?”

“Yes, that’s what I’ve heard. Didn’t you know?”

“Oh, no, I knew. I’m just surprised to hear it from someone else.”

Hyun-woo said such things but anger welled up in his heart.

‘That Buksil bastard.....!’

He had thought it was strange. Buksil had gone through so much trouble and was still deprived of Magaro’s legacy. Nevertheless, there had been no complaints even before the 10% sales fee and it was because he was receiving money from a back door! It was like he had been slapped in the back of his head out of nowhere. After all, Hyun-woo was entitled to a share. The video was taken using Buksil’s magic projector. It also wasn’t secretly taken but he had filmed with permission. And wasn’t the main character of the movie Ark?

‘What a wily young pig, selling the rights to the video without even telling me.’

He had probably thought Hyun-woo wouldn’t find out about it. Hyun-woo started contemplating how to cook the pig. Then he heard Ho Myung-hwan’s voice again.

“Ark-nim’s gameplay is very interesting when looking through your previous reports. There is a lot of appreciation this time for managing to raise Seutandal. Ark has passed the first test and will receive the full support of the company for the second test.”

Ho Myung-hwan straightened his shoulders and laughed.

‘Isn’t that good? It’s good. Really good, huhu.’

“Well, I was the one who originally recommended Ark-nim.”

“Ho Myung-hwan ssi?”

“Yes, in fact your previous evaluation reports weren’t that good. In the past there was talk about eliminating you. But I strongly protested. I saw something different in Ark-nim compared to the other candidates. In many ways your performance was still immature, but I was sure you would pass. So I managed to defer your elimination. I’m just an employee but I have a little bit of power. In the end, it all went according to my words.”

Ho Myung-hwan said with a proud look.

“Thank you. Thank you very much. I’ll work hard!”

Hyun-woo bowed a few times and thanked him. He was angry at Buksil but now wasn’t the time for such thoughts. There were 2,000 candidates so the competitive rate of being selected was 200:1! While some people had just graduated from college, others like Alan were able to splurge a lot of money on the game. On the other hand, having spirit wasn’t enough to penetrate the 200:1 competitive rate which was similar to him winning the lottery. If he had to give up halfway.....

Hyun-woo’s thoughts were then interrupted.

“After passing the first test, the mode for the candidates has slightly changed. So far we’ve just checked the reports, but the number of candidates has decreased so we can supervise more closely.”

“How?”

“First, please receive this.”

Ho Myung-hwan pulled out an equipment the size of a hard drive.

“This is a device that can be attached to the game unit. While the game is loaded after attaching this, all video feeds from the game will be automatically sent to the company’s headquarters. We can monitor Ark-nim’s gameplay without the need for reports. The video will be used for evaluation and publicity material.”

“Wait a minute. All of my gameplay will be saved?”

“Yes, is there a problem?”

“A problem.....”

There was one. It was a big problem. There were many parts of Hyun-woo’s gameplay that couldn’t be shown. If they saved all his gameplay then wouldn’t they see his lousy actions such as threatening the Three Pig Brothers and Sid, as well as cheating the NPCs? Of course, Hyun-woo’s conscience wasn’t affected by his actions but he couldn’t tell what other people would think. In addition, it might even cause problems for Hyun-woo’s businesses. His method of setting up a trading post in Lancel village, Seutandal and even Silvana was close to fraud. Of course, it was rare for the game developers to interfere directly with the game but there was Alan’s example in the past. Alan aimed for the loophole in the system and managed to avoid the challenge of other guilds. As soon as they were informed, the system was update and that method blocked off. Hyun-woo didn’t want changes in the rules to affect his businesses. No, Hyun-woo might get punished even more as a candidate compared to normal users.

‘It can’t happen. All of my struggles.....’

How much trouble had he gone through to set up trading posts in Lancel, Seutandal and Silvana? In addition, how much money had he invested into it? Even now he was still pouring a huge amount of money and time into it, but it was a long term plan that would give him the goose that laid golden eggs. Hyun-woo would cry if there were any problems with any of his businesses. Of course, in the viewpoint

of a candidate there were no big problems. But what would happen if he joined Global Exos? Cash transactions for game items were legally allowed but it was different if he was an employee of the company. That's why Hyun-woo hadn't mentioned his various projects and items sold on his reports.

'While the annual salary of a Global Exos employee can reach 100 million, the first few years it would only be around 5,000~6000. With an income of 5~6 million won per month, it's not enough for my living costs and the hospital bills.'

Of course, if Hyun-woo passed then he could make money separately in the game. But if all his gameplay was viewed by the company then it would be an issue.

'Joining Global Exos or the online game. Needless to say, both are important.'

At first, he thought he would do anything as long as he joined Global Exos. But his thinking had changed a little while in New World. If Hyun-woo summarized his assets from his bank balance, the lease contract and the amount invested in Lancel village, he had approximately 90 million won. There was also the 5 million won he earned approximately every month for a year. It was hard to believe, but in one year he had managed to earn 150 million won from New World. Of course, the support salary from Global Exos was included but it was still more than the salary of an average Global Exos employee. If Ark completed his trade routes and planned then his income would jump even more. Still, the reason Hyun-woo wanted to join the company was because he never imagined it thanks to his educational background. In addition, the game was a game. He could receive that kind of income in New World now but he never knew when that would change.

'Mother also asked Gwon Hwa-rang ajusshi how I was making all that money. She never expressed it but she wants me to get a decent job and have a stable life. If I get a job at Global Exos then the monthly salary will steadily rise and might become more than the income I get from the game.'

Hyun-woo had to pass the company examination somehow for his mother. He had finally passed the first test. 50% of the candidates had been dropped so the competitive rate was now 10:1. Was it possible to give up his current income when he didn't know if he would pass the test or not? The other problem was that he wouldn't be able to afford the costs of living and hospital bills if he gave up his current income.

"What's wrong?"

“No..... Are you sure I have to wear the equipment?”

“That’s the company’s policy.”

“But didn’t you just say that the company’s policy was to allow the candidates to play freely without any pressure? If you’re monitoring all my gameplay then of course it would be a burden.”

“Ugh, t-that is.....”

Ho Myung-hwan looked embarrassed as he was unable to refute Hyun-woo’s logic.

“I’m just telling you what my superiors have directed me to.”

Ho Myung-hwan panicked at Hyun-woo’s counterattack and was only able to say that he received instructions from his superiors. Hyun-woo thought for a moment before sighing and shaking his head.

“Then I’ll have to give up the entrance examination.”

“Huh? What do you mean? Give up on the test?”

“It’s just like I said. I don’t want videos to be taken of my gameplay. Thanks to Global Exos’ policy, I’ve been playing the game freely. It was because I played freely that I was able to pass the first test.”

“I understand what you’re saying. But we have no intention of interfering while monitoring you. It is literally just monitoring. All we will do is watch.”

“But I have a timid personality so if Global Exos is watching then I won’t be able to play like I do now. Eventually I’ll just fail the test. So it is better for me to give up early and play the game more comfortably.”

The choice Hyun-woo selected was inevitable. Playing the game with the device attached wasn't a problem. However, if they saw Hyun-woo's wicked actions then it would be impossible for him to receive a good evaluation. It was highly unlikely that he would make it pass the second test and would end up failing. And they might apply sanctions or severe consequences to the projects that Hyun-woo currently had in progress. If so, it would be better to just give up and focus on his businesses.

'Unfortunately it can't be helped. I absolutely can't give up the businesses.'

Of course, giving up the test also wasn't a simple matter. If he gave up the exam then he had to return the game unit. Although putting everything in order with the lease business, he would have no money to afford a game unit.

'For the moment, I'll just have to use the game room while until I save enough money.....'

Hyun-woo sighed at the idea. But Ho Myung-hwan was even more frustrated than Hyun-woo. After an awkward silence, Ho Myung-hwan got up from his seat.

"Please wait a minute. I need to call someone."

Ho Myung-hwan hurriedly exited the cafe, crouched on the stairs and took out his phone. After a few beeps, the voice of the Chief of the Planning Department Ha Myung-woo was heard.

"Is everything resolved?"

"Ah, no. That's why I'm calling."

"Why? What's the matter?"

"That..... Ark wants to give up on the test."

"What, what the? What are you saying? How the hell did he come to that conclusion?"

“He didn’t like the fact that we will monitor all of his gameplay.”

“Why is that a problem? Did you explain it properly? We’re just going to monitor and not interfere. Did you say something to offend him?”

“No, I explained it properly.”

Ho Myung-hwan replied while sweating. While Ho Myung-hwan made it sound like they were doing him a favour, monitoring Hyun-woo’s game was incredibly important to the Planning Department. After the Planning Department watched the video and discussed it, they thought that Hyun-woo was actually the closest to their goal. Thanks to that, it was necessary to recruit Hyun-woo through any means possible. And the Planning Department was indeed finding prominent users and monitoring them while giving support money. All this painful effort was to find the master code. Thus Ha Myung-woo was willing to commit a significant amount of money to attract Hyun-woo. However, his attitude changed in regards to Hyun-woo.

“You don’t have to bother giving him a lot of money. Just use any excuse to get permission to monitor his game.”

Thus Ho Myung-hwan called Hyun-woo to meet.

“.....Perhaps he has already been contacted by another company?”

Ha Myung-woo asked in an uncomfortable voice after thinking for a moment. The online gaming market had a tremendous capital beyond the public’s imagination. And the most important thing in the gaming market was information. Thus various game companies were engaged in a fierce behind the scenes battle in order to obtain these information from the users. Global Exos was a corporate giant that controlled 30% of the online gaming industry. Therefore they were the target of many game companies. And recently Global Exos had no ability to control the main system of New World.....

So other competitors employed professional gamers to sneak into New World in order to obtain information. The so-called spy. Thus the Planning Department of Global Exos couldn’t afford to relax. They couldn’t imagine what would happen if the master code for New World landed in the hands of their competitors. In order to prevent that worst case situation, they needed to have access to the user

most likely to find the master code. It would be a serious problem if Hyun-woo was in contact with their competitors.

“No, there are no signs of that”

“Then it makes no sense. If no one else is meddling then why would he give up?”

“Well, let’s see. He simply wants to play the game without others watching.....”

“Damn, it can’t be helped. Let’s offer to increase the funding. Offer 1 million won more! That is how much we use when recruiting users that aren’t a candidate.”

“If it’s that much then there is no reason to quit.”

Ho Myung-hwan entered the cafe again with a confident expression.

“I just talked with my team chief right now. But we still need to monitor.....”

“Didn’t I say I was giving up the test?”

“That would be a problem. How about this instead? We’ll increase your current support funding of 1.5 million won to 2.5 million won. This is a privilege that other candidates don’t have.”

“But.....”

Hyun-woo struggled for a while before shaking his head. 2.5 million won a week was equivalent to his old monthly salary at the convenience store. However, it wasn’t possible to exchange it for his ability to make money freely in the game. No, the main problem wouldn’t be solved with an increase in the money.

“I’m sorry. I’m a free spirit.....”

Ho Myung-hwan's confident face darkened at Hyun-woo's answer and he excused himself again. Ho Myung-hwan crouched on the stairs and once again heard Ha Myung-woo's voice on the phone.

"What the? He still wants to give up?"

"Yes, that's..... He is a free spirit....."

"Is this a joke?"

"No, that's what Ark-nim said."

"Dammit! That bastard, is he crazy? Are we handcuffing him? We're just monitoring so what's with this stupid free spirit stuff?"

"What do I do? Will we have to give up at this rate?"

"Don't be stupid. You were confident about persuading him thanks to reading his reports. There must be another reason for him so stubbornly refusing."

"What else would it be?"

"He is as cunning as a raccoon. He might've already been in contact with the competitors. The other side has probably presented their own terms. He is clearly weighing the conditions. And he became filled with confidence after you appeared."

"Then.....?"

"Yes, he doesn't know about the master code but it is clear that our competitors want 'something'. Even if he's not in contact with our competitors, it might be a problem if he gives up the test and then finds the master code."

He heard the sound of Ha Myung-woo grinding his teeth through the phone.

“Okay, it can’t be helped if he is weighting the offers. The competitors don’t know that we are looking for the master code. They’re probably just going around stabbing blindly. In such a situation, they wouldn’t offer more than 3 million won. So we will raise the funding by one more million. And 300 points will be added to his test score. If 300 points are added then he’ll be the top candidate.”

“The test scores are posted separately?”

“Are you stupid? Just say it. Threaten to collect the support money provided so far if he still refuses!”

“But there is a clause in the contract.....”

“Shut up, just use any method possible! Make him accept!”

“Yes, I understand.”

Ho Myung-hwan wiped at his sweat and entered the cafe.

If Hyun-woo didn’t give permission then his neck would be on the line.

‘Why is this happening?’

Hyun-woo was also puzzled by Ho Myung-hwan’s attitude. He seemed to have met some type of condition after the events in Seutandal. But was it just that? It didn’t exactly demonstrate any practical skills. So he couldn’t understand why they were clinging to him.

‘I don’t know why but 3.5 million won every month and points added to my score.....’

It wasn't something Hyun-woo could easily refuse. However, he still thought maintaining his businesses in New World was better than the support money.

'Will they offer more money if I hold out?'

Hyun-woo's thoughts were then interrupted. Ho Myung-hwan added in a begging voice.

"This is the maximum amount we can offer."

'Looking at that expression, it seems they will not offer any more money.'

So he had no choice but to decline. Hyun-woo shook his head with a sigh and Ho Myung-hwan made a desperate expression.

"It's a request. You've already allowed one video."

"But having all of my gameplay watched..... It would be different if I could take the videos and upload it....."

"Huh?"

Ho Myung-hwan's eyes widened.

"Who said you couldn't do that?"

"I can?"

"We just want to gather information about how a candidate triggers a scenario. Do you think we would watch videos of 1,000 candidates for 24 hours every day? We just want information about the candidate's quests and how it affects the quest system. We can't see all the details with the reports which is why a video is required. There is no need for anything except the main situation."

Hyun-woo and Ho Myung-hwan looked at each other with stupid expressions. They didn't know how but wasn't the situation somehow resolved?

'What the? There wouldn't have been any problems if you just said so in the first place.'

Hyun-woo thought to himself. But he managed to get an extra 2 million won and 300 points from the misunderstanding. Hyun-woo felt like flying but he didn't show it. If he hadn't misunderstood and refused then he didn't know what conditions would've been offered.

"Phew, it can't be helped. There's no longer any reason to refuse. I'll accept as long as I get paid and am allowed to take and send in the videos."

"Really?" Thank you. Thank you!"

Ho Myung-hwan got up and shook Hyun-woo's hand. The role of the candidate and supervisor seemed to have changed. Now that things had been cleared up, Ho Myung-hwan wrote up a simple contract.

"There are a few conditions instead of the 24 hour monitoring. It isn't required when taking a break in town or meeting other players, but you must shoot the scenes of your quests. And once the video has been filmed, it shouldn't be edited."

That wasn't a problem. Apart from the information related to Seutandal and Silvana's trading post, Hyun-woo saw no need to hide anything else. On the other hand, Global Exos believed that the master code was associated with a quest. Therefore there was a need to grasp all the candidate's quests. In addition, the condition of no editing was in case Hyun-woo obtained information related to the master code and tried to hide it. So there were no problems because the part that Hyun-woo wanted to hide was different from what Global Exos wanted to see. Hyun-woo suddenly asked as the agreement was being drawn up.

"You said the videos sent could be used as promotional materials?"

“Yes, sometimes the materials is requested by the TV broadcasters or it is used in advertisements. Oh, if that happens then you’ll be contacted and a separate performance fee will be paid. In this age, the game character could also be used as publicity.”

“It nothing to do with that..... If possible, I don’t want my real name of game ID disclosed. I hope for my face to be unknown.”

“Do you have some problems?” Ho Myung-hwan asked with a doubtful expression.

“Like I said, I’d like to play the game freely. If other users know too much then I won’t be able to concentrate on the game.”

“You don’t have to worry about that. Such provisions are actually common in promotional materials. I’ll contact you in advance if there is ever such a situation.”

Ho Myung-hwan was once again very cooperative with Hyun-woo. Then Hyun-woo asked Ho Myung-hwan in a coy voice.

“By the way..... Is the Red Man a character associated with the test?”

He had thought about giving up the test just then but now the situation had changed. Now he had a chance of passing the entrance examination and still getting his golden goose. It was difficult to question the company’s staff so he wanted to get as much information as possible.

“Huh? Red Man?”

Ho Myung-hwan repeated in a strange voice. Hyun-woo had met the Red Man twice on Seutandal. However he had been too far away in the Abyss of Despair to see his face clearly, and when the Red Man attacked Haman Fortress it had been so dusty that Buksil wasn’t able to film. Thanks to that, the important Red Man didn’t appear in Buksil’s video. But Ark obviously thought that Ho Myung-hwan would know who he was talking about.

“There have been several hints. If he wasn’t related to the test then it would be impossible to arrange the schemes in the Underground World or on Seutandal.”

“Why don’t you tell me more?”

Ho Myung-hwan listened closely to Hyun-woo’s words. Hyun-woo explained his reasons for thinking that the Red Man was associated with the test. He mentioned his incredible skills and the plot to revive the Dark Lord.....

“Are my thoughts correct about it being one of the test challenges?”

“That..... I cannot tell you yet.”

‘Indeed! My guess is correct.’

Hyun-woo became even more convinced after Ho Myung-hwan’s words. Why would he act like that if the Red Man wasn’t a part of the test? But that was Ark’s mistake. In fact, even Global Exos wasn’t sure what they were looking for. Thanks to Hyun-woo mentioning the Red Man, they might finally have a clue.

‘Although it wasn’t clearly told, the Red Man clearly is associated with the test. That guy is sweating so much after I mentioned it. If we stay in touch then I might be able to figure out more about the Red Man.’

That was Hyun-woo’s thoughts.

‘Such a character is really running around New World. Maybe Ark-nim really will find what we are looking for. This is important information! If we use Ark-nim then we might be able to find out more.’

That was Ho Myung-hwan’s thoughts.

“Ark-nim is now one of management’s special targets so we’ll be contacting you more often. I told you that I like the way Ark-nim plays. If you have any concerns then please get in touch with me.”

Continue tracking the Red Man. That was the company’s main concern now. Hyun-woo accepted Ho Myung hwan’s number.

“You never know, we might end up working in the same company.”

Hyun-woo and Ho Myung-hwan shook hands firmly before leaving. An incredulous laugh escaped from Hyun-woo’s mouth on his way home.

‘Huhuhu, what is with this incredible windfall? 3.5 million won in support money and an opportunity to get information from the employees of the company..... Not passing the entrance examination is not just a dream.’

He didn’t feel tired anymore. Hyun-woo entered the unit as soon as he arrived home. Everything Hyun-woo wanted to achieve was in there.