

Ark Vol 19 C 6

Chapter 6

ACT 6 Impregnable Fortress

“Heh, it’s not even near the end and those guys have already run away.”

An archer laughed as he looked outside the window. The place he was looking out from was a bunker installed in front of the Defense Tower. The Hermes alliance had used the same method Alan chose in the past to protect the Defense Towers. In other words, it was the strategy to build bunkers in front of the tower while magicians and archers attacked those navigating a minefield of traps. No, this strategy was a common strategy that must territories used. It was a classic strategy to protect the Defense Towers. Of course, Ark had previously broken that strategy in 12 hours. However, it was only possible thanks to his raccoons digging tunnels underneath. One year had passed since then and nobody had succeeded in smashing the Defense Towers in less than 15 hours.

“To be honest I was a little nervous at this time.”

“This is the same strategy to protect the Defense Towers which Ark broke in 12 hours. Furthermore, the users commanding the units are the pioneers Bread and Redian so I was expecting a fierce battle.”

The unit attacking this Defense Tower consisted of Bread, the Wolrang and some of the Eastern Nation. They knew that Bread possessed a reckless character and tremendous attack power. However, Bread had retreated after entering the mine field and failing a few times.

“Heh, even the last pioneer can’t do anything? Even if they have 2,000 people, it will be impossible for them penetrate the huge number of traps we laid in time. They only brought 500 people so of course they can’t occupy the Defense Towers.”

“That’s right. Instead of Bread, isn’t Ark who ordered this the pathetic one?”

“Yes. After all, he only experienced the siege once a year ago. At that time the siege only had 2,000 people at most. And Ark was only commanding 83 people.”

“That standard is just child’s play.”

The alliance members relaxed in the bunkers and continued chattering. Then the garrison chief of the Defense Tower suddenly heard Raiden’s desperate voice in his ear.

-When you receive this command, destroy the Defense Towers immediately and return to the castle!

“He wants us to destroy this perfect Defense Tower and return to the castle? What is he saying?”

“I don’t understand the details either, but.....”

The garrison chief frowned and answered the questions of his men. The defenders breaking their own Defense Towers had never been heard of before. However, the garrison chief could tell from Raiden’s desperate voice that something serious had happened.

“It must be because of those guys who retreated..... Anyway, clearly there was a serious problem at the castle. It might be too late if we question it, so let’s hurry up!”

“Damn, let’s break the Defense Tower.”

The troops exited the bunkers and headed towards the Defense Tower. Then they fired arrows and magic towards the tower.

Kwa kwa kwa kwang, kwa kwa kwa kwang!

Suddenly an explosion occurred hundreds of metres away from them.

“What, what the? What is that?”

“Isn’t that place the mine field? The traps? Did the traps explode?”

“Don’t tell me those guys returned?”

The garrison chief flinched and turned his head. His idea was correct. Bread and the Dark Eden members who he thought had returned to the main body ages ago were walking through the mine field. The garrison chief was even more confused than when he received Raiden’s order.

“What is that? If they walk through the mine field like that then they should’ve been wiped out long before they reached here.....huk, did they increase their troops? No, the numbers seem the same. Are they just pushing through now that there’s not a lot of time left?”

“Captain-nim, look over there! Those guys in front.....!”

Then a soldier pointed to where the trap had exploded and shouted. It wasn’t an enemy that was activating the traps. Hundreds of animals that looked like rabbits were moving and activating the traps.

“What, what the? Where on earth did those animals come from?”

The garrison chief murmured with a puzzled expression. This was a siege battlefield. Once the siege began, no users as well as animals could enter. Yet a herd of animals had suddenly showed up? And despite their colleagues being caught by traps, why did they just continue walking forward? Were they animals that had been trained for mass suicide?

“Huhuhu, I have to admit Ark really thought of a shrewd plan.”

The animals which had the garrison chief confused weren’t really animals but stuffed dolls. That’s right. The hundreds of rabbits which rushed onto the battlefield was an animal doll.

-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.

It was the Poco Poco doll that Ark had bought from Paradon! In fact, Ark already knew before the siege that the Hermes alliance would use traps and bunkers to protect the towers. Despite knowing that, Ark had only sent 500 troops to each Defense Tower.

'The traps react to moving objects. In other words it doesn't matter if a user, NPC or doll is the one to activate it!'

Ark thought that and bought 2,000 Poco Poco dolls from the continent. However, it wasn't important to destroy the Defense Towers. Rather, he actually wanted to protect the Defense Towers.

"If the Defense Towers are destroyed then it would be a problem."

Bread laughed as he put down the Poco Poco doll.

"Poco Poco, aren't you named well?"

"Poco Poco, now you're all screwed."

The Poco Poco doll toddled into the minefield and spat out curses. In fact, Bread had quite a bit of stress piled up since the siege started. It wasn't necessary to say, but from the beginning Bread's purpose wasn't to destroy the Defense Tower. He was finally participating in the long awaited siege only to be stuck at the boring mine field. So he had to listen to the Hermes members call him and Ark names like coward, etc. Thanks to that, Bread and the Wolrang's rage went up to 120%. So he had recorded angry messages into the Poco Poco doll before sending them into the mine field.

"U-unbelievable.....!"

The garrison chief belatedly realized the situation and screamed.

“Everybody get back into the bunker! We have to stop them!”

The garrison chief commanded as the archers and magicians ran back to the bunkers.

“It is already too late. These foolish bastards!”

Keuaaaaang!

At the same time, hundreds of shadows flew from Bread’s back. It was the Wolrang who had their fury build for the last 20 hours! After releasing the 1,000 Poco Poco dolls, the Wolrang and Eastern Nation rushed towards an enemy at a tremendous rate. Then they attacked the magicians and archers escaping to the bunker. The troops at the Defense Towers consisted 90% of archers and magicians. If there were traps and they hid in the bunkers then there would be sufficient power to wipe out the enemy. However, the mine field had already been destroyed. And the troops had exited the bunker. Without the protection of the traps and bunkers, the archers and magicians only lasted a few minutes. It was more like a one-sided slaughter than a battle.

“Now you’ll see why I’m called the last pioneer!”

Bread murmured as he broke the joints of an enemy.

Bread and Redian had earnestly started the plan to capture the Defense Towers. The battle between Dark Eden and the Hermes alliance at the gate was also finishing.

“The raccoon clan will focus on repairing the barrier. The defense unit will stay there and protect the raccoons and barrier. The rest of the troops wipe out the enemy on the walls!”

The hundreds of soldiers gathered at the gate moved following Ark’s command. Magic and arrows flew towards the raccoons but they were protected by the shields of the defense unit. When magic and

arrows didn't work, the enemy warriors tried 'Rush.' 'Rush' was a skill which allowed warriors to pierce through shields. But Ark just thought it was ludicrous and snorted.

"Razak, show them who they're messing with!"

Clack clack clack clack, clack clack clack clack!

Pepepepeng, hwarrrrruk!

When Razak used Iron Fire Wall, the soldiers rushing were caught by the flames and were thrown back. Racard also wasn't playing around.

"More warriors are rushing from 10 metres away at your 3 o'clock, magicians are chanting spells at 5 o'clock and some archers are trying to climb the right corner wall to snipe people."

Racard reported the movements of the troops in real time. Then he listened to the report and passed it on to Shambala, Dark Eden and the Eastern Nation.

Ssak ssak ssak ssak, ssak ssak ssak ssak!

Radun also plunged onto the battlefield and used Fire Aura. When there were thousands of people on the battlefield, it wasn't easy to spot something underneath their feet. Radun also had Protective Colouration so he could go around and use Fire Aura as well as pick up items.

'Huhuhu, the three pets that I raised well are better than 100 users!'

His heart was once again satisfied as he looked at his familiars playing an active part. Meanwhile, the enemy who was concentrating on maintaining their attacks became even more violent. Now high ground was the most strategic place to attack the barrier. The most important thing to the alliance was to attack the barrier. And the most important thing to Ark was that the raccoons repair the gate. Therefore the Hermes alliance concentrated their attacks on the raccoons and the barrier. No matter how much Ark and the 800 members of the defense unit tried to protect them, the raccoons had their health slowly drain away.

'But these attacks are like fighting against the ocean!'

Ark watched the raccoons' health using Eyes of the Cat and shouted.

"Great Sacrifice!"

His bag automatically opened and 50 potions rose into the sky. The potions formed into a huge jar before scattering around the battlefield.

'Ahhhhh, my 1,400 gold.....!'

Ark shed tears like a waterfall as he looked at the scattering potions and all the money that was gone. Despite wasting money, the result was good. All the raccoons repairing the gates and the soldiers protecting them had their health increase.

-An intermediate recovery effect from the 50 intermediate recovery potions is applied to all allies within 100 metres.

It was the special power of Nursing, Great Sacrifice. In fact, Ark had purchased potions and distributed it to the soldiers. Drinking an intermediate recover potion would heal 500 health. But when he used Great Sacrifice, all allies within a 100 metre area would recover 600~800 health. So Ark had purchased and separated them inside Radun in groups of 50 or 100 in case of emergencies which required Great Sacrifice. It also had the effect of stopping the warriors from overusing their recovery potions.

"U-unbelievable.....!"

The Hermes alliance members muttered as they saw Dark Eden's health recover. The battle had already lasted for 1 hour so most of the high priority priests were already dead. Now health couldn't be expected to recover any more and they would have to survive with their remaining health. But after seeing the troops in front of the gates recovering in such a way, the alliance members felt their motivation decrease.

“This is the chance to win the battle on the castle grounds.

Ark smiled as he looked around the surroundings. In fact, Ark had predicted that the battle would go like this. Dark Eden had a lot of troops thanks to the mackerel pieces strategy but Ark’s main priority was to protect the barrier. Therefore he had left the 500 members of the defense unit at the gate to protect the raccoons and the barrier. In the end, there was only a 200 difference between the numbers of Dark Eden and the Hermes alliance. Furthermore, the hastily put together Dark Eden had less experience than the Hermes members. It wasn’t a favourable situation. But in the actual battle, Dark Eden had one-sidedly pushed the Hermes alliance. The reason Ark placed the defense unit at the barrier was because the Hermes alliance would also concentrate their attacks on the barrier. And the second reason was that Dark Eden’s weapons and defense was stronger.

“What? Why are level 250 users so strong?”

The Hermes members were confused after colliding with Dark Eden. It was natural. In fact, the weapons and equipment Dark Eden were using was the cursed japtem from Seutandal. After absorbing the demonic energy, the cursed japtem was 2~3 times stronger. There was the penalty of having low durability but that didn’t matter in the short term. So Ark gave all the soldiers who participated in the battle on castle grounds the cursed japtem. Thus Dark Eden could dominate the battle early on.

‘Moreover, there are two people who have a large effect.’

One person was Shambala who was capturing the walls with the Eastern Nation. The other one was Isyuram.

‘Teacher playing such a huge part is completely unexpected.’

Ark looked away from Shambala towards Isyuram. In fact, Ark hadn’t expected Isyuram to play a huge role. In reality, Isyuram was a strong man in Korea’s police force. But in the game he was just a merchant. He might’ve changed professions but he was still a merchant. A merchant participating in battle would die straight away. However, Isyuram displayed just as much combat power as Ark and Shambala when the battle began. The reason for that were 2 skills that he received when he changed professions.

-Stat? Buy it with money! (Beginner, Passive, Profession exclusive skill): A skill of Kuronil's which gives a merchant the abilities of a warrior.

When the merchant who has this skill pays a certain amount of money to the 'Brave Gold Pig', an artifact of a Battle Merchant then they can switch one stat for another one for 1 hour. The amount of stats that can be converted depends on the amount of gold paid. However, the stat conversion can exceed 80%.

As a merchant, most of Isyuram's stats were concentrated on intelligence, wisdom and luck. Even if he changed to a dual profession, it was meaningless if his stats were the same. Stat? Buy it with money! was a skill to fix that weak point. When the battle began, Isyuram had used hundreds of gold to convert his intelligence, wisdom and luck to strength, stamina and agility. Well, even if he switched stats then it was still equivalent to a warrior's stats. No even if he used hundreds of gold and switched 80% of his stats, it was still less than a warrior's. That was the limitation of having a dual profession. But that increase in stats made all the difference to Isyuram. When just comparing combat ability, his was obviously superior to everybody participating in the siege.

'If the stats are at a similar level than almost no users can match Teacher.'

However, not even Ark realized that Isyuram had another skill which had a significant impact.

-Can't live with a loss! (Beginner, Passive, Profession exclusive skill): A skill born from a merchant's spirit which cannot stand the loss of money.

When a user under the effect of 'Can't live with a loss' is attacked by an enemy, there is a 50% chance to absorb the damage and reflect 10% of the shock back to the enemy.

<50% chance to reflect 10% of the damage to the enemy>

The skill 'Can't live with a loss!' was created to help merchants in battle. It wouldn't show a big effect for other users.

'50% chance to reflect 10% of the damage is a pretty decent skill.'

Ark thought as he confirmed the skill information. However, there were secrets that even Ark was unaware of hidden in this skill.

"Ugh, what the, what is this? Aaaagh!"

A user who attacked Isyuram suddenly clutched his chest and screamed. The reason for that was 'Can't live with a loss! It was a skill where the user received some of the shock back. Despite reading the information window, 'Can't live with a loss!' wasn't simple a skill which reflected damage. The pain which Isyuram felt when he was hit was reflected back to the enemy. The problem was that Isyuram felt 100% of the pain. In other words, Isyuram would really feel the pain if he was cut by a sword. Isyuram only reflected back 10% of the pain so it was 1/10th what he felt. But this was a game so the users who experienced pain for the first time screamed and rolled across the ground. Then they became too terrified to attack again.

"What the, this guy?"

But Ark was unaware of Isyuram's settings so he couldn't understand the reaction of the users. Anyway, thanks to Stat? Buy it with money!' and 'Can't live with a loss!' Isyuram was able to go deep into enemy lines without really being bothered. So Isyuram and Shambala pierced through and scattered the enemy lines.

-Ark, we've occupied the Defense Towers. The rest is up to you. Make sure you finish it cleanly.

Suddenly Bread's voice flowed into Ark's ear.

"That's it. I've finally grasped the 2 Defense Towers!"

Ark was now sure of his victory in the siege.

'The hardest part is over. With the Defense Towers in my hand, Gwen will never be able to smash the barrier in the remaining time. Now I just have to finish the last part of the mackerel strategy.'

That's right. The mackerel pieces strategy couldn't be completed if the Defense Towers were still occupied by the Hermes guild. No matter how much the raccoons repaired the barrier, it wouldn't last for several hours if the Defense Towers were destroyed. Of course, if it received a concentrated attack then it couldn't endure for a long time even with the protection of the Defense Towers.

'But after overpowering the troops on the castle grounds, the barrier will be able to withstand Gwen's attack for 3 hours.'

That's right. It hadn't been necessary to use 18 hours for the tunnel strategy. But this was the reason why he only started the strategy after 18 hours despite his troops taking damage. The siege finished after 24 hours. Even if he managed to capture the throne, if Gwen's troops pierced through the barrier before the siege ended and attacked the weakened Dark Eden then the result would be unpredictable. However, now there were only 2 and a half hours remaining. With the Defense Towers controlled, Gwen wouldn't be able to enter the castle before the siege ended. He didn't have to worry about that anymore and could concentrate on capturing the castle.

"The Defense Towers are now controlled by us! Annihilate all of them!"

"Waaahhhhhhhh!"

The spirited Dark Eden shouted and rushed towards the Hermes alliance. After a while, Dark Eden finally controlled the castle grounds and occupied the walls.

"The enemy has been completely destroyed!"

"770 people have been killed!"

1,400 alliance members dying compared to 770 Dark Eden members was quite good. This meant he had 770 troops remaining. When added to the troops keeping an eye on the castle, it was 1,730 people.

'The raccoons still have to repair the barrier due to Gwen's attacks so I should leave 400 troops here. That leaves 1,330 people. It should be enough to control the castle in 2 hours!'

"Now it is the final battle. Head to the castle!"

There was no reason to delay any longer. Ark led 530 troops to join with the ones at the castle. JusticeMan and the rehabilitation members rushed towards him when he arrived at the castle.

"Ark, has everything on the castle grounds been cleaned up?"

"Yes, Bread and Redian have occupied the Defense Towers."

"Then this is the only thing remaining."

JusticeMan looked at the castle and nodded. A battle was still occurring in front of the castle. JusticeMan and the 800 troops had been shooting arrows at the windows while the Hermes members inside also shot arrows and magic at them. Despite fighting so much while Ark was controlling the outside, there were almost no casualties. The reason was the structure of the castle. In fact, the actual castle was more difficult to capture than the grounds. The castle was completely covered from the ground all the way up to the roof. The windows were the only place which connected it with the grounds. Just like the walls outside, troops could be placed at the windows to attack. Yes, the castle was a strong defense just like the walls and the courtyard. In addition, the defense of the castle was better than the walls. Usually attackers could enter the castle after the Defense Towers were destroyed. But this time the Defense Towers were perfectly fine. And Dark Eden didn't have any siege weapons.

'It is the same situation as Gwen who is stuck outside the gate.'

Unlike Gwen, Ark absolutely had to capture the castle to win. While Gwen needed 2 hours to break the barrier, presently Dark Eden required triple that time enter the castle. It would take at least 6 hours.

'But.....'

Ark smiled and opened his bag. The item he took out was the Phantom Hourglass which he had used to break the gate! The reason said he could capture the castle in 2 hours was because of this Phantom Hourglass.

“Now shall I get started?’ Shield troops, advance and raise your shields!”

Magic flew from the windows of the castle but the attack wasn’t enough to be a problem. They could only attack outside using the windows, so even with 1,000 troops only 50~60 people could actually attack. Ark blocked the attack of the enemy using the shield unit and arrived at the castle door. When he used the Phantom Hourglass, the door instantly became tattered.

“Now, hit the door with your blunt weapons!”

Then the shield unit took out their maces and warhammers. And they battered the rotted door.

Kwa kwa kwa kwang, kakang, kakang, kakang!

But why was there only a metallic sound as the mace and hammer bounced off?

“What the, this is? How.....?”

The confused question emerged from Ark’s mouth. After all the rotted parts had fallen off, another huge iron door seemed to appear behind it. The Phantom Hourglass had influenced the target. Then the wall behind it had also been influenced. Yet the iron door looked just like it had been newly made despite the 500 years acceleration.

‘What on earth is going on?’

Ark made a confused face.

“T-this....? M-mithril. The entire door is made of Mithril!”

A dwarf warrior cried out. Ark instantly felt like the dwarf had hit him in the head with his warhammer. Mithril..... Anyone who was interested in fantasy knew about mithril. Mithril was a magic metal that only a dwarf could smelt. It was a dozen times stronger than steel and had high magic resistance, so it was widely regarded as a deluxe material. But mithril's best feature was that no matter how much time passed, it wouldn't rust and would actually become stronger. In other words, using the Time Acceleration of Phantom Hourglass had actually caused the door to become stronger.

"Oh my god.....!"

Ark's mood became dark at the thought. Ark had given up the siege weapons and wasted 18 hours because he had confidence that the Phantom Hourglass could get rid of the door. But who would've imagined that the Phantom Hourglass would affect the impervious mithril door? Mithril was an expensive material where one ingot would cost 10 gold. He could get at least 2,000 gold with just a bit of the door. In other words, it was a 20,000 gold door. He honestly thought it was madness. But that madness had caught Ark's ankle and held him tight.

'Of course I can destroy it if I concentrate attacks on it.....'

The problem was time. Ark had calculated the time required to maintain the barrier and wasted 18 hours. He had spent 3 hours occupying the grounds so now the remaining time was 2 and a half hours. Furthermore, he had believed in the Phantom Hourglass and blew the siege weapons up. Without the help of the siege weapons, it would be impossible to destroy the mithril doors in a couple of hours. The door even received the protection from the Defense Tower. Even if he destroyed the Defense Towers, Gwen would break through the weakened gate before Ark could enter the castle. If that happened then Dark Eden would become surrounded. Ark looked at JusticeMan with a soulless expression.

"If we enter the castle by the windows....."

"Impossible."

JusticeMan sighed and shook his head.

"Before you came, there was an attempt to plunge through the window. But the windows of the castle are all blocked on the inside with iron bars. Their arrows and magic can get through but people can't enter through the window. It's probably because you previously used the window."

That's right. Raiden had built the defences of the castle based on his past siege experience with Alan. At that time, Ark had jumped through a window with Alan which allowed Raiden to seize the throne. Thus Raiden installed 'Crime Prevention' windows in case something like that might happen again. Thanks to the security window, it was impossible to climb the wall and enter through the window. Even if the windows weren't blocked, only a few people could enter at a time and they would just be attacked by the troops inside. As soon as they tried, they would be thrown out the window as hedgehogs.

"There are siege weapons on the walls. Gwen used the bomb catapults. If we use that....."

Shambala considered for a bit before pointing at the outer walls and speaking. In fact Ark had thought about that as well. With the engineers, they could seize the catapults after a certain amount of time and use it. If they used the 10 turrets then it would be possible to break the door in time. However, the turrets were on the walls and it wouldn't reach the castle door. JusticeMan grinded his teeth together.

"Did we come all the way here just to do nothing as we lose?"

"It isn't possible to do that!"

"Maybe we should just start attacking the door."

"No, that would be ineffective. Breaking the castle walls would be quicker than attacking the mithril gate."

Ark shook his head and muttered. It was true. While the door was thinner than the castle wall, it was made of a metal dozens of times stronger than steel. It would be better to penetrate through the walls than the door. Well, even if they attacked for 10 hours they would barely manage to make a hole.

'Wait? Create a hole in the wall?'

It was at that time. A desperate idea entered his head.

'Aren't the castle walls made using rock? And can't a hole be bored into the rock?'

Ark suddenly recalled some old memories. It wasn't impossible to create a hole in rock.

'According to my memory.....'

"There is a way!"

"A way? What is it?"

The eyes of JusticeMan, the rehabilitation members, Shambala, Isyuram and Lariette all focused on Ark. But there was no room for Ark to explain it to them.

"I have no time to explain now."

"Understood. Just tell us the necessary things."

JusticeMan nodded and said.

"I need JusticeMan ajusshi and the rehabilitation hyung-nims to attack the castle like before so they won't suspect anything. Meanwhile I will lead 500 troops to the secret dungeon. Racard, Razak, you guys come with me as well. Now it is a fight against time."

They would only be able to win if they entered the castle. The problem was whether he could enter the castle during the time limit.

".....Understood. We'll believe in you!"

JusticeMan ordered the troops and they shot a shower of arrows at the castle. The alliance members who were stretching their necks to observe Dark Eden quickly hid their bodies behind the windows. In the meantime, Ark led the 500 troops somewhere else.

“Don’t waste your firepower unnecessarily. Wait until they peer through the window!”

“The warriors will attack the castle door!”

The voices of JusticeMan and the rehabilitation members could be heard. Thanks to the constant arrows from JusticeMan’s troops, the enemy were unaware that Ark had led 500 troops elsewhere. Dark Eden only had 830 people left around the castle. The Hermes alliance would definitely win if it continued like this so they wouldn’t leave the castle to attack Dark Eden.

‘Well, it’s not like we’re hitting the enemy.....’

JusticeMan looked at the castle and sighed. Despite all their attacks, the castle didn’t have one scratch on it. Swords and arrows couldn’t do any damage to the walls while the maces barely dealt any damage to the mithril doors. Of course, if they concentrated their attacks on one point then it would be damaged but if the attacks were delayed then it would just be repaired. While Ark used the raccoons to repair the barrier, the Hermes alliance also had engineers inside repairing the door.

‘What is Ark going to do that can penetrate the walls?’

Frankly, JusticeMan had already 90% given up. 1 and a half hours had already passed since Ark disappeared. Now there was 1 hour left to penetrate the walls but what could Ark do in 1 hour? They also had to fight the 1,000 troops in the castle.

“It is a big deal. That Ark, he put everything he had into this siege.....”

JusticeMan murmured with a pained expression.

“JusticeMan ajusshi!”

Ark's voice was suddenly heard from behind him. When he turned around, he saw that Ark and the troops were returning. But the state of the soldiers wasn't ordinary. During the one and a half hours the soldiers had disappeared, their faces had turned completely white.

"What have you been doing? How are you going to penetrate the castle walls?"

"It's over here."

Ark smiled and pointed towards where the soldiers were gathered. JusticeMan's eyes widened as he saw what Ark was indicating to. The soldiers were tightly packed together so he couldn't see it at first but then something started wriggling on the ground.

"This is.....?"

"Do you remember?"

".....That's it! I get it now!"

JusticeMan finally understood the situation. But then he spoke with a dark expression.

"Yes, I had completely forgotten about that. No, I never imagined that you would use this method. However, it is too late. There's only 50 minutes left until the siege ends. Even if we penetrate the wall, defeating 1,000 troops and capturing the throne in 50 minutes is....."

"We won't have to fight the 1,000 members."

Ark grinned and described the plan. Then JusticeMan's expression brightened.

"Ohhh, I see. Then it won't be necessary to penetrate through the walls."

"These guys can't be allowed to notice or it will be a problem."

“Leave that to me!”

JusticeMan hit his chest and shouted.

“From now on we’re changing the way we attack. We will split into 3 units. One unit will attack the window continuously. While unit 1 is attacking, units 2 and 3 will wait. When the attacks of unit 1 ends, unit 2 will attack while unit 2 is on standby. It will be a rotation attack!”

It was the time difference attack that Napoleon had used before. When one unit finished pouring their arrows and magic, the next unit could immediately attack without there being any breaks. With 15 troops divided like that and attacking, the alliance members won’t be able to protrude their heads outside the window.

“Now! Follow me!”

Then Shambala and 100 of the Eastern Nation started climbing the walls. Shambala had recently changed his profession to God Killer and the Eastern Nation were former assassins. They quickly climbed up the walls like ninja. They climbed a 5 storey building in less than 10 minutes. After Shambala arrived on the roof, they hung dozens of strands of rope.

“Now, let’s go!”

Ark tied something to the rope. Then he sent a signal to the Eastern Nation who pulled it up to the roof. After 6 of those packages were pulled upwards, Ark and 300 selected troops also used the ropes to climb to the roof. Thus Ark, Shambala, JusticeMan, the rehabilitation members, Isyuram, Lariette and 400 soldiers gathered on the roof.

“But can we really hit them with 400 people? There’s only 50 minutes left and those guys already think they’ve won so they’re not even bothering to look out the window. If we take a few more troops then those guys won’t notice.”

“This is the limit to the number of personnel that can plunge into the castle using this method. There’s also no more time to move more troops. Although there are 1,000 troops inside, only around 200 will be

on the 5th floor while the rest will be on the 1st floor. We should only need 300 people to capture the throne.”

“I see. Then let’s get started.”

“Yes.”

Ark nodded and sent a wireless communication towards Racard.

‘Racard, let’s get started.’

“Yes! Hey, Skeleton. Master said to start.”

Chiii, chiii.

At the same time, the things which were dead..... The big piles of maggots started wriggling and spilling a yellow liquid from their mouths. The roof started to smoke and melt.

‘As expected from the Grub Acid!’

Ark looked at the melting roof with a satisfied smile. That’s right. The reason Ark led the soldiers to the secret dungeon was to obtain this acid. No, it was to catch the maggots which possessed this acid poison. In the old days, Ark had led the rehabilitation group and the Meow into the secret dungeon and captured up to the 5th floor. During that time, Ark had particular trouble with the 3rd floor because of these maggots. These maggots were the monsters on the level and every time they sprayed their acid, the equipment would lose 10% durability. It also melted the walls and the ground.

‘If I have enough maggots then it is possible to melt the castle walls!’

That was what popped into his head. So Ark had instantly led the 500 troops to the secret dungeon. One year ago it had taken him five days to reach the 3rd floor, but he was more than double the level now. Besides, this time he entered with 500 level 250 users! Ark quickly reached the 3rd floor and started to

hunt maggots. Then he would make Razak use Death's Equations! That's right. Ark brought the maggots outside and made Razak use Death's Equations. Death's Equations was a skill which could resurrect corpses as zombies in exchange for Razak's bones! The maggots belonged to the A rank so he had to sacrifice 18 ribs to resurrect 6 maggots. After hearing Racard's command, Razak ordered the maggots to move. This strategy was only possible thanks to the secrets in Silvana. But like JusticeMan said, there was only 40 minutes left. That was insufficient time to melt the walls and defeat 1,000 troops.

'But my goal is to capture the throne on the top floor. So there is no reason to fight the enemy on the 1st floor and then go up. It is before to descend from above!'

That's right. Penetrating through the wall or the roof was the same thing. If he made a hole in the roof then he could capture the throne immediately.

'40 minutes is sufficient to melt through the roof and capture the throne!'

"That's it!"

Ark exclaimed as 6 holes around 2 metres wide were created on the roof. The Hermes alliance was completely unaware that Dark Eden was above their heads.

"Let's turn on the heat!"

Ark shouted as he threw an object similar to a bee hive through the holes.

-Pepper Beehives

A honeycomb filled with black pepper made with Creative Cooking. When the beehive explodes from a shock, it was scatter black pepper around.

It was a pepper beehive created with Creative Cooking! When he threw 2 each down the 6 holes for a total of 12 beehives, the area was completely filled with black pepper. The cries of distress from the Hermes members could be heard through the holes.

“What, what the? This powder is?”

“This smell.....pepper? Where did it come from.....ack!”

“Ugh, it got into my eyes. It stings!”

“Now’s the time. Fall!”

Ark and his selected troops descended to the ground below. Thanks to the stinging pepper, the Hermes alliance didn’t notice until the 400 troops had descended. Then an alliance member rubbed his eyes and screamed.

“Huck! These guys, how did they.....?”

“Your reaction is too slow!”

JusticeMan grinned and grabbed the alliance member. Then he swung around and the alliance member fell in a parabola shape until he hit the ground. The alliance member who struck the ground had his health drain away. But that wasn’t the end. JusticeMan grabbed the torso of the member who had fallen. It was the top mount position often seen in MMA fighting games.

“Now, let’s see if you can avoid this!”

Boom, boom, boom, boom, boom!

JusticeMan’s fist struck the alliance member’s face like a missile. A large portion of the person’s health disappeared with every hit. It was the end once caught by JusticeMan’s High Class Jujitsu. Meanwhile,

other alliance members were running towards JusticeMan when Bu Dong-san threw some nails and shouted.

“This is the revenge for Bul-kkun and the others!”

Throwing nails was his speciality after changing to Guardian. Shambala and Isyuram also helped JusticeMan and the rehabilitation members. And last but not least.....

“Blade Tempest!”

Kwa kwa kwa kwa, kwa kwa kwa kwang!

Ark cornered some alliance members and exploded a magic sword. As Ark predicted, there were only 200 members on the top floor. With Ark and the 400 troops he picked, they managed to wipe out the 200 enemies in 20 minutes.

“That’s it. JusticeMan ajusshi, mobilize some troops to block the stairs.....”

Ark suddenly stopped and jumped.

‘No!’

The ‘Throne of Rule’ wasn’t in the room on the top floor!

‘Why? The Hall of Glory should obviously contain the throne.....’

Then something popped into Ark’s head. That’s right. When Ark was the Lord, the throne was on the top floor. But Ark had forgotten one important fact. When Ark had been the Lord, there were only 4 floors. The 5th floor was built after Silvana increased from D to C rank.

‘Then the throne is downstairs? Oh my god, I’m screwed!’

Ark realized a little too late and shouted.

“JusticeMan ajusshi, go down to the 4th floor and seal the stairs to the 3rd floor instantly!”

“Understood. Hurry!”

JusticeMan rushed downstairs with his troops. Ark also descended the stairs and entered the room. JusticeMan and the Dark Eden members who descended first had stopped moving towards the stairs. Just looking at JusticeMan’s dark face confirmed Ark’s fears.

“You really are very persistent.”

A voice laughed from within the depths of the 4th floor. The scene was the worst situation Ark encountered today.

‘No wonder it was strange!’

Ark thought as he glared at Raiden. They had been fighting for 20 minutes on the 5th floor. Yet not one person sent a whisper to Raiden. Even after the battle was over, no alliance members went up to the 5th floor. Why? It was obvious when standing on the 4th floor. Raiden was sitting on the Throne of Rule. And the 800 alliance members were spread out in a perfect defense formation in the Hall of Glory. That’s right. It was why the alliance members didn’t climb to the 5th floor. Raiden had been organizing all his troops on the 4th floor. Now there was only 20 minutes left until the siege finished. There was no need for Raiden to fight Ark and Dark Eden. If Ark caught him moving troops halfway then it would cause problems. So Raiden had used those 20 minutes to move troops to the Hall of Glory and now Ark was in complete despair. Raiden opened both arms widely with an arrogant look and said.

“Good work getting here. I recognize your efforts. Coming here with 4,000 hastily constructed troops, you definitely are a strong fellow. But there is no meaning if you can’t control the throne. Now I’ll give you a chance. You have 20 minutes to try and snatch it from me!”

‘That bastard……!’

Ark grinded his teeth together as he glared at Raiden. But this battle couldn't be won with anger. Raiden had 800 people while Ark only had half that number. And unlike the 5th floor, the Hall of Glory had strong defensive lines which were difficult to slip through. It was impossible to break the defensive lines and reach the throne in 20 minutes. Even if he gathered the remaining troops and brought them inside through the roof, they wouldn't be able to defeat all 800 people in 20 minutes.

'I can use Area Declaration and the Divine Skill.....'

But the range of Area Declaration was 100 metres. The Hall of Glory was around 150~200 metres long. Even if he used it at the start of the defense line, it wouldn't reach towards the throne. Furthermore, Hermes was a top alliance so there would definitely be 4~5 people who changed to a 2nd stage profession. If they used Area Declaration then his would disappear.

'Even if I use Descent of the Fire Draconian and defeat 800 people, it will be impossible to reach Raiden. It isn't possible to penetrate the lines and sit down on the throne.'

He was stopped at the very last moment.

"What happened? The guy who is always running wild is now quiet. 5 minutes have already passed so you only have 15 minutes left. Won't it take some time to reach here?"

Raiden smirked and taunted.

'That bastard's face.....no, wait? Right now I only have 330 people?'

Then Ark suddenly felt a flash in his head. Ark looked at the enemy's defense and smiled coldly.

'That's right. There is that method!'

Ark suddenly had a brilliant idea in this desperate situation.

'But that method requires several prerequisites. One is to gather the enemy troops in one place. The problem is we'll also take some damage. If the operation 100% succeeded then he could wipe out the enemy. In order to succeed, our troops have to enter!'

Ark's eyes brightened as he turned his head and whispered towards JusticeMan.

"JusticeMan, please gather the troops outside and bring them to the roof."

"What? But there are only 15 minutes remaining. We'll only be able to get several hundred people on the roof at most during the time limit. In addition, we need to fight the 800 troops as well....."

"It doesn't matter."

Ark laughed confidently. JusticeMan looked at Ark and nodded.

"I can tell by your expression that you have a plan. I understand."

Then JusticeMan sent a whisper to the soldiers outside and moved troops to the roof. Anyway, all the alliance members were gathered on the 4th floor so there was no problem moving the troops.

'Now I have to tell Racard.....'

Ark contacted Racard and earnestly started his plan. No, he was about to start. If this operation succeeded then he could capture the throne. Then why was there something weighing on his mind?

'Wait..... Currently we're in the middle of a siege. I was able to move all the Dark Eden troops to the roof because the Hermes members are gathered on the 4th floor. Nobody is interested in the castle door anymore. Maybe..... 'This is a chance!'

Ark had a sudden idea to make some money. Then he raised his head and communicated with Racard.

'Racard, tell Razak to move the maggots when I tell him to.'

After relaying the plan to Razak through Racard, Ark released and then resummoned Racard to the castle. And he gave some special directions to Racard and Radun. Those instructions were.....

"Kikikiki. As expected of Master."

Racard giggled and kicked the maggot.

"Now you stupid maggot. Quickly get started!"

Racard was standing in front of the castle door. Then the maggots started to crawl to the door. And they started to rub the hinges of the door connecting it to the war with the acid. Even the hinges were made of mithril but the acid of the maggot melted it instantly. After a few moments, all the hinges had melted and the door shook. Then it fell to the ground with a loud noise. Although it fended off hundreds of attacks, with the hinges melted it was just a chunk of metal. Racard had managed to remove the door in just a few minutes. However, the door had nothing to do with winning the siege. There was no need to get rid of the door because Dark Eden's troops had already moved to the roof. Then why was Racard removing the gate?

"Now it's your turn. Radun."

Ssak ssak ssak, ssak ssak ssak ssak!

Racard withdrew from the door. Radun licked his tongue and approached the gate. Then he opened his mouth and started to swallow the whole door.

That's right. These were the special instructions Ark gave to Racard and Radun. Ark's purpose wasn't to get past the door but the door itself. Ark had devised a strategy where he could definitely obtain the throne. Then he had thought of this while relaying the necessary instructions. It was an enormous treasure which no one would've thought of obtaining. It was a mithril door worth 20,000 gold.

'A mithril door worth 20,000 gold is a huge treasure. It is a waste to have such a huge treasure defending the castle! If he won the siege then he would be the Lord, but he wouldn't be able to remove the door even if he became the Lord. But if it is lost in the midst of the siege.....!'

That was Ark's thought.

'If I sell the mithril door then I can get back the money I borrowed from Lancel village! And no one from the Hermes alliance or Dark Eden is paying attention to the door. It is the perfect chance to steal the mithril door. I can't miss this opportunity!'

The ending of the siege was a serious situation. Even in such circumstances, Ark was still thinking about earning money from selling the mithril door. Anyway, all the Hermes members were on the 4th floor so there was no one to interfere with Racard. After coming up with the idea, Ark had Racard take one maggot and move to the 1st floor. And the maggot was used to melt the hinges. So he obtained the 100% pure mithril door. The size of the door didn't matter to Radun.

Ssak ssak ssak, ssak ssak ssak!

Radun flicked his tongue and quickly swallowed the door. So Ark's assets increased by 20,000 gold. Moreover, this money was an income that no one but Ark knew about.

"Master, it was eaten!"

'Okay, all of you have achieved 400 points!'

Ark smiled and rewarded his summons. Thanks to his pets' covert operation, Ark had obtained the treasure of the mithril door. It was a 20,000 gold treasure.

'Now there's only 8 minutes left. I've collected the door and the preparations are finished so shall I capture the throne?'

Ark took one step forward and glared at Raiden.

"Bah, you chatter too much."

"Are you still going to do something?"

"That's right. And there's no way you can stop me."

".....Nonsense!"

"You think I'm talking nonsense?"

Ark smiled and stretched out his hand.

"I'll pull you down from that spot within the next 5 minutes!"

Raiden started to become nervous after hearing Ark's confident tone. Raiden knew Ark was someone who managed to come up with brilliant ideas in decisive moments. Of course, he was completely sure there was no win for Ark to win. But his uneasiness couldn't help increasing.

'That reminds me, he has a skill to evade other people. That's right, he'll probably use that skill in this situation. He probably intends to pierce through the defense lines and sit on the throne just before the siege ends.'

"Gather close together! Don't let even a needle slip through any gaps!"

The alliance members formed into one large group in front of Raiden in the Hall of Glory. Ark hid his smile and shouted.

“Now’s the time. Dark Eden, charge!”

“Waaaaahhhh!”

They all plunged towards the alliance members. Noisy cries and the sound of metal clashing sounded throughout the Hall of Glory.

Raiden’s face became slightly tense at the assault. However, within a few minutes that tension changed to a complacent smile. Despite being attacked, the defense formation of the alliance was unshaken. Now there was only 3~4 minutes left, so even if Dark Eden had thousands of troops they wouldn’t be able to penetrate the 800 strong defense formation.

“Kukuku, this must be their last desperate struggle.”

Raiden looked at the land outside the window and laughed. Then he looked back towards Ark as he wanted to see it change to despair.

“What, what the?”

A baffled exclamation fell from Raiden’s mouth. He was certain that Ark had no chance to win in this situation. But rather than despair, Ark actually had a confident smile on his face? After seeing Ark’s face, he felt a strange sense of misgiving. Then that sense of misgiving became a reality.

“Now!”

Ark shouted as he rushed towards the alliance members. The NPCs within Dark Eden swiftly withdrew while the users surrounded the alliance members in a circle with their shields. What were they trying to do? Raiden looked at the scene with an expression that indicated he couldn’t understand.

Tengkong, ku ku ku ku, ku ku, ku ku..... Kwa kwa kwa kwang!

There was a weird sound and something suddenly fell from above them. It caused a tremendous shock and impact which shook the castle! The Hall of Glory quickly filled with dust which blurred everybody's vision. After the dust finally sank, Raiden gaped with his mouth wide open. It was impossible. The crowd of 800 alliance members and 200 Dark Eden members had disappeared. And 500 different Dark Eden soldiers had taken their place.

"If you're wondering where they came from....."

JusticeMan smiled at Raiden and pointed towards the sky. Now Raiden started to understand what happened. The ceiling was open. At the moment Raiden was on the 4th floor. Instead of seeing the 5th floor when he looked up, all he saw was the night sky. There was no ceiling in the Hall of Glory. That's right. This was the plan Ark came up with.

Ark had already used 6 maggots on the roof so he used them to scrape through the 5th floor, which was the roof for the Hall of Glory. As a result, the 5th floor and roof had fallen into the Hall of Glory. The alliance members and Dark Eden members who were fighting below were all buried under tons of rock. While they were packed tightly together, at least 70 alliance members had survived. However, there were now 500 Dark Eden members in the Hall of Glory. While the NPCs retreated since they would disappear once dead, the users in Dark Eden had dropped down when the roof fell. So the 800 vs. 330 battle changed to 70 vs. 500.

"U-unbelievable.....!"

Raiden stuttered with a stupid expression. The circumstances were clear. But Raiden still couldn't understand everything. The dropped ceiling had fallen on friends and foes but it wasn't a problem since more Dark Eden members dropped down as well.

'But why did that Ark.....?'

The point Raiden couldn't understand was that one of the bodies buried under the ceiling was Ark. Of course, Raiden could guess why Ark didn't flee at the end. If Ark retreated then Raiden would definitely know something was happening. But Ark had remained and was hit by the absurd attack. In the end, Ark was still crushed by the ceiling. Ark's plan had proceeded as planned and Raiden lost 730 troops. When it was 70 against 500, Dark Eden would certainly capture the throne. It was the worst situation! But....!

“Hu.....hu, huhuhuhu!”

Uncontrollable laughter emerged from Raiden’s mouth. He finally stopped laughing and said in a cold tone.

“You fools, it is the end. Even if you kill me and everybody in the Hermes alliance, it is still your defeat!”

“What? What is that nonsense?”

Shambala frowned at Raiden’s words. Then Raiden answered arrogantly.

“You still don’t understand? Dark Eden is just one attack group. Your leader has died so there is no one left to capture the throne!”

That’s right. That’s why Raiden was convinced of his victory after seeing Ark die. The only ones who had the right to sit down on the throne was a guild leader or leader of an attack group. In the case of the Hermes alliance, if Raiden died then the right would pass to Gwen who was the leader of the Silver Gate guild. The problem was Dark Eden wasn’t an alliance of several guilds but one group. Because of that, only Ark had the right to sit on the Throne of Rule. But now Ark had died. Even if Dark Eden destroyed the Hermes alliance completely, it wasn’t possible for them to occupy the castle. Raiden might be dead but the victory of the siege would go to the Hermes alliance. A pleased smile spread over Raiden’s face at the idea.

“Heh, too bad. It is pitiful. Because your stupid leader went and died, there is no one to capture the throne even though you were so close.”

“Thank you but I don’t think there’s any need for sympathy from you.”

At that time, someone’s voice could be heard among the rubble. Raiden’s face stiffened at the sight. The voice which came from the rubble.....

Ttuduk, ttuduk.

Then somebody slowly raised their body from among the corpses.

“Heok! Y-you... .. How are you....?”

Raiden jumped like a shocked frog. The identity of the zombie like figure was Ark! Ark had been turned into a bloody rice cake among with the Hermes members by the falling ceiling. Raiden looked at Ark’s face and shrieked like a crazy person.

“N-no way! Y-you’re dead! I clearly saw it! You died! So why is a dead guy getting up? It’s a scam! It can’t be allowed!”

What are you saying?”

Ark swept dust from his head and smiled.

“Are you saying that a user’s skill is breaking the law?”

That’s right. It was impossible for someone in New World to be resurrected in the same place. But sometimes a skill would jump over that law. Razak’s Pledge of Death skill acted like that. When Razak used Pledge of Death, his life was exchanged for his master’s and Ark would immediately resurrect. When Razak died all the maggots also died but fortunately the maggots weren’t needed any longer.

“Dammit!”

When Ark revived, two Hermes members cursed and ran towards him. However, it was impossible for the 70 members to break through the 500 Dark Eden members. While Dark Eden was fighting the Hermes alliance, Ark casually approached the throne.

“Wah.... Wah.... Waaaaah.....!”

Raiden seemed to have become insane from the situation. Ark placed his hand on Raiden’s shoulder and said.

“There’s no time. Will you just get off? Or do you want me to beat you and pull you off?”

“Wah, wah! Uwahhhh.....!”

Raiden grabbed the throne and shook his head from side to side.

“I need you to get off.”

Ark smiled and looked at Shambala. Shambala looked at Ark with irritated eyes before complaining.

“Damn, why do I always have this role? Area Declaration, River of Blood!”

“Hiik, Area Declaration Abarasuk!”

When Shambala used his Area Declaration, Raiden instantly panicked and used his to make it disappear. Then Ark nodded and exclaimed.

“Well done. Now it’s my turn? Area Declaration, Glory of the Night! Divine skill, Descent of the Fire Draconian!”

Kwa kwa kwa kwang!

The Fire Draconian flew up into the night sky and descended into Ark’s body.

-You have used the Divine Skill Descent of the Fire Draconian!

The effect will be applied for 10 minutes.

* 300 Fire damage added to all attacks.

* Attack speed, Movement speed and Reaction rate will increase by 50%.

* All enemies that attack will receive 10~100 fire damage.

* Fire resistance increases to 500% and all party members' fire resistance will increase to 100%.

* When activated, all enemies within the area will receive 1000 fire damage while 50% of the user's health will be restored.

.... Raiden turned into a barbecue. Afterwards JusticeMan, the rehabilitation members, Shambala, Isyuram, Lariette and Dark Eden surrounded the throne while Ark sat down on it. The remaining time was only 1 minute. Ark closed his eyes and counted down the remaining time in his head.

'30, 20, 10.....3, 2, 1!'

Ark's eyes flashed open. There was a magnificent drumming sound and a message window appeared.

-The time limit of the siege is over.

The person who occupied the Throne of Rule is the leader of Dark Eden, Ark. According to the rules of the siege, Ark had become the Lord of Silvana. One of the special skills of the Lord is to 'banish' all remaining enemies within the castle.

"Now all of you remaining in my home, Banish!"

Ark's voice rang out through Silvana.