

## Ark Vol 19 C 4

### Chapter 4

#### ACT 4 Opening of the Siege

“It looks even more absurd close up.”

Ark had arrived in front of the castle while leading the 4,300 troops. He had thought Silvana castle was great when he saw it from a distance. But it was unbelievable when he saw it close up. The castle walls were so high and thick that it looked like a rock wall and the steel on it made it seem like one giant shield. It was an overwhelming sight.

‘But it isn’t my opponent!’

Ark looked at the soldiers lined up on the wall. That’s right. Ark’s opponent wasn’t the wall. It was the members of the Hermes alliance!

“Racard.”

Ark murmured in a low voice. Then a bat flew out of the sky onto Ark’s shoulder. It was Racard.

“Have you figured out all the movements of the Hermes troops?”

“Huhuhu, nobody can avoid my eyes.”

Racard declared with an arrogant expression and explained.

“Yesterday evening 5,600 troops gathered in the castle. Today at dawn 1,400 people were divided between the left with right Defense Towers, with each one receiving 700 people each. 1,000 people were left in the castle while the remaining 3,200 people were stationed at the front.”

In a siege, the system was that the defending side couldn't help having the advantage. The reason for that wasn't just the high walls and Defense Towers. The biggest advantage between the challenger and the defenders was the 'tactics' range. When the siege started, as the challenger Dark Eden would have no choice but to gather in front of the castle. And they could only move the troops after the siege started. Therefore the troops on the walls could see where Dark Eden would move its troops. But the Hermes alliance would've already deployed the troops and with the high walls, there was no way to determine accurately the deployment. So Ark had used Racard to reveal the Hermes alliance's cards. There was no need to explain why. Thus two days ago Ark had ordered Racard to watch the castle using satellite surveillance mode. It was in order to catch the movements of the Hermes alliance.

"Have you confirmed who is commanding the troops outside?"

"Yes I saw it. She is the leader of the Silver Gate guild called Gwen."

Racard replied after recalling his memory. Ark had fought with the Hermes alliance before in the siege. Because of that Racard could remember the main guilds which belonged to the alliance.

'If Gwen is leading the attack then is Raiden hiding inside the castle?'

The siege warfare was a battle to take control of the throne. Obviously the alliance would have some users to protect the throne.

"And the arrangement outside the castle?"

"Look at this."

Racard took out a few memo papers. He had roughly drawn the symbols for 'Ma' and 'Jeon' on it, so the symbols were recorded like they were a code. Racard had used satellite surveillance mode for two days and completely grasped the movements of the troops. 'Ma: 50 ' meant that there were 50 magicians, while 'Jeon: 200 meant there were 200 warriors. Thus Ark was able to 100% identify the complete movements of the Hermes troops.

"Hehehe, didn't I do well? Shouldn't it be sufficient for 200 points?"

Racard murmured as he twisted his hands together.

“This will be worth 150 points.”

“Eh eh? But.....”

“But if you continue to monitor the enemy’s movements and report it to me then I will give you another 150 points.”

“Eh! R-really? Then I can finally.....!”

Racard looked at the scarf and gloves Ark was wearing with longing eyes. Racard had been watching the enemy for two chilly days but he hadn’t complained in order to earn points. Previously his pets had worked so hard to buy the equipment but they had only earned around 100 points by the time they had to leave Lancel. At the time Ark had taken out the gloves and scarves he received from So-mi and said.

“If you reach 400 points then I will give you these winter equipment.”

“Ooh!”

His pets’ eyes popped out. In fact, his summons had thought they would only be given one shabby coat after scraping together 400 points. Yet Ark was showing them gloves and scarves made of the finest wool! In addition, each set also had a different embroidered design of a bat, a skeleton and a snake.

“You guys only have 100 points. You’re also leaving Lancel so you can’t do any business anymore. But the weather is getting colder so if you earn 300 points during the siege then I will 100% give you these high quality equipment.”

That was the reason why Racard wasn’t complaining.

‘Once my pets also have a goal then they listen well.’

Ark looked down at the papers Racard had written on and laughed. Then a horn sounded from the Shrine of War and a NPC's voice was heard.

"I now declare this the siege area! Aside from the people participating in the siege, nobody can approach this area until the siege ends!"

Ku ku ku ku, kong!

Then a huge hourglass started rotating slowly. It was the hourglass which indicated the 24 hours of the siege. Once all the sand had fallen down, either Ark or Raiden would be the winner.

'It's started!'

Ark simultaneously summoned the leaders of his group. JusticeMan, the rehabilitation members, Shambala, Bread, Redian, Lariette and Roco. The core power of Dark Eden was gathered in one place. However, the result Ark quickly summoned them wasn't to consult about the strategies. The strategy he had determined to recapture Silvana had replayed in his mind hundreds and thousands of times. There was no reason for him to discuss it now.

'But it is necessary to change something because of the placement of the Hermes troops.'

"I've confirmed that there are 700 people stationed in each Defense Tower."

JusticeMan scratched his beard and murmured.

"Does that mean they have a surplus of troops?"

"No, they have no intention of having a full-fledged war with us."

Ark took out Racard's memos and explained it.

“If you look at their configuration, most of the magicians and archers are placed along the wall as well as the warriors. They will concentrate on defending the wall.”

It was a basic tactic in a siege to place archers and magicians along the walls while the warriors were stationed behind the gate. Depending on the circumstances, they could come out to inflict a counterattack. Suddenly running out of the gates and attacking before running back in was a fairly stressful tactic. However, the Hermes alliance had arranged their warriors along the walls. And there were quite a few troops in the Defense Towers. It meant they intended to defend the walls rather than a full-fledged battle. There was a reason the Hermes alliance selected this method. The Hermes alliance wanted to avoid the financial cost of a war of attrition. If Hermes concentrated on defending then it would be difficult for Dark Eden to win.

‘The Hermes alliance is using the tactic of hiding behind the castle wall like turtles. If I want to win then I’ll have to either climb over the walls or go through the gate. But our numbers are inferior so we’ll just receive damage if we attack like that.’

In order to break the gate they had to remove a Defense Tower. The Defense Tower raised the defense of the walls and gate and healed their durability. So it wasn’t an exaggeration to say that the Defense Tower was the key between victory and defeat. If they couldn’t remove the Defense Towers then not even siege weapons could destroy the gate.

‘Then isn’t it obvious that there are considerable defences around the towers?’

For example, Alan’s method of burying traps and using long ranged attacks was a common tactic. The Hermes alliance would also use the same tactics.

‘In order for a siege to be successfully, I will have to enter the castle within 18 hours. When considering the time it takes to capture the gates, I need to take control of the Defense Towers in 14 hours. But 700 people are deployed there so I will have to send at least 1,000 troops to capture it within 14 hours. That was a total of 2,000 people. If I do that then I’ll only have 2,300 troops left.’

The Hermes alliance had 3,200 troops deployed outside. Since they controlled the castle, it was possible for them to exit and attack the main forces at any time. Looking at their arrangement, the Hermes alliance had no intention of coming out but that would change if Ark only had 2,300 troops left after sending people to capture the Defense Towers. Even the ones inside the castle would come out and attack. Then it would be a battle of 4,200 vs. 2,300 people.

'It is difficult. There should be at least 3,000 people remaining in the main force. Then I can only send 500 people to the Defense Towers. With that number I absolutely can't capture the Defense Towers in the time limit.'

In this situation it wasn't possible. They had already run into a wall at the start of the guild. However.....

"It does not matter. Because it isn't necessary for us to smash the Defense Towers."

Ark replied with a wicked grin. JusticeMan also nodded and said.

"That's right."

Like Ark said, the Defense Towers was very important when building a strategy. But he had no intention of removing the Defense Towers. No, it would actually be a problem if the Defense Towers were removed. Ark looked at Bread and Redian before saying.

"Bread, Redian, I want you guys to lead 500 troops to the Defense Towers but do you understand? You can attack the enemy but you can't attack the Defense Towers. You should pretend to attack of course, but concentrating on decreasing their numbers."

"Okay."

So Bread and Redian made their way to the Defense Towers. Ark opened his mouth again after they left.

"You already roughly know my strategy for this siege. Security is the most important thing in this mission. If those guys notice then this plan will 100% fail. Each unit has to move as planned without violating any orders. When leading the unit, don't let them know the contents of the plan until the last moment!"

"Ooh!"

Ark grabbed the hands of the leaders and shouted powerfully. Then he turned his body and shouted towards the soldiers.

“Now, let’s begin the attack! 1st siege weapons unit!”

Ku ku ku ku, ku ku ku ku, ku ku ku ku!

At the same time, some catapults moved forward slowly. It was the catapults Ark had asked the raccoons to make.

“Concentrate all attacks on the gate!”

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“Ridiculous.”

On the walls outside Silvana castle. The commander called Gwen snorted as she looked at the catapults.

“They expect to attack a castle protected by C ranked Defense Towers using 10 catapults?”

The siege weapons played a huge role in a siege. It was almost impossible to break the walls and gate of a castle using general weapons. Of course, if they attacked the gate for a while it was bound to break but attacks would also be pouring down from above. They could only break down the gates when they were already close to destruction. Thus a siege weapon was needed. The siege weapons did 200% more damage to the gate than normal attacks. But the siege weapons had a fatal weakness. They couldn’t move freely because of their weight. While the siege weapons had a longer range than magic or arrows, the opponents could still attack it from the walls. Therefore 40 catapults were usually needed in a siege. The catapults could be set up in a rotation, with damaged catapults being swapped to repair the damage. But Ark had only prepared 10 catapults. It would be impossible to do much damage to the walls before the catapults were destroyed.

“You fool, you know how important siege weapons are. Is it a lack of money? Anyway, we seem to have overestimated Ark too much. Use full force to intercept the catapults!”

Arrows and magic was fired from the walls after Gwen gave the order. Hundreds of magic and arrow was concentrated on one catapult. No matter the endurance of the catapult, it would be destroyed instantly from the concentrated attacks! But.....

“Huh? What the?”

“What? Aren’t those siege weapons far away?”

The soldiers buzzed with confusion. The magic and arrows couldn’t reach the catapults and just fell. Hadn’t the catapults come into range yet? That was the opponents’ thoughts but the catapults were already firing rocks at the gates.

Kwa kwa kwa kwang, kwa kwa kwa kwang!

“What is this? Isn’t the range of a catapult similar to magic and arrows? Then how could a catapult that is outside the 10 metres range attack the gate?

Gwen looked at the catapult with a confused face. The only thing she could think of was that Ark’s catapults had a longer range.

“Is that the reason he only mobilized 10 catapults? Good but.....”

Gwen smiled and raised her fist. The several soldiers peeled off the tents placed here and there.

“Huhuhu, it’s not an accident that we’ve maintained this estate for 1 year. This Silvana isn’t the old Silvana. It is a military fortress!”

Gwen murmured as the massive object hidden by the tent appeared. The thing inside the tent was a catapult! No, they were 10 gun turrets fixed on the walls. The gun turrets were the Hermes alliance’s anti-siege weapons! No matter how long the range of Ark’s catapults, with the turrets on the walls then the attack had no chance of hitting. And the projectiles shot out by the turrets wasn’t simple rocks. They boasted tremendous explosive power!



'The bombs are expensive so I didn't really want to use them but I have no choice.'

"Launch! Attack their siege weapons!"

Tu tu tu tung, tu tu tu tung!

Bombs were simultaneously launched by 10 gun turrets. The bombs fell in a big parabola towards enemy lines.

Syu syu syu syuk, syu syu syu syuk! Kwa kwa kwa kwang, kwa kwa kwa kwang!

Suddenly a huge number of fire arrows were shot from the catapults. They flew up hundreds of metres to impact with the bombs, causing them to explode in thin air. Gwen looked at the catapults with stupid eyes. At the same time, two carriages appeared on either side of the catapult. It was a machine with dozens of holes on the top like a honeycomb with smoke gushing out of it.

"What the, that is?"

Gwen muttered in a stupid voice. Then the carriages turned towards Gwen's direction. At the same time, dozens of flaming arrows went flying out of the hole. They were giant arrows 10 times larger than crossbow arrows.

"Huck! S-scatter!"

Gwen shouted with astonishment as she hid her body behind the wall.

Kwa kwa kwa kwang. The flaming arrows caused a large impact as it crashed into the walls. The alliance members who couldn't avoid it quickly enough had 40% of their health drained away at once. The magicians who had low health died instantly from the flaming arrows.

"What on earth? I've never seen a siege weapon like that!"

“Huhuhu, how do you like my modern weapon?”

Ark chuckled as he soon Gwen who had panicked. While this siege was unexpected for Raiden, Ark had been planning how to win back Silvana for a long time. Thus he had invested in the raccoons and developed the modern weapons in the underground laboratory beneath Lancel. It was this bee hive type carriage. The official name was Fire Barrage Crossbow.

-Fire Barrage Crossbow (Special Manufactured Product)

Weapon Type: Large Weapon

Attack: 100 ~ 150 X 24

Range: 500 metres

Durability: 500/500

Weight: 800

User Restriction: Special craftsmen use only

A large weapon created by the raccoons who had studied for a long time, 24 flaming arrows can be loaded on it and fired. In addition, the range at which it can be launched is 1.5 times more than a crossbow. However, the reload time takes longer than other siege weapons.

\* When used by the raccoon clan, the Firing Speed and accuracy will increase by 20%.

The money which went into developing the Fire Barrage Crossbow was 4,000 gold. It was 10 times the cost of a normal catapult.

‘To be honest, it is slightly regrettable when seeing the results.....’

In fact, Ark had hoped not to use the modern siege weapons. The weapon could fire a barrage of arrows but the additional damage bonus didn’t apply to the buildings. But when he checked a video of a previous siege, he found there was a need to attack the gate with the Fire Barrage Crossbow. A C-grade estate was able to install turrets on the castle. The range and destructiveness of the bombs from the turrets was enormous. If they fell on the soldiers then the damage would be no joke. This was the reason why other alliance avoided attacking C rated territories. If 10 gun turrets attacked and intercepted the siege weapons then the siege would end instantly.

‘Doesn’t that mean I have to use the Fire Barrage Crossbow to intercept the turrets?’

Ark thought that as he watched the video. And he confirmed that the results were good. 48 arrows flying from the two Fire Barrage Crossbows could counter the bombs from the 10 gun turrets.

‘But the Fire Barrage Crossbow has a fatal weakness.’

“Magicians, cool down the Fire Barrage Crossbow.

“Yes!”

At Ark’s orders the magicians used ice magic on the Fire Barrage Crossbow. This was the weakness of the Fire Barrage Crossbow. Once the 24 arrows were fired, the overheated crossbow would have to be cooled down using ice magic. In other words, it couldn’t be used for a while. On the other hand, the turrets on the walls were similar to the catapults. The bombs were able to be used for continuous attacks.

‘If those guys continue to use the bombs then the Fire Barrage Crossbow will be destroyed but.....’

The Hermes alliance had already witnessed all their bombs being intercepted so they couldn't use it again. The price of one bomb was 50 gold! It would be different if the interception was a fluke, but the Hermes alliance which had financial difficulties couldn't afford to continue using the bombs.

"Huhuhu, fighting a war isn't easy with no money."

Ark laughed but this actually wasn't a situation where Ark could laugh. After all, the cost of the flaming arrows was expensive for Ark as well. The price of one arrow was 4 gold. The two Fire Barrage Crossbows launched 48 shots at the same time which was 192 gold flying away. He had laughed when they intercepted the bombs a while ago but inwardly he was crying.

"Well, it is necessary but I can't use the weapon recklessly."

Anyway, now the bombs attack was sealed off. Now Gwen had lost the way to stop Ark's catapult attacks.

"The catapults don't waste any money. Attack!"

Ark's 10 catapults fired a barrage of rocks at the gate. But the gate was still under the protection of the Defense Towers so it didn't receive any damage.

'Well this is the limitation of having only 10 catapults. I hadn't expected to penetrate the gate using the catapults. The important thing is to make it look like I intend to penetrate the gate using the catapult. No, to be precise it is to make them think the castle will be penetrated through the gate!'

"The bombs are sealed so shall we begin?"

When Ark turned his body with a pleasant smile, JusticeMan also smiled and nodded. Then he raised his fist and cried out.

"Hmm, is it starting? Good, good. 1st battalion, capture the left castle wall!"

“Wah ah ah!”

JusticeMan led 500 soldiers and rushed towards the castle.

“Huk, t-those guys are.....Are they really trying to capture the castle wall? Stop them!”

The magicians and archers hurled attacks towards the charging battalion. No, as soon as they tried to attack dozens of flaming arrows hit the rampart. It was the support fire from the Fire Barrage Crossbow. The alliance members who tried to attack were hit by the flaming arrows and fell.

“Now! Simultaneously climb the castle wall!”

The soldiers threw hooks up to the rampart and placed ladders against the wall at JusticeMan’s command. The soldiers placed their shields above their heads and started to climb the walls. Of course Gwen wasn’t just going to stand there watching. While the magicians and arrows was attacking non-stop, the warriors also threw stones and logs from the top of the wall.

“All archers and magicians on the wall intercept their magicians and archers!”

“Warriors protect the archers and magicians with your shields!”

“Damn it, smash the hooks and ladders!”

When Dark Eden’s offense truly began, panicked cries emerged all over the place.

“Warriors stop the hooks and the ladders. Don’t let them enter!”

“Gwen-nim, the enemy’s support of the flaming arrows has started again.”

“Everybody take shelter!”

Gwen and the alliance members simultaneously hid themselves. The support fire from the flaming arrows was still powerful but since the crossbow needed to be cooled down, Gwen could read the timing so it never did as much damage as its initial hit.

“Okay, attack the enemy again!”

After the attack from the Fire Barrage Crossbow was over, the alliance members instantly raised their bodies and counter attacked. There were continuous shouts without any breaks! Various magic and arrows were flying all over the place! The soldiers climbing the wall fell down before more replaced them! It was intense and fierce..... It truly was like a scene from a medieval movie.

‘As expected from JusticeMan ajusshi.’

Ark laughed as he looked at the battlefield. The section of the wall where soldiers were gathered was intense and bloody. No, it just looked intense. Although the soldiers were fighting to climb the walls, they weren’t as eager as they looked. While fire and swords appeared on the walls and a considerable amount of time had passed, almost none of Ark’s users had died. No, a lot of users only had their health go down to 50%.

‘Nevertheless, the atmosphere seems like there are dozens of casualties.’

Despite the atmosphere, there actually weren’t a lot of casualties. There were two reasons why the general soldiers fighting the battle was unaware. One reason was the tactics that JusticeMan was using and the other was that they couldn’t see their opponents’ health. Of course, the ‘Penetrating’ scroll or a similar skill that thieves had allowed them to see the enemy’s health. But on a battlefield where there were 1,000 people fighting, there was no time to use scrolls or skills to check the health of a user. So not even one person could grasp the whole battle situation.

‘But it is difficult for Dark Eden which was hastily put together to fight equally with the Hermes alliance. They haven’t really worked together long so the weaknesses will gradually show.’

It didn’t matter how excellent a commander JusticeMan was as the soldiers were the ones fighting directly. Although they had undergone some discipline training, these movements gradually disappeared

as they got distracted by their health running out. While the priests could recover the warriors' health, it would be dangerous for them so they couldn't heal the entire defensive line before retreating.

'If this keeps up then our weak point will be exposed to the Hermes alliance. It is better to stop it here.'

"Send a signal to retreat."

Pepepepeng!

A messenger launched firecrackers into the sky. JusticeMan confirmed the signal and raised his sword before shouting.

"Everybody retreat. Magicians cover them while the warriors protect the priests!"

"1st battalion, join with the main body and recover your health and mana!"

Ark commanded as the 500 soldiers retreated from the castle and left the battlefield. In the combat area they couldn't recover their health and mana. After the 1st battalion left the field, Ark raised his sword and shouted again.

"The 1st battalion concentrated their attack on the left wall. The 2nd battalion will attack the right wall. Fire Barrage Crossbow, cover the 2nd battalion!"

Syu syu syu syuk, syu syu syu syuk!

The flaming arrows were shot towards the walls. At the same time, 500 soldiers rushed towards the right. The battle for the right wall was just as intense..... No, it only looked intense. When there was a few casualties, Ark had the 2nd battalion retreat, then another battalion attack, retreat, and so on. This pattern of attacks continued so while the fighting continued without any breaks, there were few casualties.

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“They’re retreating again!”

Gwen frowned as she received the information from a soldier.

“That Ark, what is he thinking?”

Gwen realized there was something unclear after seeing the same situation repeated so many times. Until now Gwen had thought Ark was using standard tactics. He didn’t have huge war funds so he couldn’t have drink potions like water during the siege. So it was obvious he had the troops retreat once the priest’s mana ran out and they couldn’t heal anymore. The same thing applied to splitting his troops. Some beginners might think that throwing more troops onto the battlefield was better but siege warfare was different. No matter how many troops there were, the actual amount that could fight was limited thanks to the castle walls. If they ran directly into battle then they would just be hit by arrows. In addition, if the troops withdrew when they were too damaged then Gwen could lead an assault group outside the castle to wipe them out. That’s why in a siege the forces were always split.

“Ark’s way of thinking isn’t wrong. But.....”

The number of troops attacking was too low. The Hermes alliance had 3,200 troops deployed outside. Of course, with the walls the amount of troops assigned to each area was limited. But they were able to concentrate 1,000 troops on the side walls. If Ark really intended to control the walls then he needed a minimum of 1,000 people. However, Ark never committed more than 500 people.

“Aside from their first attack, the remaining ones weren’t as aggressive. I can tell just by looking at the main body of Ark’s forces. They’ve attacked so many times but the troops hasn’t decreased that much. It is also the same for us. In the end, he really doesn’t intend to control the castle walls. Is he trying to buy time so he can smash the Defense Towers?”

If that was the reason then Ark’s passive attacks was understandable. With the Defense Towers destroyed it would certainly be possible to destroy the gate with the 10 catapults and that strange large weapon. Gwen then smiled.

“If you think that then you’ve already failed!”



Gwen contacted the person in charge of the Defense Towers who said.

-There are only 500 enemies attacking here. They haven't even entered the trap field. You don't have to worry about this place.

In the old days, the Hermes alliance had used a plan to destroy the Defense Towers. After occupying the castle, the Hermes alliance had imitate their strategy and buried traps around the towers while leaving magicians and archers in buried bunkers. Of course, this method had a weak point. If the enemy broke through the minefield then the magicians and archers would easily collapse. However, with 500 troops it was impossible to pass through the mine field while being attacked by 700 archers and magicians. The one method was to use the tunnel plan that Ark had used in the past. However, the Hermes alliance was already aware of this plan. Therefore they had placed steel all over the bottom of the Defense Towers.

"If those guys haven't made it through the minefield yet then there is no way they will occupy the Defense Towers. With the Defense Towers active, there is no way 10 catapults can destroy the gate. Well, it's taken a lot of Ark's time so I'm grateful."

Gwen laughed as she looked at the huge hourglass. While they hadn't suffered any damage, the pointless repetitive battles meant the 16 hours had already passed since the siege began. Typically the castle had to enter the castle within 18 hours in order to win. There was 2 hours left to that time limit but there was no way Ark could break into the castle during that time.

"Okay, it has been boring but there's not much time left. Only 8 hours until our victory!"

Gwen encouraged the Hermes alliance members who were tired from Dark Eden's continuous attacks. Finally the hourglass showed that the 18th hour had passed.

"Now there is no way they can destroy the Defense Towers, the gate and occupy the castle!"

Gwen was sure of their victory.

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“That’s it!”

Ark laughed as he looked at the huge hourglass. Now only one quarter of the sand was left in the hourglass. The remaining time until the siege finished was 6 hours. But the Defense Towers were still well and the Hermes alliance’s members had barely decreased. On the other hand, while Dark Eden had tried to preserve their troops 800 of them still died. It was a desperate situation but Ark firmly believed in his victory. Ark stood up and turned around to look at the rehabilitation members.

“Hyung-nims, are you ready?”

“Yes, any time is okay.”

Bul-kkun grinned and nodded.

“Then let’s go. Engineer unit, move the catapults towards the castle!”

The dozens of engineers moved the catapult at Ark’s command. When it entered into range, magic and arrows were instantly aimed towards it. With hundreds of attacks concentrated on it, one of the catapults instantly caught on fire.

“Sheesh. Fire Barrage Crossbow, support the catapults!”

“Yes, target sighted fire!”

Syu syu syu syuk, syu syu syu syuk!

The two crossbows turned and fired the flaming arrows. Then there were successive explosions along the walls. While the Hermes alliance hid themselves from the flaming arrows, the engineers unit was able to move a catapult to the target point.

“Now!”

Ark got on the catapult and shouted. Following him was Bul-kkun, Ddeok-dae, Hae Gyeol-sa, Yapsab, Jjak-tung and Tazza who were all wearing headbands with 'Commandos' on them. Each of them lined up and saluted.

"I'll meet you in hell!"

Ark confirmed that all the rehabilitation members had were on the catapults and shouted.

"Catapults aim vertically and fire!"

Tu tu tu tung, tu tu tu tung!

Seven of the catapults fired simultaneously. At the same time, Ark and the rehabilitation members flew up at a tremendous speed. They flew in a parabola and headed towards the castle walls.

"What? That guys, are they crazy?"

Gwen murmured with an absurd expression. Were they thinking about penetrating the walls by flying on the catapults? Did they think they would be safe after falling dozens of metres? No, even if they managed to survive the fall damage how would they fight against 3,200 people? Did they think this was GI Joe? Those thoughts passed through Gwen's mind without seconds. She eventually came to the conclusion that Ark became crazy after failing the siege. But in the next moment Gwen witnessed an amazing scene.

"Slime's Time, NO1!"

A cry emerged from Ark's mouth just before he hit the ground. At the same time, a yellow viscous liquid covered Ark's body. It wasn't just Ark. The yellow liquid covered all of the rehabilitation members' bodies. Then Ark and the rehabilitation members impacted with the ground.

Ttiyong-ttiyong!

Ark and the rehabilitation members bounced up like rubber balls?

“What the, that is?”

Gwen and the rehabilitation members looked at the bouncing people with an absurd look. But after a brief moment, Gwen raised her voice.

“What are you staring blankly at? This is a great opportunity to get Ark. Attack them!”

“Wah ah ah!”

100 of the alliance members shrieked and rushed up at Gwen’s command. Dozens of swords and arrows attacked Ark! But.....

Ttiyong-ttiyong!

The swords and arrows just bounced off. That’s right. Ark was using the special skill of the Slime’s Immortality Pill, Slime’s Time! Any physical damage or fall damage would be 100% nullified. The other rehabilitation members had also eaten the Slime’s Immortality Pill in Seutandal. Well, it wasn’t the original product so it had the side effect of amplifying pain by 50 times.....

“Keuak!”

“My spirit flew away the moment I hit the ground.”

The rehabilitation members groaned after they hit the ground. But the rehabilitation members were raised in a dark world filled with violence so they instantly raised their body.

“They’re coming! Everybody stay focused!”

“Jjak-tung, Tazza, gather back to back and stop them!”

“Okay, keuak! Damn, that hurts!”

Jjak-tung and Tazza wobbled as the swords and arrows bounced off.

“Get out of the way!”

Meanwhile Bul-kkun, Ddeok-dae and Hae Gyeol-sa ran up to the alliance members and head-butted them. While Slime’s Time made them invincible to physical attacks, they also couldn’t attack with their weapons. Thus the head-butt actually didn’t do any damage. However, their bodies were like rubber so the Hermes alliance members flew back a few metres.

“Hahaha! How is it? Our bodies are now like rubber! Head butt!”

So Ark and the rehabilitation members pushed the alliance members back with a head butt and ran towards the gate.

“What is this? Why are they heading to the gate.....?”

“Are they trying to open the gate?”

But it was impossible to just pull the gate open like an ordinary door. Naturally the equipment to operate the gate was kept separately. Ark used to be the Lord so he should’ve known that as well. Then why was he heading to the gate? Gwen found it impossible to understand.

“I don’t know what he is doing but that guy is like a rat in a bag. Ark is the leader of Dark Eden. If he dies then the siege is over!”

“But these guys are impervious to attacks!”

“Bah! This is a game so no skill is invincible. If physical attacks don’t work then try magic. All magicians attack these guys!”

The magicians started chanting spells at Gwen’s command.

“Anger of the blazing fire, Rage of Fire!”

“Splitting blade of the wind, Wind Cutter!”

“The cold north wind, Ice Spike!”

“Ark, watch out!”

Bul-kkun shouted.

That’s right. It was Slime’s Time weakness. While it invalidated physical attacks by 100%, it also made them 100% more vulnerable to magic. For 10 minutes there were invincible against warriors but vulnerable to magicians. If they were hit by dozens of magic then they would be broken like tofu. At that moment Ark heard Racard’s voice from above him.

“Master, the magicians are attacking from your 3 o’clock and your 11 o’clock!”

“Hyung-nims, this way!”

Ark shouted as he instinctively moved his body. Then he head butted some alliance members. The magic flying towards Ark and the rehabilitation group hit the alliance members instead. Ark had used the alliance members as a shield to stop the magic attacks.

“You fools! Physical attacks won’t connect so all warriors retreat!”

Gwen shouted angrily. The hundreds of alliance members surrounding Ark's group disappeared. Then the dozens of magic shots flew back towards Ark and the rehabilitation group. They couldn't use the alliance members as an obstacle anymore!

"Damn, I'll go first!"

Bul-kkun bit his lips and jumped in front of Ark. At the same time, blasts of fire, wind and ice hit Bul-kkun's body.

"Waaaaahhhhh!"

He was 100% vulnerable to magic attacks. The incomplete Slime's Immortality Pill also increased pain by 50 times so Bul-kkun screamed as he really felt like he was being roasted and frozen. He collapsed to the ground and raised his thumb.

".....Go!"

"Ugh, Bul-kkun your sacrifice won't be in vain!"

"The magic is flying!"

"Ohhhhh, it is my turn now!"

This time it was Hae Gyeol-sa who jumped in front of Ark and was burnt.

"H-Hyung-nim.....!"

"Don't turn around, go! The gate is right around the corner!"

Yapsab grabbed Ark's shoulder and shouted. Ark looked at Hae Gyeol-sa before turning around. Yes, now wasn't the time to be flooded with sentiment! The success or failure of the siege depended on this

operation. Ark clenched his teeth and ran towards the gate. Magic flew non-stop but Ddeok-dae, Yapsab, Jjak-tung and Tazza blocked Ark with their bodies. But the hundreds of magicians poured down magic on them who had their magic resistance decreased by 100%. In the end, the rehabilitation members could only take a few steps before they collapsed. It hadn't even been 1 minute until the last of them, Jjak-tung collapsed.

'Damn, there's only 10 metres left.....!'

Ark moaned as he looked at the approaching gate. The magicians on the wall were already chanting spells. When the chants were complete then Ark would die.

'.....Is it going to end here?'

Ark was just thinking that.

Kwa kwa kwa kwang, kwa kwa kwa kwang!

A huge explosion suddenly occurred on the walls. The Fire Barrage Crossbow had finished cooling and had sent more flaming arrows towards the walls. The magicians who had been concentrated on Ark were hit and fell down. The rest of the magicians also received impact from the arrows and had their chants cancelled.

'Now!'

Ark ran between the falling magicians. Although a few magicians who hadn't been blown away tried to attack him, they couldn't aim properly. Ark rolled his body to avoid the magic and finally arrived at the gate.

"Heh, what's this? Does he intend to break the gate by himself?"

Gwen snorted and muttered. Ark's hands flashed as he arrived at the gate. Then he took out a small hourglass from his bag. Ark used the hourglass and a message window appeared.



-You have used the Phantom Hourglass.

That's right. The item Ark was holding up was the Phantom Hourglass! It was the reason he headed towards the gate.

"Maximum acceleration!"

Then the sand at the top started to fall at a tremendous speed. At the same time, an amazing change started to happen to the castle gate. The gate which had been attacked for 10 hours yet hadn't even lost 50% durability instantly turned red. The gate also started to be pierced with holes. Since the Phantom Hourglass accelerated time 500 years forward, the steel gate became rusted and battered.

"Now's the time. Catapults attack the gate!"

Ark shouted through the tattered gate. At the same time, the catapults outside sent their rocks flying.

Kwa kwa kwa kwang, kwa kwa kwa kwang!

The already corroded gate which was barely hanging on splintered and broke into two pieces. The gate had been breached despite the Defense Towers still standing. Blood disappeared from Gwen's face as she looked at the broken gate.

"U-unbelievable..... The gate.....!"

The Hermes alliance also stared with surprise.

"R-repair the gates!"

Gwen shouted when she heard Ark's voice.

“The whole army, charge Silvana!”

Gwen looked outside with surprise.

“Then the reason Ark attacked so roughly until now.....!”

Now Gwen realized Ark’s arm. Despite battling for 18 hours, there had been almost no casualties. From the 3,300 Dark Eden troops, around 800 people had died. In other words, there were still 2,500 troops in front of the gates. Of course, the Hermes alliance had received even less damage and only 300 people had died. There still remained 2,900 stationed on the castle walls. But the Hermes alliance was dispersed all around the outside. If Dark Eden broke in and the fighting became confused, the magicians and archers on the walls wouldn’t be able to attack properly. There was also the tremendous power of the Fire Barrage Crossbow.

“But we have 1,000 more troops than them.”

That was Gwen’s thought.

-Gwen, stop those guys from entering!

She suddenly heard Raiden whisper in her ear.

-But.....

-You fool, this is Ark’s scheme. I thought it was possible so I contacted the Defense Towers. The Dark Eden troops attacking the Defense Towers retreated 30 minutes ago!

-The troops attacking the Defense Towers have retreated? Then.....!”

Gwen felt like she had been hit on the back of her head with a hammer. The troops attacking the Defense Towers had already retreated 30 minutes ago. Then those guys were coming here. If they

joined then there would be 3,500 people! If the Hermes alliance combined their troops from inside the castle then they would have 3,900 people. Of course, the Hermes alliance had the 1,400 troops stationed at the Defense Towers but it would take them 30 minutes if they left now. She had to rally the troops and hold out until then. But a melee fight inside the walls would be confusing and dangerous. However, if there weren't any extra troops than the 2,900 Hermes members on the walls would be trampled by the 3,500 Dark Eden members!

-Furthermore, the opponent is Ark. If he did all this to break the gate then he would definitely have some ulterior motives. We absolutely can't give the castle to him! But now there is no time to worry about Ark. Stop their entry!

Gwen received Raiden's order and shouted towards the alliance members.

"No. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 assault units! Dispatch those troops immediately! Charge the enemy and destroy the catapults and the large weapons. Maintain formation in front of the gate and stop their entry! The rest of you just restore the gate as much as possible. The Defense Towers are still standing. If the large weapon is destroyed and the gates repaired then it will be possible to endure for the remaining time!"

So Gwen led 1,500 troops to the gate. But Gwen was thinking about it too much. While Ark and the rehabilitation members were trying to break the gate, the rest of Dark Eden was just watching. If Dark Eden attacked the castle during that time then Ark and the rehabilitation members wouldn't have received the magicians' attack so one-sidedly. In addition, Dark Eden wasn't showing large movements even after the gate broke. However, Gwen and Raiden were too hasty and couldn't realize that point. And there was another part Gwen missed. It was why Ark used the risky strategy of jumping inside the castle with the catapult to corrode the castle gate. Ark could've mixed in with Dark Eden while using Slime's Time to access the gate from the outside.

Nevertheless, Ark had used the catapult to corrode the gate from inside the castle. The reason why.....