

## Ark Vol 18 C 4

### Chapter 4

#### ACT 4 Media Power!

“I guess it has begun now.”

A man muttered as he looked at the clock on the wall. With a bushy beard and thick potbelly, it was a man in his late thirties wearing pyjamas. He looked like any ordinary father living next door. And he was actually a common neighbourhood ajusshi. But that was in reality. Once he entered through the magic door to a fantasy world called New World he was Raiden, the leader of the Hermes alliance filled with hundreds of people. Yes, this ajusshi was the leader of the Hermes alliance Raiden! It was currently 8 o'clock in the morning. It was still too early to be active in the game. Raiden's normal pattern was to log on at 12 o'clock. However he had been unable to sleep last night.

“It has to work.....”

It wasn't possible to hide his anxiety as Raiden muttered before taking out a cigarette. The reason he had a sleepless night was because today was 'the day.' It was the formal debut stage of the Hermes alliance's secret society!

“Today I will see if the secret suicide squad can play an active role.”

Raiden had a lot of expectations towards the suicide squad. No, to be exact they were the only thing he could rely on. It wasn't necessary to explain but the Hermes alliance was in massive debt after the lawless port was destroyed. That was not the whole problem. At the time, Raiden had gathered funds from the alliance to invest into construction of the lawless port. The amount of profit gained from the lawless port depended on the funds invested. If it had gone as planned and they were able to recapture Seutandal then the dividends would be enormous. The lawless port seemed to be a business plan with a 100% success rate. In addition, Seutandal would be a golden goose once it was recaptured! Everybody in the Hermes alliance invested with the dream of making a fortune and the lawless port was able to be created in a short amount of time. But the lawless port was smashed before it could give any profits. At the same time, the investments of the alliance members became toilet paper overnight. Whether it be dozens of gold or hundreds of gold, all the alliance members' blames were directed at Raiden. That wasn't all. The person who most believed in the success of the lawless port plan was Raiden himself! He believed that shares in the lawless port was a guaranteed blue chip (stock where growth, profitability and stability was secured) and he believed that the one who held the most shares would profit the most.

He had mobilized his offline and online contacts and prepared money to invest. Thanks to that, Raiden was backed into a corner in both New Word and reality.

‘But if the suicide squad succeeds today.....’

As much as 10,000 gold (from the lawless port stolen goods) would come into his possession. It wouldn’t be enough to settle all his problems but it would turn off the heat.

‘There is also one more important thing aside from the money coming in today. I will be able to gauge if the secret society will be profitable. In the words of Jewel, obtaining the 10,000 gold won’t be a problem. It will be possible to recover all our losses and have a reserve source of income if they prove successful today.’

“And once again Seutandal..... Huhuhu, hahaha!”

Raiden cackled at the thought of the rosy future. Then the door suddenly opened and a sharp voice could be heard.

“Shut up! You’re laughing when I just received an early morning call from debt collectors!”

A woman who was Raiden’s wife yelled into his ear. Raiden winced and closed his mouth before stuttering.

“Oh, no, this is.....”

“I really can’t live like this. How could you borrow money without saying a word to me? Do you know what it is like receiving called from loan companies? If you don’t pay it off within a week then they will send someone!”

“U-understood. It can be solved today if everything goes well.”

“Bah, are you certain? I’ll tell you in advance but I can’t live with debt-stricken people. If you don’t fix it in a few days then I will take the children and go to my parent’s house!”

His wife shouted as she poked him angrily.

‘Damn, I have to pay off that borrowed money.’

Raiden continued smoking while sighing. He had stayed up all night chain smoking. He couldn’t possibly eat until he heard news of Jewel’s victory. Well, if he didn’t pay back the money then his wife wouldn’t be setting the table for him. Raiden restlessly pulled out some milk from the refrigerator. He was drinking the milk when his son turned on the TV and its sound could be heard.

“Today’s game exclusive scoop will be a special live broadcast!”

‘Game exclusive scoop? Is it already that time?’

Raiden drank the milk and turned his eyes towards the TV.

Originally the game exclusive scoop was broadcasted once a week during the evening. But since viewers started to protest that the information was coming in too late so a program called ‘game scoop hot issues’ began in the morning hours.

‘Anyway this is a special live broadcast? Had an event begun in New World?’

“I’m curious about the special live broadcast. Since it wasn’t in the schedule.”

The female reporter asked the question that Raiden was wondering about. And the host laughed and nodded.

“It’s not a surprise that you don’t know. I heard some talk a few hours ago and decided in a hurry. But there is no doubt that every minute will be interesting. I’m very curious in the results as well.”

“Ah, your words have made me even more curious. The audience is also interested so please tell me quickly.”

“I understand. But before that, have you seen the video titled ‘Crime File’ which spread like wildfire over the internet yesterday?”

“Yes, I received a notification from my friend and watched it. Since beginners from Schudenberg often visit the Haruna camp. I’ve also been there before but the NPC captain of Haruna was really beautiful and kind. Seeing such a good NPC get killed was really heartbreaking. Well, a new NPC appeared not long afterwards in the game but he is just a bearded grandfather.”

The female reporter said with a deliberately angry expression. Then the host laughed loudly and nodded.

“Hahaha, I know as well. While users have killed NPCs before, this is the first time an NPC village was decimated so it is was a shocking incident. But the even more shocking contents of the video was the advance attack notice.”

“A village called Lancel.”

“That’s correct. Lancel village is located in the Argus Mountains in Schudenberg. After building the village, it has been rapidly growing thanks to its eager residents. In addition, there are many unique goods and a variety of species so the village has been quite famous these days.”

“Are they going to be killed like the residents of Haruna camp?”

“Yes, that might be so. But where there is evil in the world, there is also justice.”

The host shook his finger and spoke.

“The thieves who appeared on the video are strong and vicious. When they said they would attack Lancel, I thought all the users would run away. However justice is still alive. Surprisingly many people

have decided to oppose the bandit group! And even more amazingly, the one who rallied them to stand against the thieves is none other than Dark Wolf!”

“Omo, isn’t Dark Wolf the one who became a hot topic after Seutandal rose?”

“That’s correct. The hero who caused Seutandal to rise will make an appearance on the game exclusive scoop! After he heard the news, he ran to Lancel and rallied the users to fight against the bandit group. And the combat scene of him fighting against the thieves will be aired live!”

Then a lamp which was placed in front of the host started shining.

The person standing nearby wearing earphones received instructions and nodded, causing the host to shout.

“The images are being transmitted now. We will see the true identities of the thieves who attacked the NPC village and see if Dark Wolf can stop them, creating a new legend. All the viewers are cheering for Dark Wolf.”

Puhak!

Milk spouted like a fountain from Raiden’s mouth as he idly watched the screen. The face which filled Raiden’s 54 inch LED TV was Jewel.

After seeing Jewel’s face on the TV, his six year old son asked.

“Eh? Isn’t that the person who appeared in a video with Daddy before? Isn’t that ajusshi Daddy’s subordinate? Then Daddy is also bad like him?”

“Oh, no! I don’t know that person!”

Raiden wildly shook his head.

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‘Huhuhu, that Jewel still doesn’t know what is going on.’

Ark laughed at Jewel’s confused expression. Yes, this was the method Ark came up with 18 hours before. In order to oppose the Crime File circulating the internet, he had received the help of the broadcasting station!

Ark had been desperate before he thought of that method. If the Crime File scared users off then Lancel would only have 300 people protecting it. On the other hand, Jewel’s force numbered 500 people. Furthermore, they also had high levels. No matter how he thought, he couldn’t think of a method to win. In order for the mission to be a success, he had to ensure that the damage to NPCs and the village remained below 30%. But in order to reduce damage to the residents, he would have to sacrifice the village and vice versa. Those two challenges weren’t compatible at the same time. And if that quest failed then the quest he spent 1 and a half years on would also fail. That wasn’t all. If the town received a serious blow then the real estate price would slump! Even if Ark managed to stop the thieves, Ark had no choice but to submit to considerable damage.

‘The only way to minimize the damage is through the users.....’

While they were only level 100~150, it would be possible to do something with those numbers. Furthermore, if the users died then Ark wouldn’t receive any damage. He could use risky strategies without any burden.

However, the users would be too scared from the ‘Crime File’ to be hired as mercenaries anymore. Then Ark’s eyes caught sight of the business card with the name of the journalist from the game exclusive news on it. In fact after the ‘Netherworld exploration of a Wicked Wolf’ video, Ark had been contacted many times by the game scoop reporter. The viewers were really interested in the identity of the black wolf so the reporter wanted him to appear on the broadcast. However Ark had refused the offer. While he would receive a performance fee for going on the broadcast, he wasn’t an entertainer so the fee would be small. The amount wasn’t large enough to tempt him. Ark knew that having his face on the broadcast might have even bigger disadvantages. No, he wasn’t going to show his face for that amount of money.

‘But it won’t be a problem if it is a video of the game. And if it is broadcasted on the TV.....?’

Ark’s thoughts rolled around wildly and he quickly called the broadcasting station.

“Dark Wolf-nim, you’re accepting the offer to appear on the broadcast?”

“No. I have a different request today.”

Ark explained what he wanted to the reporter.

“Do you know the Crime File which circulated a while ago? That bandit group will be raiding Lancel village tomorrow. I was wondering if you wanted to broadcast the battle?”

“The battle of Lancel village? Tell me more.”

Although the Crime File had circulated on the internet, it had also attracted close attention from the game exclusive news. Because users giving an advance notice before they attacked an NPC village was unusual. Naturally, the plan was for the game exclusive news to dispatch a reporter in New World to the site.

“Could it be that Dark Wolf-nim is also participating in the village?”

“It’s not just me. From the Evil Silrion, Blue Sword also known as Shambala and Bristania’s strongest pair Bread and Redian will also appear in the battle to defend Lancel.”

“Is that true?”

The reporter from the game exclusive news was excited by Ark’s proposal. Since the game exclusive news was based on information about New World, naturally he knew the names Bread and Redian. Not only Dark Wolf, but the Crime File video was also an incredible topic. Blue Sword, Bread and Redian were also going to be there! It was to the extent that everybody in New World would be interested in the video! If they broadcasted it then the audience ratings would be secured.

“Team Leader-nim, it is a huge event!”

“What? Dark Wolf, Shambala, Bread and Redian are all going to appear in Lancel village? There’s no need to think about it. Organize the airtime immediately! Schedule an opening in the hot issues section which will be followed by the video of the battle!”

It was given the green light.

“Are there any reporters close to Lancel village?”

“There is. We have some reporters in Giran ready to film the scene of Lancel being attacked by the thieves.”

“That’s great. Then tell them to quickly make contact with Dark Wolf!”

“By the way, Dark Wolf says he will edit it directly from that site and send in the video.”

“What? Why?”

“I think he wants to ensure that the scene comes out wonderfully.”

The reporter scratched his head and muttered. But it was in fact the opposite. No, the reason Ark wanted to be the director of the camera was to ‘hide that thing.’ In this battle, it was inevitable that he would sacrifice the users’ lives to protect the NPCs and the village. Of course he would have to give some unreasonable commands. Then wouldn’t it be broadcasted to the entire country? However, the Team Leader didn’t know Ark’s intentions and nodded without thinking.

“Anyway, the viewers will show a huge amount of interest since Dark Wolf is entering the war. The appearance of Dark Wolf isn’t bad. Tell the reporters who will make contact with Dark Wolf to do whatever he says. This fight that will be televised live will be a hot issue!”

And approximately 10 hours ago, a reporter from the game exclusive news arrived in Lancel. He established a simple base station at Lancel village to film the battle. Then 15 cameras and equipment to connect it to the broadcasting station was installed. And the person who was controlling the images



was Ark! The antennae on top of his head was to relay the information from the 15 cameras to the base station.

‘Huhuhu, it really is a brilliant idea!’

Ark looked at the hundreds of users who appeared on the screen and smirked. There was a reason Ark dragged the broadcasting station into this. Ark implemented his plan shortly after the reporter arrived in Lancel village. Ark transformed into Dark Wolf and called the users to the square along with the reporter.

“Everyone please pay attention!”

“What? We’re busy.... Eh? That person?”

“Dark Wolf! Dark Wolf who caused Seutandal to rise!”

The users who were busy trying to escape after seeing the Crime File stopped and started paying attention. Most users in New World had seen the video, so there was nobody who didn’t know about Dark Wolf. After their attention focused on him, Ark quickly started talking.

“Everybody already knows this but the bandit group which appeared in the Crime File is planning to attack Lancel tomorrow. There is no time to receive help from other villages in this area. If this is left alone then Lancel will be plundered like they planned.”

Ark said as he looked at the users.

“Are you really going to just sit back and watch? Even though it is an NPC village, this is a place of shelter within the Argus Mountains. Yet they want to trample this place! Are you going to ignore the users who intend to destroy this shelter?”

“That is true however.....”

“We still haven’t completed all the quests in this village…….”

“But……those fellows will attack NPCs as well as loot the village. There is no reason for us to intrude in vain…….”

The users whispered among each other. In fact, the users didn’t want Lancel village to be threatened. Lancel village was the only resting place for users hunting in the Argus Mountains. It was also unnecessary to say that users received quests from Lancel village. But the burden was too big for them to participate in the battle.

“I will not tolerate the atrocities of those fellows. No matter what, I will oppose them and protect Lancel. And just now, the game exclusive news has decided to live broadcast the battle of Lancel during the ‘hot issues’ section.”

“What? The game exclusive news?”

“That’s correct. This person right here is a reporter from the gam exclusive news.”

Ark pointed towards the reporter. Then the users started buzzing around with astonished voices.

“That’s right, I’ve seen that reporter before on the game exclusive news.”

“Then the battle for Lancel village will really be broadcasted on the TV?”

“If we fight in the battle then we’ll appear on TV?”

The users gradually began to understand the situation. There was a serious chance that their characters in New World could be broadcasted! Ark then drove another wedge in the shaken users.

“Everybody knows that Lancel village will be attacked by those in the Crime File tomorrow. We have to stop it. And if we win the battle then you’ll be a hero. Naturally users who show more achievements will receive more attention. Those users might be given a chance for an interview. Isn’t that right?”

“Ah yes, that is.....”

The reporter nodded his head. Lights appeared in the users’ eyes at that reply. A TV which a common house appliance which was spread out all over the world. But now they had a chance to appear on it. Plus, if they did something notable then there was a chance for an interview. Anybody would be happy about a chance to appear on TV! The players were buzzing for a while before one user stood up and shouted.

“That’s right, we can’t just rest while the village is attacked by thieves!”

“Besides, the hero of Seutandal Dark Wolf is also here!”

“Let’s all fight together!”

The attitude of the users changed 180 degrees once they heard the word ‘TV.’ While a video might die down quickly, appearing on TV was no comparison. Thanks to that, the users now swarmed and frantically tried to apply to participate.

“Oh, a celebrity!”

“If my character appears on TV then I can boast to my girlfriend!”

“Eh, what? It’s true. The Lancel battle will be broadcasted live on the game exclusive news. Huh? Of course. Where? Don’t make me laugh and just return soon! This is the opportunity to be a celebrity! Don’t worry about your equipment being taken away!”

Some users even whispered to their friends who had already run away.

‘Huhuhu, this stupid crowd!’

Ark inwardly smiled with satisfaction as he looked at the user. Yes, this was the reason why Ark dragged in reporter from the game exclusive news. An appearance on TV. This also had another effect aside from gathering users. With the images being streamed on the television, it was impossible for them to cowardly run away or disobey orders if the situation became difficult. If they had to die while on TV then they would rather die with honour.

‘You’re already my puppets. Now I can control you as I wish!’

Thus Ark was able to get his hands on 400 people free of charge. Despite their levels, these puppets were those who didn’t fear death and would submit to his orders.

‘Also Jewel’s group has been perfectly branded as a villain!’

Ark looked at Jewel with a stupid smile. Ark was managing all the images shown in the live broadcast. And the picture he sent to the broadcasting station was that of Jewel’s face! The close up shot of the villain attacking Lancel village was displayed for the whole country to see. Of course the TV broadcasts didn’t have any influence on New World. But at least Jewel’s face was imprinted sharply in the minds of players in New World. Even if he managed to lose his chaotic status later on, it wouldn’t be easy for him to get along with other users. Jewel had already lost even before the start of the battle. And it wasn’t just Jewel, it also applied to Duke and the rest of the group. However Jewel still hadn’t grasped the situation.

“What the hell? How come these users are still in the village?”

Jewel couldn’t understand and just stared at the users. He hadn’t expected that all the users would run away after watching the Crime File. But at least 70-80% would’ve run away. However, there were at least 400 users standing in front of him. It seemed like the numbers had actually increased instead of decreasing. Furthermore, there was an unusual fighting spirit in the users’ eyes. But there was a reason for it.

“Hey, did you see?”

“Yes, I just checked right now and it really appeared on TV.”

“It was only for a little bit but my face definitely appeared.”

“Really?”

“Thankfully I’m taping it!”

“If we participate then we’ll become celebrities like Dark Wolf!”

“Will we make a new legend?”

After seeing that it was broadcasted on TV, the morale of the players increased even more. But Jewel didn’t know that and was frightened by their intention to fight. Jewel was only able to understand one thing.

‘There’s no mistake, that bastard has definitely arranged some schemes!’

“Leader-nim?”

“There’s no need to worry! Those guys are only level 100~150 at the most! It might become a little more troublesome but our victory is still assured! It will go as planned. We’ll show them what will happen if they try to attack us! Step on them one by one!”

“Charge!”

Snap, snap, chwa chwa chwa chwa!

Dozens of members from the suicide squad rushed forward. They were wearing thick metal armour, shields and holding spears! They were the assaulters, the profession with the strongest breakthrough power in New World.

“Break through into Lancel! Dash!”

“Wah ah ah ah!”

The assaulters used their shields and spears and surged forward.

“Heok, it is the assaulters!”

“Stop them! If you collide with them then some will fall down!”

The users became confused and started firing magic and arrows. But.....ting, ting, ting, ting! The magic and arrows just bounced off the shields. It was the defensive power of the assaulters who had the strongest breakthrough power! The Assaulters also consisted of the highest ranking users in the suicide squad. Level 300! When the assaulters used their skill ‘Dash’, the movement speed increased by 50% while their defense increase by 30%. There level 100~150 were unable to stop the rush. Thanks to the thrust from the assault corps, Lancel’s defences quickly became disorderly!

“So they appeared like I expected.”

However Ark was still composed. Jewel’s purpose was to destroy Lancel village. It was expected that they would use the assault corps as soon as they began to break through to Lancel. It was impossible for Ark not to prepare for such an obvious attack.

“Hahaha! Those stupid guys, I’ll make sure they regret jumping in so rashly.....”

One of the assaulters rushing forward suddenly disappeared. It wasn’t just one person. One by one more assaulters started disappearing.

“What, what the? Why.....?”

Jewel looked at the sight with puzzled eyes. Only then did he discover that a hole had appeared where the assaulter disappeared. Holes had been dug all over the place and camouflaged using wooden branches.

“A pitfall trap? That guy, still using such boring methods until the end..... But they are assaulters. A trap like that won’t be enough to give them a fatal wound. They’ll soon leave the trap.....”

“Will that be possible?”

Ark laughed and murmured.

Tutututung, pepepepeng!

All of a sudden there were loud sounds and smoke rose from the hole. What had just happened? While Jewel was still looking, some assaulters climbed out of the hole with looks of fear on their faces. But before they could fully exit, a black hand grabbed their arms and legs and pulled them back in. There was a violent sound and the assaulter disappeared again.

“Aaaaack!”

‘What is happening in that hole.....?’

Jewel stared with shocked eyes until some ears emerged from the hole again. They were ears that he had seen on an NPC before.

‘They previously accompanied Ark.....!’

Yes, the hand while pulled the shocked warrior into the hole was a raccoon. The hole and the raccoons was the plan that Ark devised to deal with the assaulters. In other words, the holes that the assaulters fell into weren’t a trap. They were complicated underground tunnels created using the raccoons specialty. Then Ark covered the entrance to the underground passages using the wooden branch and camouflaged it. The assaulters wore heavy armour so they were vulnerable to fall damage. It was natural for them to be ‘stunned’ by the impact of falling! Then the raccoons waiting in the underground passage would swarm and shoot them with the cannons. Even with their high defense, the assaulters were unable to withstand the barrage of so many cannon fire while in a ‘stunned’ state. It was a 100% chance of death once they fell into the hole!

“This is ridiculous.....!”

Jewel’s mouth started foaming. Jewel had thought it was just traps laid out. But he believed in the assaulter’s defense and judged that it was possible to ignore the traps. He never could’ve guessed that it would turn out this way. However, ‘Dash’ had already begun. While ‘Dash’ boasted overwhelming breakthrough power, its weak point was that it couldn’t be stopped until the skill was finished. No, even if Jewel told them to stop then they wouldn’t be able to.

‘The raccoon holes are unexpectedly but only 10 assaulters fell into the hole. There are still 30 of them left. 30 assaulters are enough to shatter their defences! Once their rampage stops then I will reorganize their formation and batter their defences!’

Just like Jewel said, there were still 30 assaulters who managed to reach the users. If the assaulters collided with them then it was possible to shatter dozens of users! The overwhelming power might also impact the moral of the users! Once the suicide squad broke in then any hope those users had would be lost. Clearly the users would run away with fright. Then the assaulters rushed into the users like Jewel planned! Ark then jumped onto a user’s shoulders and raised the Saw blade.

“Razak, transformation off! Iron Fire Wall activate!”

Clack clack clack, clack clack clack clack!

The Saw blade transformed back into Razak. But Razak’s outward appearance was different from before. Previously he carried around a tattered shield but now it was one covered in flames. It was a magnificent fire shield which looked like a skull!

Clack clack clack clack clack!

Razak shouted (?) and raised his shield over his head.

Kwa kwa kwa kwa kwang, pepepepeng, hwarrrrruk!



At the same time, wings of fire opened up on either side of the shield and hit the assaulters. The assaulters that had been travelling at top speed wobbled and fell. This was the power of Razak's new 'Blazing Fire Draconian Shield!' After Ark gave the Fire Draconian Skull to the raccoons, they had made the 'Blazing Fire Draconian Shield' out of it. Frankly, Ark never imagined that a shield would be created from it. Since the information couldn't be confirmed, he thought that an unusual item would be made. Because wasn't the material a skull? Yet an unexpected shield for Razak was created.

-Blazing Fire Draconian Shield (Rare)

Armour type: Steel Shield

Defense: 250

Durability: 150/150

Weight: 70

User Restriction: Exclusive use for a Skeleton Warrior

A shield made with the skull of the Fire Draconian Oracle Lumines. The oracle was originally had a mission to protect the Fire Draconian species so the oracles have learnt strong protective magic. All the protection magic that Lumines has learnt over the hundreds of years has been concentrated in this skull. A skilled craftsman can create a powerful artifact out of this skull. But only those with a deep understanding of bones will be able to draw out all the power within the skull.

Mana consumption:100 Cool down time: 5 minutes>

'This is worth the 200 gold production cost.'

Ark looked warmly at the shield roaring with fire. A rare shield with a special option attached was a lot different from a general magic shield. With the special option, Razak has another defensive skill. The Iron Fire Wall had the ability to stop the enemy's rush when within a 10 metre area! The skill alone was worth more than 200 gold. The problem was that it was a pet exclusive item so it would be difficult to sell. But if it was an item to this degree then he wouldn't want to sell it. Thanks to that, his summons managed to stop the 'Dash' of the 30 assaulters. It also caused flame damage and a 'stun' effect!

"Kuaaaaak!"

Thanks to the stun effect, the assaulters couldn't move a finger.

'That's it. The cool down time of Iron Fire Wall is 5 minutes. It is similar to the cool down time of the warrior's 'Dash.' Then I can block their next Dash.'

Razak had also been steadily eating food so his current stats were equivalent to level 290. So that stat difference wasn't that much compared to Jewel's group. Moreover, Razak had also received considerable training from Ark so his combat abilities weren't inferior. Using the 'Blazing Fire Draconian Shield,' it was possible to stop the 'Dash.'

Clack clack clack, clack clack clack clack!

Even without the need for Ark's commands, Razak knew to use his shield and was the main axis of the users' defense. It was a scene where he could see Razak's growth.

'That's it, their momentum has been broken. Now.....!'

Ark raised his fist and let out a large roar.

"Now's the time. Exterminate the villains who are threatening the peace of New World!"

"Waaaaaah, for New World!"

Then a wave of 400 users raised their weapons and rushed Jewel's group. The users.....the first group they attacked was the assaulters affected by 'stun.' The assaulters were normally an impregnable wall of defense. But that didn't matter. Although the users were only level 100~150, there were still 400 of them.

Kwa kwa kwa kwang!

The users swarmed like a group of ants and the assaulters instantly lost all their health. Since they were caught by 'stun', the only thing the assaulters could do was send an SOS signal.

"S-save me!"

"These bastards..... Stop them! Block those guys!"

"Damn, these guys are like mayflies..... Smash them all!"

Jewel's plan to smash the users with 'Dash' failed so their group had no more room to breathe. They had to mobilize their power before colliding with the users. Thanks to the imitation of Lancel village created by Illusion Sonata, Jewel's group had quite a few casualties. And now the 40 assaulters had also received damage. But Jewel still had more than 400 forces left. Despite having the same numbers as the users, their level was higher! So Jewel's group thought they could smash them quickly but the users were surprisingly persistent.

"To the tired bodies, listen to this cheerful song."

A soft singing voice could be heard over the steel clanging sounds and screams of the battlefield. It was the Minstrel Roco singing from Lancel. A Minstrel's singing buff! While the priests and magicians could also apply buffs, the buffs of a Minstrel were different. While the Minstrel specialized in buffs, unlike the magician they couldn't use any attacks. That was the reason why users avoided becoming minstrels. In other words, it was just a profession that specialized in buffs. When Roco used her support magic from the rear, message windows appeared in front of the users.

-The Advanced 'Song of Life' effect has been applied.

-The Advanced 'Song of Wind' effect has been applied.

-The Advanced 'Song of the Brave' effect has been applied.

Roco's many skills had increased to advanced level after training with Melody. And thanks to Gentle Reverberation, it was possible to stack the effects three times. But that strong point of a Minstrel was something else. A priest and magician could only apply buffs on 5~10 people maximum. Furthermore, buffs consumed mana so they couldn't fire it continuously. On the other hand, the minstrel's buff applied to all allies who heard the music. One buff could affect 400 people at once. The efficiency of the buff was like the difference between heaven and earth.

"Damn, that stupid female again.....!"

Jewel aggressively glared at Roco. But the problem wasn't just Roco.

"Why on earth are these guys just jumping in rashly?"

Jewel shot out fire and muttered as some users were burnt. No matter how many buffs Roco used, the level difference was overwhelming. Even if three or four people attacked one person, it would still be difficult. But the users just jumped it recklessly like that wasn't a problem. Plus.....

"Kuaaaack, it is regrettable. But at least I defended the justice of New World before I died....."

"Heok! Damn, can I only last until here? Yeong-sook, I love you!"

The users talked nonsense even while collapsing. They were putting on an act because they were conscious of the broadcast. But Jewel couldn't understand the circumstances.

"This is irritating. What happened to the weakening effect of the Crime File? Then I'll have to let them know it isn't a joke. 1st unit, surround the enemy on your right flank! Make them realize this isn't a joke!"

"Yes. 1st unit, surround a target!"

Soon dozens of the suicide squad members had surrounded a few users. They simultaneously took out a scroll and used them. It was the chaotic scrolls which could turn users into beggars in no time! If that many users were turned into beggars then they would realize it wasn't a joke.

"Aw, it is the chaotic scrolls!"

"If we're hit by those scrolls then our equipment might drop!"

As expected, the users stopped once the chaotic scrolls were used. Once the obvious threat was used, clearly the users would realize it wasn't a joke and would run away.....but they didn't.

"Your opponent is me! Use the scrolls on me!"

"I'm not scared of those scrolls!"

Instead of shrinking away from the scrolls, the users were even more fired up.

"W-what is this.....?"

It was impossible for Jewel to understand the users' reactions. But there was a small smile on Ark's face who was watching from a distance away.

‘Huhuhu, that method is more effective than I thought.’

The users weren’t afraid of the scroll because of something Ark devised. Thanks to the broadcast, he had succeeded in engaging users without wasting any money. However the situation could change if Jewel used the chaotic scrolls. Since it was being broadcasted then they wouldn’t run away, but there was no telling how they would waver on the battlefield.

‘Is there a way to stop the users’ fear of the scrolls?’

Ark thought for a bit before coming up with a brilliant idea. It was the contract that was in each user’s bag. When looking at the terms of the contract, it said.

-A Merchant’s Agreement.

When users insure one of their items and pay the relevant insurance price of 5%, the contract will be signed. If the relevant item is dropped while fighting the thieves in Lancel village, Ark’s store will pay 200% of the price.

“This.....insurance?”

“Yes, in fact I’ve been a regular customer of the famous Ark’s store for many years. The staff are always friendly and you can get high quality items for a cheaper price than other places..... Anyway, I discussed with the store manager about a way to reduce everybody’s burden. They eventually came to the conclusion of offering everybody insurance.”

Ark showed the contract like an insurance sales representative and said.

“You can insure a valuable item for 5% of the market price and if you drop that item during the battle then Ark’s store will pay you back 200%.”

“R-really?”

The players’ eyes widened at Ark’s words. In this battle users were most concerned about dropping their equipment! Yet if they paid the 5% insurance price first they would be able to receive 200% of the market price if they dropped the item? Rather, wouldn’t they receive a profit if they dropped the item? After quickly calculating, the users immediately bought ‘Ark’s Compensation Insurance.’ Thanks to that, the scrolls from Jewel’s group weren’t a threat anymore. Rather, some people aimed to get hit by the scroll in order to receive the payout.

“These guys.....”

Jewel was completely puzzled. But Ark was hiding another trick within that scheme. The equipment was from level 100~150 users. The price of the equipment would only be hundreds of thousands of won. On the other hand, the price of the scrolls Jewel used in the Crime File cost dozens of gold. Even if the equipment was taken away using the scrolls, it wouldn’t be profitable. Despite using the scrolls on all the users in the Crime File, it could hardly be used on a battlefield.

‘They will probably use the scrolls a few time at the beginning to scare the users. Once intimidated then there is no more need to use the scrolls.’

In the end, only 12 users actually ended up dropping equipment! Then the rest of the users’ insurance payment all went into Ark’s pocket. So despite some equipment dropping, Ark would still 100% make a profit. But users were scared by the Crime File and signed the insurance for 3~4 equipment. So lots of users paid 3~4 gold per person and some even paid 20 gold. He could receive a profit of 3,800 gold! Even if he had to pay the insurance money to some people, he would still receive a profit of 2,500 gold. The business was a big hit thanks to their anxiety.

‘Huhuhu, this insurance business is profitable.....’

Ark had used the insurance money to mobilize the users to fight!

“It is like I’m meeting you for the first time again. You really are scary.”

Shambala shook his head with a tired look.

However Ark just ignored him.

“Why are you still laughing? You’ve tricked those morons into fighting but it doesn’t change the fact that they have more power.”

“I know. Now I will move in earnest. Are you ready?”

“I’m always ready. Where do we begin?”

“There place where there is the most money of course.”

Ark replied with a wicked grin.

“You really never stop.”

Ark laughed at Shambala’s words and nodded. After a short time, Ark and Shambala plunged into the battlefield.