

Ark Vol 17 C 8

Chapter 8

ACT 8 Finding the Lost Dream of a Jackpot!

“Seeking a party!”

“Only available at night, vacancies available for ‘Chamber of Horrors!’”

“Looking for priest and warrior to capture the Slaughter Gardens!”

“Looking for a fellow buddy to hunt continuously for 24 hours on the weekend!”

“Receiving applications for an attack group to raid Necromancer’s Tower. Profit distribution is thorough. Users should be at least level 270, have 30 potions and at least 3 rare equipment.”

Users were gathered like a swarm of cockroaches. The city Bread guided them to was 3~4 hours away from Hwaryong Mountain and called Paradon. Ark’s mouth widened at the sight of users gathered in front of the gate and Bread explained.

“This city is the closest one to King’s Grave.”

“King’s Grave?”

“Eh? You don’t know? It is a very famous hunting ground.”

The King’s Grave were ancient ruins not far from Hwaryong Mountain. It was a quite widespread area and a suitable hunting ground for users level 200~300. So users always formed a party at Paradon and headed to the King’s Grave after equipment inspection. The party always returned with a lot of profit so the place swarmed with users.

“Once I was almost living in that place.”

Bread looked around with a nostalgic expression.

“Ah, Bread hyung-nim!”

“Redian noonim is also here!”

Hundreds of eyes concentrated on the pair after someone spoke. Then Ark and Bread’s group were swarmed by the cockroaches.

“It has been a really long time!”

“Hyung-nim, do you remember me? The magician who previously hunted with you.”

“I managed to beat ‘Naked Fist’ thanks to Hyung-nim. We managed to clear the area because you were our party leader.”

Are you forming a raid party? I’ll come whenever you call.”

The users started talking from all directions that it reached a point where he couldn’t understand anything. In fact, Bread was a legendary user in Paradon. The first time he was the leader of a party and entered King’s Grave, he managed to defeat the boss ‘who scattered despair’ after a fierce battle! He also set the record for clearing all the areas in King’s Grave solo in the shortest amount of time. And Redian also had a similar amount of popularity. Bread and Redian were the strongest pair in Bristania. When he heard this, he thought it was lucky that he didn’t receive more damage.

‘I was chased after by those two.....it’s fortunate that this is over.’

Then Buksil looked over and said.

“Wow, Hyung-nim is a very famous person.”

“Huhuhu. Well, it is normal. I’ve helped half of the people here.”

Bread hummed and gobbled up the attention before Redian interjected.

“Stop playing around. You were beaten to death by Ark just now.....”

“Beat to death? I was winning a few times.....”

Bread muttered with a dissatisfied expression.

“What? Bread hyung-nim was defeated in a duel?”

“What person managed to fight against Bread hyung-nim in a 1-on-1 fight and win?”

“Is that true?”

“Ah, that’s right. I lost. It is this guy.”

Bread indicated towards Ark and instantly hundreds of eyes concentrated on him. At the same time, Bread and Ark were flooded with a huge amount of questions.

“Is it that person Bread hyung-nim?”

“What level are you?”

“What equipment do you have? What profession?”

“Have you joined a guild yet? Why don’t you join our guild? You’ll get VIP treatment!”

Ark started feeling dizzy from the surge of questions. He had no idea how to respond to all the interest in him.

“Ya, why don’t you calm down? Everybody stop right now and disappear!”

At that moment, Redian frowned towards the crowd and shouted. Then both her hands caught fire as she glared at the users.

“Who dared pushed me? Don’t you know how uncomfortable I feel? If you don’t want to die than just go, yes?”

Redian threatened the users who retreated. Then Bread went forward and saved the users.

“Now, now! Stop. We have other business.”

‘Phew, I survived.’

Ark was amazed by Redian’s rough attitude but he managed to escape from the siege thanks to her. They left the players and entered Paradon where Bread sighed and muttered.

“Hey, can’t you control your temper?”

“Bah, what am I? Can’t I express it if I don’t feel good?”

The atmosphere around Redian and Bread was getting a bit temperamental.

“What’s not to like? Eh?Is it that time of the month?”

“Do you want to die?”

.....Redian said but her fist had already struck Bread's jaw. Bread staggered before he suddenly smiled and spoke to Ark.

"Ah that reminds me, don't you have a lot of things to put in order after hunting so much?"

"Eh? No....that....."

What the hell? Why did the topic change so fast? Where was the reaction to being hit? He just got over it? However Bread just ignored Ark's strange look and pointed to the clock tower.

"There are plenty of things for Redian and I to do in the town. We should split up and gather again at 5 o'clock. The place will be 'Camel's Oasis.' If you ask anybody in the central square then they will tell you. The alcohol at Camel's Oasis is really delicious. If you taste it once then you would want to live there. So see you later!"

Bread was turning around when Buksil shouted with shock.

"Huck, Hyung-nim! You're just going?"

"Huh? What? I'll see you soon."

"T-that.....let me go with you!"

"Eh? Why?"

Bread asked in an expressionless tone.

"You have me japtem. Of course we have to go together to organize it. Isn't that right?"

Ark stared at Buksil as he spoke. Bread was unable to sense the subtle atmosphere and just laughed.

"I don't understand exactly but you can't come with me. I am going to spend some 'adult time' with Redian."

"Do you want me to hit you again?"

"Huhuhu, relax..... Anyway, let's meet at 5. At the Camel's Oasis."

Bread dragged Redian into an alley. After Bread and Redian disappeared, Buksil looked around with worried eyes. Then blood drained from his face as he saw Ark's wickedly gleaming eyes.

"That.....that.....Ark-nim?"

"Huh? What?"

Ark murmured as his lips slowly curved upwards.

"Ah that reminds me, how was your week? But let's not talk here. If you want to settle the problem between us then it should be when no one under the age of 18 is around. So let's forget it for now. We'll drink a cup of alcohol happily after finishing our business. Well, someday that problem will absolutely be settled. Come, let's go!"

Ark just licked his lips and circled around Buksil and Baekgu. Ark had already devised a method to punish Buksil and Baekgu. It would relieve his stress instantly.

'He intends to hide behind Bread? Let's see how long he can hold up. I'll make him tell me to kill him with his own mouth.'

In fact, Ark's purpose was more than killing him. Ark had a contract to pay Buksil 800 gold for the memory crystal! At the time it was urgent but now the situation was resolved. And the reason Buksil needed the 800 gold had come back alive. There was no reason to give him 800 gold. But Buksil

wouldn't invalidate the contract obediently. Although he wouldn't destroy it now, let's see how long he can last. So Ark would create a horrifying atmosphere over Buksil and Baekgu that would make him want to get rid of the contract. Therefore Ark just stared at them before heading towards the shops. If the one sleeping stretched his foot then the one he hit wouldn't be able to sleep. He intended to make it so that Buksil couldn't sleep at all. Buksil and Baekgu jumped every time Ark looked at them so they were haggard by the time Ark entered the store.

'Huhuhu, this is kind of fun?'

Ark's newly developed method of torture had another effect.

"Hmm that's quite a lot, so how about 180 gold?"

The shop keeper looked at the pile of japtem and made an offer. It had been a fortnight since Bosaga so he had a large pile of japtem from hunting. Of course, he excluded all the magic items or items with vague descriptions from the japtem. The goods sold to stores were only japtem. 180 gold was a decent price for a fortnight's worth of collecting. But Buksil shook his head and said.

"What do you mean? Take a look at this! It should be 30 silver for one piece of this. And this too. Do you think this is our first trip? In addition, there is supposed to be an advantage when trading with goods of this magnitude. 185 gold!"

"Hah, but there is a decline in the market price these days. If I buy it and the market slumps then what will I do?"

"That is the risk you take when operating a store. 184 gold!"

The merchant's 'Bargain' skill to convince NPCs would have different effects depending on the enthusiasm. But normally Buksil didn't care about the price received. No matter the price, his transaction skill would still increase. In addition, he wouldn't get a penny of it even if the 'Bargain' skill raised the price offer. However this time his eyes were filled with a desire to get even 1 more silver and he rampaged using 'Bargain.' Before that 'destined' time came, he wanted to get into Ark's good books a bit more.

'Hah, this is.....'

The shop keeper made an awkward expression as Buksil continuously used Bargain. Ark left the bargaining to Buksil and started looking at the shelves.

"Ah, do you like this doll perhaps?"

"Huh?"

"Then let's do this. 180 gold and I'll include that doll."

The shop keeper said when he saw Ark looking at the doll on the shelf. It was a doll shaped like a rabbit.

-Poco Poco Doll (General)

A deluxe doll which resembles the famous Poco Poco of the northern mountains. The texture of the Poco Poco feels very wonderful. In addition, there is a magic equipment inside which will allow the Poco Poco to make sounds and move. It also contains a crystal to record your voice. It is best given as a gift.

"Hmm....."

Ark scratched his head for a moment before nodding.

"Okay. I accept."

"Okay, it is a deal."

So Ark received the Poco Poco doll and exited the store.

'It went well. My heart was feeling slightly uncomfortable.....'

In fact, the reason Ark wanted the doll was for Roco. Ark had discovered that it was Roco's birthday the other day. Although he gave her a salary for looking after Ark's Comprehensive Store, he still hadn't given her a birthday present. He had been worried for a while but he finally found a suitable doll.

'I got it as a bonus but it is still like I bought it.'

"Do you like dolls? Hehehe."

After exiting the store, Buksil twisted both hands and approached. It was said in a condescending tone. But Ark didn't pay him any attention and just put it in his bag.

"Now, the next thing to handle....."

It was the Skin of a Greater Demon he obtained from the Soul Eater. It was a rare material obtained from a boss monster.

"Hmm, this is the first time I've seen this type of item. Some type of magic seems to dwell inside it.....I'll have to ask the profession artisans more about it. Well it seems like a rare item so I can give you 20 gold for one piece."

That was the shop keeper's reaction when he had shown it to him. 20 gold per piece. 5 pieces was 100 gold. It wasn't a bad price for a material item. However Ark rejected the deal. The shop keeper wasn't an expert in this type of item. In such cases, the prices often wouldn't be fair. In other words, if he visited an NPC with more specialized knowledge then he could receive a higher price.

'But it is a rare item but it might not be easy to find a specific NPC for it.'

Even if he searched several cities for the NPC, it might not be possible if it was a unique item. It was a waste of time to sell the material item to the NPC.

'There is only one way left.....'

The method was selling directly to the user. It was an obvious statement but in New World, the trading price with an NPC was just a reference. Depending on how many users needed the item, the price could vary infinitely. A typical example was an item called 'Black Crystal.' When selling the Black Crystal to NPCs, they would only give 10 silver. But the need for Black Crystals among alchemists increased so these days it would go for 1 gold if traded between players.

'So selling unusual or rare materials to NPCs is detrimental.'

First he should collect information about the market price of Skin of a Greater Demon among users. And the quickest way to check that was through the auction room. The auction room was a place where unique japtem and items could be sold and the market price determined. Therefore Ark also dropped by the auction house whenever he visited a city. And users headed towards King's Grave often visited the auction house in Paradon.

"Isn't this huge?"

The auction house in Paradon was a huge 5 storey building. There were so many items from King's Grave sold that the auction house had grown. The five floors of the auction house were split up by the type of items sold. Ark entered the auction house and asked the manager NPC.

"Where is the place to deal with special ingredients?"

"Go to the D section on the 4th floor."

"Thank you very much."

"Good luck shopping."

Ark went up to the 4th floor and looked at the showcases.

“Let’s see..... Skin of a Greater Demon. Skin of a Greater Demon.....”

Moon Dust, Cro-Magnon’s Eyeballs, Brilliantly Coloured Claw of the Murania. Strange and special ingredients were scattered everywhere in the showcases. The area had relatively high level users gathered so the items stood out. The best ingredients cost several hundred gold. There were even some cases where one ore cost dozens of gold. Some ingredients which were required to create rare and unique ingredients also traded for a high price. And materials not available at stores would sell for three or four times more at the auction.

“Here. I’m glad someone else put it up for auction. Heok!”

Ark’s eyes widened as he looked at the flyer of information placed on the showcase.

-Skin of a Greater Demon

* Registrant: Invincible Sword King

* Present Selling Price: 108 gold

* Instant Purchase Price: 120 gold.

‘What, what the? 120 gold for one piece?’

Ark felt breathless as his jaw dropped. That was 100 gold more than the price the shop keeper offered. But the price was unmistakeable once he saw the item explanation. He had seen the rare ‘robe of a Dark Soul’ and ‘shoes of a Dark Soul’ in the auction room. It currently cost 800~900 gold because it was a popular piece of equipment among magicians which had an option to increase casting speed.

‘If I sell the Skin of the Greater Demon’ than I can get at less 600 gold!’

That was equal to the price of a rare equipment.

‘But I don’t have to put it down for auction right now.’

Ark was satisfied after checking the price. If he sold it at the auction house then he would have to pay the 2% handling fee. 2% of 600 gold was 12 gold, which wasn’t a small amount of money. Then it was better to find someone who needed Skin of a Greater Demon and trade it directly to them. Even if he gave a 5 gold discount, it was still a profit of 7 gold. Bristania had a lot of magicians so they would require that equipment.

‘It won’t be too late even if I go to a different place.’

Ark smiled with a pleased expression and turned around. He was looking for information on ‘Fire Draconian Skull’ when a familiar item caught his eye.

“Eh? What? Is that.....?”

Ark suddenly stopped and looked at the showcase with surprised eyes. A black lump was placed in the showcase.

“Is that really.....?”

Ark hurriedly read the information notice below the item.

-Necromancer’s Essence C rank

* Registrant: Area

* Present Selling Price: 10 Gold (No auction participants)

* Immediate Purchase Price: 15 Gold

‘N-Necromancer’s Essence!’

Ark inwardly screamed. Necromancer’s Essence! That’s right. It was the core ingredient required for the Necromancer’s Immortality Pill! However, the ingredient was placed on where side of the auction room gathering dust. And the instant purchase price was 15 gold! It wasn’t just one. The showcase had at least 20 essences!

“Such a thing.....!”

Ark hurriedly called to a nearby NPC and asked.

“Excuse me.....can you tell me a little bit about this ingredient?”

Then the NPC replied with a slightly perplexed expression.

“Let’s see? In fact we have almost no information about this stuff. Do you know the area King’s Grave located to the north of Paradon?”

“I don’t know that much about it.....”

“Ah, then I’ll explain a bit. Actually, the King’s Grave was said to be inhabited by an Undead King. Since the entrance was sealed, there was an explosive increase in undead until it was opened to foreigners. So these auction items are sometimes found from the Necromancers infesting Necromancer’s Tower in the area.”

“But these prices.....?”

“Oh, are they slightly expensive?”

The guide laughed before speaking.

“The numbers which appeared are too little. The auction room currently has 20 of them but they actually don’t appear that often. They’ve been registered for several days but it’s not popular so it hasn’t sold. At first various magicians and alchemists were interested and studied it but they haven’t found a purpose for it yet. They expected something at first so it sold for 100 gold a piece but the price has gradually started to go down and now people just put it on the auction for 10 gold.”

“These things have been registered for several days?”

Ark’s mouth gaped open. Anyway, Ark was able to understand the general principles thanks to the guide’s explanation. According to the guide, one Necromancer appeared on random floors of the Necromancer’s Tower every few days. So it was a type of special monster. While the Necromancer’s Essence was a rare item, it dropped quite a lot for users at the Necromancer’s Tower. So the Necromancer’s Essence sometimes appeared when the Necromancers were killed. Of course users would be interested in the rare item dropped by the Necromancer. But they didn’t know the purpose of the essences. Yes, the essence was an essential item in Survival Cooking to create the immortality pills! Although Ark wasn’t the only one who learnt Survival Cooking in New World, there weren’t that many of them. It was impossible for people to know how to use the Necromancer’s Essence. In fact, Ark only figured out how to use the essence by accident.

‘Although it is C rank.....’

The Necromancer’s Essences that appeared in auction room were only C rank. The Necromancer’s Essence that Ark used as A rank. The same type of essences had different ranks depending on the level and abilities of the monster that dropped it. However, it was still an essence even if it was C rank. Although it wasn’t A rank, it would still give a special skill.

‘Such an item is being sold for 10~15 gold?’

Ark’s thoughts started furiously spinning in his head. There was a hunting ground infested with Necromancers! Furthermore, there were a lot of users in front of Paradon heading towards that place.

In other words, the Necromancer's Essence would continue to appear. If users were unable to figure out the purpose then the price would continue to fall.

'Doesn't that mean I can continuously creating immortality pills?'

Even with a C rank immortality pill, the abilities would increase around the same amount as the Mongoose' Immortality Pill. However, the item permanently increased stats. Presently only expert alchemists could create 'Elixirs' like that. The Elixirs raised one type of stat by +10 but it cost 300 gold! Also, the elixirs could only be used 5 times per user.

'Based on the Mongoose's Immortality Pill, the C rank pill should increase stats by 15~20 points. It might also increase the resistance to certain attribute and stats depending on the percentage of completion. The Elixirs can't even be compared.'

Since there were a lot of magicians in Bristania, a lot of them would want to purchase it. Once created he could get a minimum of 800.....no, it will be possible to receive 1000 gold! The problem was the remaining ingredients needed.

'The Necromancer's Immortality Pill requires at least 4000 of the skin and heart of the dead to create one.'

But Ark was level 380 so he was already beyond the level 200~300 King's Grave. That meant Ark couldn't obtain the ingredients. He had no choice but to buy it. Even if the essence was cheap, if the remaining ingredients were expensive then it wouldn't fit in his calculations. But there was no need to worry about it.

'Ohhh. The skin and heart of the dead is only 10 silver?'

A lot of users from Paradon hunted the undead in King's Grave. Therefore ingredients dropped by the dead were overflowing. Since there was an oversupply of skin and heart of the dead, the price was low. Ark's heart became excited as he confirmed it.

'Let's calm down and make some calculations.'

Ark quickly visualized the calculator in his head. The skin and heart of the dead were 10 silver per piece. In order to make the immortality pill, he needed 4000 of them which was 400 gold. If he bought the Necromancer's Essence then the cost would be 410 gold.

'If the final goods are sold for 1000 gold.....?'

That was a profit of 590 gold for one!

'The problem is creating the Necromancer's Immortality Pill. A C rank will still take 2 days.'

But there was also no need to worry about that. The Easter Nation sold [Vision] scrolls! If he added the recipe for Necromancer's Essence to the [Vision] scroll than anyone could create it.

'Then I can create my Immortality Pill factory which I gave up on again!'

Previously Ark had a plan to distribute the 'Slime's Immortality Pill.' But the rehabilitation group only obtain 6 essences after labouring in the underground labyrinth for several months. In addition, the main ingredient the Unicorn Horn was too difficult to obtain so he abandoned that plan. Ark was forced to close the factory's doors. But this time the situation was different. Thanks to the users congregating in King's Grave, there was a reliable and cheap supply of ingredients.

'It is a bonanza. This is a huge profit! I can earn money without doing anything!'

Ark smiled and looked at Buksil.

'This method will be simple.'

"Buksil, from today on you will be the manager of the Paradon branch of Ark's store!"

"Huh? Branch manager?"

Buksil blinked his eyes with confusion. Ark explained the business outline and added.

“For the time being, you will stay here and purchase the Necromancer’s Essence, the Skin of the Dead and the Heart of the Dead. But be careful when buying it. If users think it is popular than they might raise the price. Do you understand?”

In fact that was Ark’s only worry. The price was determined by supply and demand. If someone bought all of the ingredients in the auction room than the users would raise the price. If it went up by 1 silver then the price would continue to rise. The rising costs would soon cause a decrease in profit. Therefore the items had to be quietly bought. It was important not to be noticed. Ark didn’t intend to have his Necromancer’s Pill become a short term business. With the ingredients supplied at the low price, he would receive a jackpot if he sold it 1-on-1 with another user. With such a grand ambition, he had to pay attention to the stabilization of the ingredients cost. So he needed someone here to monitor the market closely and adjust the purchases according to need. Ark would leave that role to Buksil. Buksil’s face lightened after he heard the explanation.

“I-I’ll do it! Please leave it to me!”

Buksil was a merchant so he could also calculate quickly. He was convinced about the business. He could also get away from Ark’s threats if he became the Paradon branch manager. Of course, Ark had been irritated with Buksil. There was no reason to pay attention to such things when there was a windfall of money.

“One thing, if you stay then there will be a problem with the videos.....”

“You don’t have to worry about that!”

Buksil quickly interjected.

“Actually, when Ark-nim was on Hwaryong Mountain than my ‘Vampire’s Eye’ reached intermediate level. Even if I’m far away from Ark-nim, I can still record videos with that skill. Communication isn’t available yet but it’ll probably work once the skill reaches advanced level.”

“Ohhh, then there is no problem. Then you’ll sometimes get in contact?”

Ark's new business plan was rapidly processed. For the moment Buksil was to collect the ingredients. After he purchased the required quantities and sent them to Ark, Ark would place the Necromancer's Immortality Pill recipe on the [Vision] scroll! He would scrape in money. Buksil would also get 10% of the proceeds. If the profit for the immortality pill was 490 gold, 10% of that would be 49 gold. The only thing Ark had to do was place the recipe on the [Vision] scroll. Even if 10% of the profit was given to Buksil, it was worth it since the ingredients needed to be purchased.

'When this works.....'

It would be a money cushion! It would be possible to earn several thousand gold from this. With that much profit, Buksil could also earn some gold.

'Hehehe. Thank you. Chairman-nim, I will follow Ark-nim for the rest of my life.'

"Yes. Work hard. Paradon branch manager. Until the day everybody earns gold in Bristania."

"I look forward to it. Baekgu, I'll be able to feed you a meat dish every day."

"Wah, really?"

While following Ark and Buksil, Baekgu could only eat kimchi soup. So the contract was signed and it was soon 5 o'clock.

"What? What happened to your expression?"

Bread asked as soon as they arrived at Camel's Oasis. Ark and Buksil's expressions were completely different from when they split up. Money made a person happy. It was a normal phenomenon. But the plan was top secret so Ark coughed and spoke with a straight face.

"What do you mean? Don't you also look completely different?"

Ark asked after seeing Redian. Before they separated, Redian's expression was 'cloudy with a slight typhoon warning' and now it was 'clear.' When she made a bright expression, Redian was quite a beautiful woman. Then Bread laid his hand on Redian's shoulder and smirked.

"I told you. We spent some adult time. Children won't understand such things."

".....Stop joking around."

Redian declared sharply but she didn't hit him like she did before. Instead she just grumbled a little bit.

'What did they do in the meantime.....?'

Ark stared at the both of them before shaking his head. Well, who cared? Ark's only concern was with his factory.

"Okay, so the alcohol here is good?"

"Ah, it is the best. Owner, alcohol and appetizers over here! "

Bread started to order alcohol in a light voice. Ark, Buksil and Baekgu started drinking the alcohol. In a short time they all became drunk.

Diririri, diririri.

Then his phone ringtone could be heard in his ear.

"Oh, wait a minute."

Ark asked Bread for understanding and left his unit. Then he picked up the receiver.

“O-oppa.” It’s serious! It’s a crisis! Lancel village is in a crisis!”

Roco’s voice shook his ears.