

Ark Vol 15 C 5

Chapter 5

ACT 5 The Knowing Eyeball

Kung kung, kung kung.

“Master, I’ve found one here!”

Baekgu’s nose which was pressed to the ground twitched like a dog and he shouted.

“I understand, wait a minute.”

Buksil ran over and looked through the bush, instantly finding a vegetable that looked like a carrot. But when he grabbed the stem and tried to pull it out, the root broke.

-Ingredient Foraging has failed.

“Damn, this one as well!”

Buksil became angry and threw the broken carrot away. Then he wiped away the sap which had dripped onto his body.

“This is making me angry. Baekgu, let’s rest for a bit.”

“But we haven’t filled the quota for today yet.”

“Eh, I don’t know, it’s too hot. Even if I find the ingredients, I can’t successfully harvest them.”

“But if you don’t fill the quota.....”

Baekgu started trembling with fear as he imagined what would happen. Buksil also winced and muttered.

“I’ll just rest for 5 minutes.”

“.....Yes.”

Baekgu approached the shade of a tree and knelt down. Buksil sat down near him, took out the ingredients from his bag and sighed as he counted them. In fact, foraging the ingredients was surprisingly tough work. Didn’t he have to go to the field directly to collect the ingredients? It was a mistake to think there would be a large amount of herbs and fruits lying around. Most of them were hidden in bushes and were difficult to spot. In the swamp, the number of ingredients was half of the number normally found in other places. But the hardest part after finding it was actually gathering the ingredients.

‘The problem of finding the ingredients is solved thanks to Baekgu’s sense of smell.’

That wasn’t the only problem. In reality, it was still possible to eat the food even if it was a little damaged while digging it out. But there was no such system in New World. If he damaged it even a little bit when gathering then the ingredient couldn’t be used anymore. In addition, it was summer so it was very hot. For Buksil, foraging ingredients was no different from hard labour.

‘Even though I’m selling the ingredients, I still feel like I’m being exploited.....’

Until now, he had managed to gather approximately 30 ingredients in one day which Ark was satisfied with. Then after setting a campsite and concentrating on hunting, 50 ingredients started being consumed a day and the satisfaction decreased. Buksil’s ingredients quota also increased and he received more work. But that changed after Ark found the Suspicious Cave. The amount of dishes eaten could increase thanks to the Monkfish mushrooms so Ark requested 100 ingredients a day.

'100 ingredients a day? No matter how much the ingredients are sold for, that is still exploitation! It means I have to work and not rest all day long.'

He could get an average of 3-5 gold for 100 ingredients. It wasn't a bad income for one day's worth of gathering ingredients. But he honestly didn't care about money after working hours in the sun.

'But.....'

The biggest problem for Buksil was that he had no other options. It became even worse after going through the hell training a few days ago. After being with Ark for a while, he knew his personality. It was only good if he wasn't caught. That was the survival strategy he developed after travelling with Ark.

'Phew, now how will I collect the remaining ingredients? If I don't gather enough then I'll be hit.....
Damn, I'm like Cinderella.'

He was abused by his stepmother (Ark) and his new older sister (the summons) and thinking about the heavy labour he was currently facing caused tears in his eyes. Then what would Baekgu be?

'I now know why people like raising pets.'

Buksil looked at Baekgu with fond eyes and Baekgu shook his tail.

'I can't imagine a New World without Baekgu anymore. Yes, I have to work hard so that Ark won't bother Baekgu. And I can earn money to provide Baekgu with food. Ayu, this is my fate.'

After providing Baekgu with food, Ark had roughly 70 silver left as profit from selling the ingredients. In order to provide Baekgu with meat, he had to make over 1 gold a day. So he had to make money. Anyway, thinking that it was for Baekgu not Ark became a source of comfort for him. Therefore Buksil stood up and said.

"More monsters appear when it is dark and it'll become more difficult so we should find them now."

“Yes, Master.”

“Shall we head towards that forest this time? Let’s see.....Eh? Huh? Eh eh?”

“What’s wrong?”

“No, that..... Damn, it was caught.”

“Caught?”

“It was caught. It appears to be caught somewhere. Please don’t move.”

“Is it the one attached to Ark-nim?”

“No, that’s the right eyeball. The one that is caught is the left eyeball.”

Buksil murmured with an irritated voice. While Buksil was picking ingredients, he also had to film the video. Buksil always left his right eyeball with Ark. So he never had both eyes because the other one was needed for scouting. Currently Baekgu was level 310. He was stronger than the monsters around here. So even as a merchant, Buksil could gather ingredients away from Ark. But he wasn’t confident against monsters without Ark. Razak and Racard were summons so they were resurrected after they died, but Baekgu was an NPC. If he died then that was it. So it was always necessary to check if there were any monsters with his eyeball before moving. However, it wasn’t that easy.

While his two eyeballs were set free, the magic projector was attached to his head and he always had to confirm three images at the same time while moving. So he didn’t have to be in the same area to film the video. Anyway, an ordinary person like Buksil was controlling it. A person couldn’t look at three screens at the same time. If he was careless even for a bit then his eyeball would sometimes hit something. He became better after going through hell training with Ark but even he had a limit.

“Damn, I’ll have to take back that eyeball.”

Buksil complained as he run to the forest. It was a dense forest where the bushes were overgrown. It wasn't a problem to look for the eyeball. When the eyeball was set free, there was always a separate window showing the direction of the eyeball.

"Ah, there it is. My eyeball!"

After following the arrow, he poked through the bush and was able to find the eyeball that was stuck. Buksil pulled out the eyeball from the bush and rubbed it with his sleeve. It was when he tried to send it away again. Suddenly he heard a sound from the side.

".....Are you certain?"

".....I made the necessary preparations....."

".....I'm worried..... It's been two days....."

'Are those voices?'

He had been here for 10 days but it was the first time he heard voices. This was an undeveloped land so there weren't many users. He couldn't relax because it might be a monster who talked like a person. No, he still had to be careful regardless of whether it was a monster or user.

'If I meet a chaotic user here then it will be chaos.'

Buksil winced and his expression became tense. He hadn't seen it until now but there was a gap in the bush where he could hear the voices. The bush seemed like it was hiding a cave. Buksil confirmed it and became worried. It was best to avoid monsters and users. But he had to collect ingredients around here for a while so there was no guarantee he wouldn't run into them.

'Don't they have a partner as well? If I hide here then they can't find me.'

Buksil pushed his eyeball carefully through the bush. He controlled the eyeball and steered it into a wide open space.

‘Aren’t they users?’

Around 15 users were gathered in the empty space. Buksil moved his eye and sneaked along the wall, managing to listen to their conversation. Then one man surveyed the area and muttered.

“It’s good that you managed to find a place like this.”

“It is better to be careful.” It is better than working in the light.”

“That is correct.”

Then a smile spread on the face of a man with a X shaped cross on his cheek called Sunfish. Then a handsome user who had been watching from the side clicked his tongue and muttered.

“Why would you choose that face when you started the game?”

“Is that how it is? It makes me look tough. Who would want a pretty face like yours? Is the Namdaemun Gate handsome? Ha, even a dog passing by would laugh at you.”

“What did you say?”

Namdaemun glared angrily at the scarred Sunfish. Then a knight crossed his arms and said.

“Shut up, please calm yourselves down.”

“I’m sorry, Jepeteu hyung-nim.”

With one single sentence from the knight, the two men withdrew with their tails between their legs. The man called Jepeteu looked down at the hobbit sitting behind the scarred man. The group in the cave was divided into two sides, and Jepeteu and the hobbit seemed to be the respective leaders.

“That is like the price of a luxury vehicle.

What happened to all the money you earned? If your merchant ships continues hitting Seutandal than that amount can be easily recovered. In addition, the law hasn’t really conflicted with the pirates yet. I just want to move my organization here.”

“The guys under me also talked like that. If a bandit group comes here than the living expenses for my subordinates will decrease.”

“Just enforce some discipline on them.”

‘Dangerous!’

Buksil became tense as he watched through the eyeball. He couldn’t completely understand everything the men said. But he understood clearly that they were chaotic users. Although he couldn’t confirm it with the 『Penetration』 scroll, it was obvious from their conversation that they were chaotic. And chaotic users were the most dangerous thing to an isolated merchant!

‘This is serious. Chaotic users are wandering around this place.....

It was clear that those guys weren’t low level. He should return to the campsite where he left the ingredients. It was lucky that he discovered them first. Luckily they hadn’t seen Buksil so he could still escape. Buksil observed their movements with the eyeball and withdrew slowly. It was when he was carefully retreating. His heel seemed to catch on something and there was a loud sound.

“Master, it’s dangerous! Ugh!”

Baekgu grabbed Buksil then moaned and collapsed. He looked back with surprise and saw that a shining blue arrow was embedded in Baekgu’s thigh.

“Tr-trap? Baekgu!”

“What was that sound?”

“Outside. Someone tripped one of the traps outside!”

The voices of the group in the cave were clearly heard.

‘This is serious!’

Cold sweat dripped down Buksil’s back. A merchant had been discovered by 15 users. If even one chaotic user was mixed among the users then Buksil’s fate was decided. If they were pirates then the [Robbery] and [Plunder] scrolls were a basic part of their equipment. And there were 15 people. He would instantaneously become a beggar the moment he was caught.

“Baekgu, run!”

Buksil got on Baekgu’s back and shouted. However, Baekgu had an arrow in his thigh and couldn’t run properly. The group inside the cave exited with their swords drawn.

‘No, this can’t happen!’

In this desperate situation, Buksil suddenly came up with an idea.

‘That’s right, there is a way to bind their feet!’

“Stupid bastards, we’re the Seutandal’s autonomous group. You’re all surrounded!”

A loud voice was suddenly heard behind the group. The group who had ran up to Buksil flinched and started to protect their bodies. But there was nothing behind the group. Yes, the voice that was shouting just before was his eyeball! Buksil had hidden it behind the group and then used the communication feature while Baekgu quickly ran through the forest.

“What, what the?”

“There’s nothing here?”

“That bastard! He used some strange technique!”

The group belatedly realized that they had been tricked and ran after Buksil. One of the archers used ‘Eagle Eye’ on Buksil and shouted.

“T-that is..... A magic projector! A magic projector is attached to his head!”

A look of confusion spread on Jepeteu and Garrett’s face.

“What? Then he was recording everything about our meeting?”

“When did he start recording? Surely not from the beginning?”

“Damn, I don’t know. Anyway, just take away the magic projector!”

“Horse, grab the horses!”

Garrett ran into the cave and pulled out their horses. Garrett got on the horse and glared at Jepeteu.

“I thought this place was safe? What are you going to do about this problem?”

“.....Don't worry about it.” I'll do whatever it takes to retrieve it. Hey, tell the situation to the other kids and intercept him. The rest of you chase after him with me. Archers will take the lead.”

“I understand. Track!”

The archers used tracking and chased after Buksil. The fifteen people raised a cloud of dust as they chased him.

‘Damn.....’

A frustrated sigh flowed from Isyuram's mouth. He had a few trivial problems coming here.....he died because of Ark.....but Isyuram had managed to infiltrate the organization of wanted criminals. Up until then, Isyuram thought his task had succeeded. However, it had been a month and Isyuram still hadn't found anything. It was natural when thinking about it. They were wanted criminals in reality and in New World. If they were caught then they would spend between 1-10 years in jail. They also doubted their parents and siblings so it was natural not to trust Isyuram.

‘I'm just lucky to be allowed in this group.....’

If he hadn't met Garam in prison then it wasn't possible for him to be here. When he initially joined, the boss Jepeteu hadn't liked it. Luckily Garam had an unexpectedly high position in the organization. Although he wasn't the second in command, he was among the top 5 out of 70 people in the organization. Thanks to Garam's active defense, he was able to join the group. However, Garam was also very careful.

“My phone number? That's a bit.....”

“Why? Sometimes I might come in late so I'll have to get in contact with you.”

“That is a bit difficult. Actually, I was in a small situation.”

“Situation?”

“I’ll gradually tell you.”

Garam always used that excuse whenever he tried to pry for information. Talks between Garam and the other organization members was also the same. If they ever talked about something important, than Isyuram was always locked out and they never called each other by their real names.

‘But I can’t question them too closely.....’

Thanks to their many years as criminals, they were used to distrusting people. If Isyuram acted even a little bit strange then he would be sniffed out and crushed. Well, it still turned out okay. If any information about Isyuram being a part of the police leaked then his method of finding information in New World would be gone forever.

‘I still haven’t found anything.’

When Isyuram first entered the virtual reality world, the Special Crimes Countermeasures chief said that the criminals were tired of an isolated life. But after Isyuram examined it, he realized it wasn’t the whole story. It might’ve begun like that but now it wasn’t.

‘There’s no doubt about it. These guys are taking advantage of the virtual space called New World to do business.’

His awareness of games had changed by 180 degrees after playing New World. And the most startling thing about New World was the cyber money.....it was gold recognition. When Isyuram first started the game, he didn’t think too much about using the 2,000 gold he had. There were people who just enjoyed the game. It was also worthless for those who didn’t understand the game. It wasn’t the wrong idea of course. For people who didn’t play New World, gold had no value. The thing that Isyuram didn’t know was the real market price of gold!

‘The game money has equal value to cash.’

1 gold was worth 10,000 won. When it was this degree then it already wasn't a simple game. In addition, New World was a game that millions of people enjoyed. Gold was a necessity. In other words, gold in New World could be changed into cash at any time or vice versa. There were many stock investment professionals who would buy or sell gold with future profit in mind. The game money moved within 1 year totalled several thousand billion won! So money in New World could also affect the economy in reality.

'This is the blind spot of the National Police Agency investigation!'

Several hundred billion won was moved in one year thanks to the online game. The scary point was that the enormous funds moved were all anonymous. Thanks to the user personal information privacy policy that was implemented a few years ago, it was impossible to investigate the personal information. There was no way of knowing about any transactions that took place within the game. In other words, things like illegal money transactions and money laundering were all possible.

'Illegal money laundering for gangsters or concealment of wealth or illegal gambling of politicians. There are a number of ways to take advantage of it.'

Just like the Swiss banks concealed personal information, it was able to conceal billions of money. But the National Police Agency (NPA) were still unaware of the gravity of this situation. Of course the cyber investigations team made an effort, but those measures still couldn't completely account for the virtual reality world. If criminals used the various methods of laundering illegal money in the vast virtual reality world then the NPA would have no way of tracking all that money.

'Damn, the criminals are ahead of them but the police don't want to admit it..... Anyway, my guess is that Jeopeteu and the criminals are making contact with other organizations. If I can figure out how they are contacting the other organizations then I might be able to figure out a way to catch them.....'

There was no way to hide 70 people meeting in secret. In addition, Isyuram was still a merchant despite his superhuman fighting skills and the criminals were warriors. There was no probability of success even if he only fought against 1 person.

"Hey, why does your face look so down? If you're bored then do you want to play a game of poker?"

Isyuram sighed as he sat down beside Garam. Garam had a pile of gold in front of him. The poker game involved dozens of gold. When compared to the exchange rate of 1 gold=10,000 won, that was already illegal gambling.

‘I’m itchy to put on the silver handcuffs.’

“No, that’s okay.”

It happened when Isyuram was shaking his head. He heard the sound of a horse and someone came into the campsite panting.

“Hey, it’s a serious problem!”

“Huh? What?”

“This meeting where we were finalizing the deal was recorded by someone with a magic projector and then he fled!”

“Eh? Really?”

The members of the organization threw down the cards and stood up.

“Jepeteu hyung and Garret hyung are chasing after him so hurry!”

“Damn, this is troublesome. Let’s go!”

The members started flocking and making preparations to chase.

‘Magic projector? Is that an item that can store a video? Then this was an opportunity! It must be something important if those guys are making all the fuss, and if I’m lucky then I might be able to intercept the magic projector!’

Isyuram joined the rest of the criminals.

‘Damn, I didn’t think that far.’

Ark scratched his head with an irritated expression. The exploration of the Suspicious Cave was successful. He gained more experience than expected and also a rare mantle. But the biggest profit was the Hearthstone. Every time he attacked an enemy, there was a chance to absorb mana using the Mana Steal Stone. Although he had more than 6000 mana, the skills he received after changing professions ate a lot of mana. In such a situation, a Hearthstone that could recover mana was a windfall. There were mana potions but they were many times more expensive than the health recovery potions. Although the probability was low, with the Vampire Stone and Mana Steal Stone then he could absorb health and mana at the same time. That alone was enough to make the ‘Promised Sword’ better than Gwisal’s sword. Ark wanted to confirm the effectiveness of the Hearthstones right away. But he had figured out a method to create Hearthstones using the Phantom Hourglass. If he went to an area with the desired special effect then he could produce a Hearthstone. He wanted to try it when he had all four Hearthstones equipped.

‘It’s good, it’s all good, but.....’

Ark looked at the Monkfish mushrooms that had become charcoal and sighed. In his desperate situation, Ark had used the coal dust explosion to finish off Karad. However, there was something Ark hadn’t considered. There were a huge number of Monkfish mushrooms in the coal mine. But those mushrooms had been caught in the explosion and completely became charcoal. Although he hopefully dug a few out, the effect of the Monkfish mushrooms had disappeared like expected.

‘In the end I’ve only managed to obtain 60 mushrooms. Damn, if I knew this would happen then I wouldn’t have caused the explosion.’

But it was too late for regret. Still, wasn't he quite lucky? Although Ark's dream of obtaining a jackpot with the mushrooms was stopped, he had finished the other preparations thanks to the Suspicious Cave. He had managed to gather all the 'Skin of the Dead' and 'Heart of the Dead' from the dungeon.

'Huhuhu, I can finally make the A class Immortality Pill!'

It was the reason that Ark had doubled Buksil's required quota of ingredients. Once he started making the Immortality Pill, he could not use the pot until it was completed. It took him 48 hours to create the B class 'Slime's Immortality Pill' so the A class pill would probably take longer. So he wanted to store as much food as possible before starting the creation period.

'Fortunately I already have enough food for two days. Once I make food out of the ingredients that Buksil collected this time then I can start the Immortality Pill.'

So Ark's face filled with expectation as he waited for Buksil.

"This bastard, why is he so late? Hey, what are you doing?"

Ark hit the eyeball attached to the back of his head and shouted. Then he heard a voice coming from the eye.

"Ugh, Ark-nim, please save me!"

"Bah, I knew you would commit a crime that would make me hit you. If you don't come back within 3 minutes then....."

"It's not that....chaotic, chaotic users! I am being pursued by them!"

"Chaotic? Where? Where are you?"

Ark stood up and shouted.

“I’ve almost reached the campsite but.....ugh! There are archers among them.....ouch! Anyway, I’m desperate. Please do something. I’m still fine but Baekgu.....Hik, Baekgu!”

“Master, over there!”

Then Racard pointed to one side and yelled. When he turned around, a huge cloud of dust was approaching at a rapid pace. Buksil was riding Baekgu in the lead while 15 users riding horses were chasing after him. When he checked using Eyes of the Cat, both Buksil and Baekgu had less than 20% health left.

‘What’s going on? Such a large number.....’

Ark made a confused face. Then Buksil rushed towards Ark at an absurd speed and shouted.

“S-save me!”

“What the, that guy?”

“Sheesh, he had colleagues?”

“Never mind, I only see one fellow. Kill them all!”

“Heroic Strike!”

No unnecessary questions were asked! The thieves rode forward on their horses and swung their swords.

“T-this.....you keep running and withdraw to the back!”

The group had already caught up so Ark had no choice. Even if he got on Radunma and ran away, it was difficult to escape from horses. The group also had archers so it was suicide to turn around and run when they were this close. In the end, Ark grasped the situation and drew his sword.

“There’s no possibility of this situation ending gently. Razak, Racard, get ready!”

Ark used Sprint to head towards Buksil’s direction along with his summons. The swords came from every direction. Ark raised his arm and shouted.

“Razak, transform!”

Ttdadadak, ttadadadak!

The bones started clanging and Razak transformed into the Saw blade. At the same time, Ark grabbed one of the warrior’s sword and pulled him to the ground. Then the Saw blade changed into a whip and pulled the horse, causing it to be stunned from the impact. The important thing in a fight was to attack one person while dodging the other attacks. Alternatively, he could attack and use any gaps to drink potions or use recovery magic.

“You’re the first one!”

Kwa kwa kwa kwang!

Ark blocked the sword which unleashing a barrage of kicks on the warrior.

“Oh, t-that guy.....stop him. Warriors turn around, archers intercept him!”

When Ark unexpectedly caused one of the warriors to fall into a critical condition, the thieves became tense. They took a battle position and attacked Ark. The warriors lifted their shields and charged.

‘Sheesh, I only had a bit more before defeating him.....’

Ark rolled on the ground to avoid the warriors' attacks. But before he could regain his posture, the arrows flew down like an evening shower. The arrow caused damage and an abnormal status. The arrows pierced through his chest, shoulders and thighs and glowed red.

-You have received a critical hit from the arrows! 250 damage. 240 damage. With the arrow lodged, your movement will be slowed for 30 seconds.

"Damn, Racard!"

"Ohhhh, Dark Dash!"

After Ark was hit by the arrows, Racard rushed to the archers. However, the archers were protected by magicians who used 'Fireball' and Racard retreated as his wing caught fire. Meanwhile, Ark pivoted on his foot to avoid more arrows and blocked the incoming attacks of the warriors. In addition, the warrior that Ark had driven into a critical condition was healed.

'As expected, is it too difficult to fight against 15 people?'

Ark clenched his teeth as he lost a lot of health in a short time. They were between level 250-300. After hunting the Mould Zombies in the cave and collecting the materials, Ark reached level 366. When his dark attribute bonus was added, it came to level 549. That was more than 200 levels difference. However, there were 15 opponents. While he could defeat 20 monsters, the 15 users had a variety of skills. In addition, they were a band of thieves so PVP was their specialty. Their combat standard couldn't be compared to that of monsters. Of course, he had defeated numerous users in Seutandal but even then it was 1 against 2~3. He also had a lot of supporters to reduce the enemy. However the only person fighting now was Ark. Buksil and Baekgu had their health depleted so they couldn't help. No, Buksil and Baekgu would just be a hindrance even if they did fight.

'No, Racard also can't help.'

In the bandit group, there were archers and magicians. If it was monsters then Taunt could be used to scatter them but Taunt didn't work on users. If Racard approached again then the long range attacks would hit him.

‘Damn, why did Buksil bring these guys.....?’

He had no business with that group. If he had 20~30 people with him then defeating those 15 was possible. But the 15 people had a combination of professions so it was unreasonable to expect Ark to beat them.

‘I have to try and take advantage of the terrain features.’

Ark dodged the arrows without any breaks and swung his sword when there was a chance. Ark knew that the swamp was around here. The poisonous swamp and rotting trees made it a densely packed place. Those guys wouldn’t be able to ride their horses there.

‘The problem is escaping their encirclement.’

The thieves had surrounded Ark and Buksil and took turns attacking them. Whenever Ark made a move to penetrate the siege, the thieves just moved back and maintained the encirclement. They were good at fighting in a group.

‘But there is a way!’

“Racard, Blood Lane!”

At that moment, Racard’s eyes turned red and a huge amount of blood gushed out of his mouth, hitting the archers and magicians. It flowed up and covered a range of 10 metres like a rain shower. The descent of the cursed blood caused a large number of abnormal states! But the thieves had surrounded a large area so half of them weren’t affected.

‘But that is enough!’

“Eh? W-what is this?”

“My body is moving on its own. Confusion!”

“Damn, it is curse magic. Curse Cure!”

The eight thieves that had been affected by the blood wandered around in a confused and dazed state. The priests swiftly chanted a spell and released the curse but the formation had already become disordered.

“Ooooooh, b.....blood....b.....”

“Go home and eat. Racard summon released! Buksil, Baekgu, run!”

Ark sent Racard who was vomiting blood back and ran forward. Although two warriors hurriedly tried to stop him, there was no possibility of stopping Ark with the battle formation collapsed.

“Adol!”

Ark combined ‘Jump’ and ‘Dark Blade,’ flying forward like an arrow and slamming into the warriors. The warriors received a devastating impact and fell to the ground. Meanwhile Buksil and Baekgu had broken through the encirclement and entered the swamp. Baekgu had only been with them for a month but had already adapted. He used ‘Jump’ to reach the swamp and lost the thieves.

“Damn, that guy got away!”

“Eh, what is this? It’s a swamp?”

The thieves became confused as they came across the swamp. They were different from Baekgu who could use Jump and couldn’t move properly for fear of falling into the swamp.

“Okay. Buksil, you escape through the swamp for the moment.”

“Huh? What about Ark-nim?”

“I have something left to do.”

Ark turned his body and grinned. While the thieves got off their horses and regrouped, Ark wandered around and attracted the Mould Zombies.

“.....I won't let it go!”

“That guy has been caught by the zombies!”

“Catch that guy! The pig was hiding behind him before!”

“Damn, if only there wasn't this swamp.....”

“Arrows. Turn him into a hedgehog with arrows!”

The thieves gathered and instantly shot a barrage of arrows. However, Ark was immersed in using Dark Dance and reducing the health of the Mould Zombies. When Ark concentrated on his footwork, a message window appeared.

-Dark Dance has reached 70% completion and Dark Scale is activated.

When the percentage of completion for Dark Dance became higher than 70%, Dark Scale was automatically triggered! It consumed 500 mana but the effect was worth it. The 200~300 damage fell down to 120~180. His defense had increased by 30% but the actual damage reduction was 40%. It was because an additional damage was applied when the enemy's damage was less than his defense. In addition, several arrows were reflected back to the archers. Thanks to that, the attack speed of the archers fell.

‘As expected, the 2nd profession skill is different.’

While Ark had decreased four Mould Zombies down to a critical condition, the thieves were running towards him after navigating the swamp.

“Oh, they’ve come just as I’ve finished the preparations. Riposte!”

Ark hit the Mould Zombies that had less than 2% health left with Riposte. Then the Mould Zombies flew towards the bandit group and exploded, releasing a white powder. It was the ‘Mould Spore Scattering’ that the Mould Zombies used when they died. The warriors who were affected by the spores for the first time wore a stupid expression.

“W-where did he go?”

“Eh? When did you get here? Take this!”

The warriors looked around restlessly and started to hit each other. They were affected by the ‘hallucinations’ of the white spores and saw their colleagues as Ark.

“Is this another curse magic? Curse Cure!”

The priests chanted a spell but the magic couldn’t break the spore’s effect.

“What are you doing? Wake up, you stupid people!”

After hearing their colleague’s voice, the warriors stopped attacking and stepped back. Nevertheless, they were under the effect of ‘hallucinations’ and couldn’t distinguish between Ark and his colleagues. The warriors couldn’t attack each other and started to confirm their colleague’s voices. But that was just the beginning.

“Hmm, the white mould has the weakest effect? Aren’t they lucky? But how long will their luck last? Now, let’s continue. Riposte, Riposte, Riposte!”

Ark gathered the Mould Zombies and shouted before blowing them away. It was a Mould Zombie bomb! The Mould Zombies’ bodies reached a critical point before exploding and scattering various spores. The white spores caused ‘hallucinations’ while the green mould caused ‘numbness.’ Then the worse mould spores appeared. It was the red spores which turned those affected into zombies! Three or four thieves were affected and their bodies started rapidly decaying.

“Damn, what the hell is this? Retreat, retreat!”

The thieves couldn’t withstand the Mould Zombie bombs and hurriedly withdrew. Then Ark’s eyes brightened and he attacked someone who was trying to run away. It was the reason why Ark bothered to fight the thieves. If he used the Mould Zombies then he could wipe out the group. But there was a reason he wanted to confront those guys.

‘Chaotic!’

It was because there were users with red names among the group. It was a bandit group so it would be strange if none of them were chaotic. But although they were a bandit group, some of them weren’t chaotic and only had a grey name. Only chaotic users could inflict the last blow safely. So it was common for chaotic users to be mixed in the group while the person in charge of PK would deal the last blow. If a bandit group had 100 people then only 10 of them would be chaotic. However, this group of thieves were a bit strange. The higher level a chaotic user was, the more severe the penalty. So it was common for the chaotic players to have the lowest level in the group. But in this bandit group, the leader Jepeteu was a chaotic user.

‘I’m very thankful.’

It wasn’t necessary to say it again, but there was a 10% chance of equipment dropping when hunting chaotic players. In other words, chaotic users were like a walking loot for him. These were the highest levelled PKers he had come across. Even if the least valuable item dropped, he would still be able to get at least a magic or rare item! Ark caught one person with the Saw blade where the others became confused.

“Heok, J-Jepeteu hyung-nim!”

“Jepeteu, I’m sorry but you’ll have to die.”

“What, what the? This bastard.....!”

Jepeteu’s face turned red and he swung his sword. But away from his colleagues, Jepeteu was just level 300. He was moderately strong when fighting with his group but had no chance in a 1 on 1 fight. In addition, he was still affected by the ‘numbness’ caused by the green mould. Ark continuously used his sword and kicks. Within 1 minute, Jepeteu had his face shoved into the swamp. There was a ringing sound and his helmet fell down.

‘Huhuhu, I got one item!’

Ark laughed and picked up the item. Then he heard cries from outside the swamp.

“Over there!”

‘Huk, what, what the? How many are there?’

Ark turned around and his face hardened. A huge number of users were raising a dusty cloud as they came from the other side. Yes, they were the subordinates of Jepeteu who Ark had defeated. There were dozens of them!

‘Are these the subordinates in his party? They have dozens of people so wouldn’t some of them be PKers? Anyway, it’ll be annoying if they come to the swamp. I can’t get any more items.’

“Radun, transform to Radunma!”

Ssak ssak, ssak ssak ssak ssak!

Radun transformed into the huge lizard and Ark jumped on. On flat ground, Radun could run at the same rate as a horse. But this place was different. The swamp was poisonous. It would be difficult to ride a horse properly. But Radun was a snake so he wasn't affected by the swamp. Ark was willing to face the thieves in the swamp because he knew he could escape anytime.

“Let's go Radun!”

Pa pa pa pa, pa pa pa pa!

Radun moved his short legs and ran across the swamp.