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Chapter 9

ACT 9 Into the Abyss

"Units 1, 2, 3 and 4, disturb him from the rear! Archers and magicians should cover the assault troops. Priests should heal the warriors without stopping!"

"Waaaaahhhhh!"

The guild cried out at Ark's command and moved. While the leading warriors blocked with their shields, arrows and magic shot towards the enemy.

Kwa kwa kwang, pepepepeng!

The explosion of different types of magic lit up the dim environment like it was daylight. A huge presence was revealed by the light. It was a 20 metre monster with 8 arms. It was a middle ranked boss monster called Dark Hunter Baldwin. Baldwin was receiving hundreds of attacks. He didn't care about the magic and arrows hitting his body and just ran forward while using his 8 arms to attack. There was a roaring sound and the warriors' defense quickly collapsed.

"Units 5, 6, 7 and 8, use your skills to grab its attention. Meanwhile units 1, 2, 3 ad 4 will retreat. Get out of its range and focus on recovery."

The units attacked it from behind. Baldwin initially ignored it but after being hit by 100 warriors using Taunt, he couldn't endure the anger anymore and eventually turned his body around. He revealed his thick fangs and roared loudly. The whole space shook from the roar! The warriors who saw the scene turned pale in horror. However, Ark just felt excited after listening.'

'This is it, this is great! It is exactly what I wanted!'

Ark's face lit up with joy. There was a reason Ark couldn't suppress his happiness after seeing Baldwin.

"Ohh, it is suffocating!"

It started a few days ago. After regaining Silvana, he had earnestly started his dream business. It was unnecessary to explain but Ark had actually been under a lot of stress.

"L-level.... Stats..... Loot.....!"

The reason for Ark's stress was his character. It had been approximately one month since the Lancel defensive war started. In other words, Ark hadn't been able to hunt for one month. For a user, the number 1 priority was raising their level. He had been experiencing serious withdrawal symptoms which were the reason for Ark's stress.

"But now all the work has been settled. Gold Dream has successfully departed so I just have to wait for it to return...."

There was no need to go to other areas to hunt. He could gain experience in Silvana thanks to the secret dungeon. The Cradle of Ancient Evil! It was a dungeon where rare, elite monsters roamed.

"This is an opportunity to raise my level!"

While he wanted to level up, he also wanted to uncover the secret in the lowest floor of the dungeon.

"The last time I was the Lord, I only reached the 5th floor with JusticeMan and the rehabilitation members. But according to the information, the secret dungeon is many times deeper.

And the levels of the monsters become higher the more we go down, so getting experience when I'm level 383 won't be a problem. This is a monster infested dungeon and the last floor might have a hidden boss." That idea stimulated Ark's adventurous spirit even further. He also had another reason to hunt in the dungeon. Even though the Hermes alliance lost Silvana, there would definitely be a siege challenge once the one month was over. Even if he had regained Silvana, the abilities of the 'Justice Division' still paled compared to the other alliances in Nagaran. So Ark needed to raise the level and ability to fight together of the Justice Division. Fighting against elite monsters should be good practice.

After getting the idea, Ark led the troops stationed in Silvana to the secret dungeon. That's right. Ark was currently in the Cradle of Ancient Evil. His stress had unravelled after enthusiastically fighting the monsters. In the old days, Ark entered the dungeon with 80 people and took a week to capture up to the 5th floor. But now the situation was different from before. Ark's level was twice what it previously was. With the addition of the Lancel troops, the Eastern Nation and the Justice Division, they had a total of 3,800 people. Thanks to that, they managed to reach the 24th floor in just 3 days. And Baldwin was the middle ranked boss that appeared every time after a certain number of floors.

'As expected from a middle ranked, elite boss.'

Baldwin didn't easily collapse from the attacks of the Justice Division. As a level 600 elite boss, his attack and defense combined surpassed imagination. But that was something else that caused difficulty for the Justice Division.

-Ugh, you conceited humans. The guards of hell will ripe your meat and heart from you. They'll eat the flesh of the group foolish enough to come here!

After being hit on both sides, Baldwin punched the ground and shouted. Then the ground split and a group of 100 dogs with red eyes came crawling out. They were the guards of hell, monsters called Hell dogs. Although they were only level 300, they were still elite monsters. They were so strong that 4~5 people were required to deal with one.

"Sheesh, these guys, don't just turn pale. The previous units, form a circle around the Hell dogs and gather them in one place!"

"Magicians, use Fire Wall around the Hell dogs."

"Archers, shoot to contain the Hell dogs."

"Warriors, lure Baldwin to the outskirts!"

Ark issued some orders and the leaders instantly directly their units. Despite their fear, the units began to execute the strategies in an orderly manner.

'It was worth the running around and dying.'

This secret dungeon had a huge harvest. During the siege, Ark had issued detailed instructions but the leader often couldn't understand the aims and hesitated to obey. But after hunting in the secret dungeon for a few days, they had completely changed. Now the Justice Division started to understand how to move in any situation. The troops soon required 80% of Ark's tricks in battle. With 3,800 troops invading the dungeon, the battles wouldn't be a battle at all. Even if they were elite monsters, they were easy to deal with when there were a lot of people So when dealing with a middle ranked boss like now, he divided the troops into units consisting of 500 people. Then they went around the dungeon and lured any visible monsters. The battle only started when a minimum of 100 monsters were gathered. If the battle wasn't difficult then it wouldn't be training. And only one unit participated in the battle. So there were quite a few casualties but the troops were able to learn the tricks of battle quickly. And by dividing into troops of 500 people, the time it took to clear the dungeon was considerably shortened. That's how they were able to reach the 24th floor in three days.

"Ark-nim, we've collected all the Hell dogs in one place!"

"Good. Racard, Radun, now it is your turn."

"Okay, leave it to me!"

Racard grabbed Radun and flew into the sky. When they arrived at the place the Hell dogs were gathered, Radun opened his mouth.

Ssak ssak ssak ssak ssak ssak!

At the same time, a large number of bee hives fell from Radun's mouth.

It was the pepper beehives Ark made using Creative Cooking! In fact, Ark didn't keep a lot of dishes inside Radun. Unlike other items, Radun would digest dishes when it was placed inside him. In addition, Creative Cooking could create poisonous dishes. There was no guarantee what would happen if Radun digested the dishes. But if Radun threw it up immediately then he didn't have to worry about it being digested. Anyway, the Hell dogs shrieked when dozens of pepper beehives flowed out. It was the impact of the pepper beehives created by Creative Coking. The Hell dogs had a keen sense of smell so it was impossible for them not to be affected.

"Now's the time. Exterminate them!"
"Assault troops, charge and step on them!"
"These guys are weak against Holy Power. All priests add holy power to the warriors' weapon!"
"Magicians and archers will use their wide area skills to assist the warriors!
The soldiers let out loud cries and obeyed their unit leader's orders. Thanks to the holy power, the Hell dogs quickly had their health drained after being hit by the swords. When the Hell dogs that were in a critical condition tried to escape, the magicians and arrows used precision attacks to kill them. Thus the Hell dogs were completely destroyed 10 minutes after they appeared.
-Kuuuuoh, these guys!
Baldwin murmured angrily as all the Hell dogs were wiped out. Then he opened his mouth and prepared to breath out fire. It was Baldwin's special move, Fire Breath. Baldwin's Fire Breath was a powerful skill which turned a 20 metre area into a sea of fire. But Ark just snorted and laughed.
"Heh, now you've run out of chances. Magicians, wait for the command!"
All the magicians concentrated and waited for the next command. Ark saw Baldwin's mouth open wide and shouted.
"Now's the time. All magicians aim their ice magic into its mouth!"
"Wind from the frozen north seas Freezing Wind!"
At the same time, hundreds of deep blue rays shot from the magicians' hands. It was the most extreme ice magic that could even freeze seawater.

Kwa kwa kwa kwa kwa kwa kwang!

When the frost magic hit Baldwin's mouth, if conflicted with the fire and a huge explosion took place. Steam rose from Baldwin as he screamed. The ensuring explosion had destroyed his eyeballs and his facial muscles were ripped to shreds. And his health was reduced by 30% because the magic damaged the interior of his body. He only had 5% health left.

"Everybody all together! An all-out attack!"

"Waaaaahhhhh!"

The assault troops swarmed around Baldwin. Baldwin swung his 8 arms like crazy but it didn't have the same power as before. Thanks to his eyeballs being destroyed, he was in a 'blind state.' While a few arms hit the users, normally it just hit thin air. The arms were also unable to block any attacks properly. And it was thousands of troops attacking.

-Kuaaack! How regrettable..... But..... This place..... Hell......

In the end, Baldwin collapsed as a bloody mess while talking nonsense. Then he gasped for breath a few times before he finally died. At the same time, 3~4 items fell on the ground.

-Your level has risen.

The message window popped in front of Ark after Baldwin died.

"Yes!"

Ark's eyes brightened as he shouted.

"Character information window!"

Character Name Ark Race Human Alignment Good +500 Nobility Title Baron Fame 21,485 (+500) Level 391 Profession Dark Soul Title Cat Knight, Caretaker of the People, Jackson's Hero, Great Adventurer, Magic Institute Member, Seutandal's Hero Health 7,325 (+475) Mana 7,515(+225) Spiritual Power 956 Strength 754 (+58) Agility 1,009 (+90) Stamina 1,249 (+45) Wisdom 185 (+10) Intelligence 1,327 (+5) Luck 179 (+60) Flexibility 262 Art of Communication 79 Affection 117 (+10) Resilience 479 Dark Fog 68 Special stat: Knowledge of Ancient Relics 173 * Equipment item effects Guardian Armour of the Merpeople (Armour): Water Attribute Resistance +100%, Penalty based on water is nullified.

Cat Paws (Gloves): Attack Speed +10%, Agility +15, Critical Hit +10%

Raccoons Pith (Helmet): Agility + 10, Wisdom + 10

Wolf's Feet (Shoes): Agility + 40, Movement Speed +40%, Attack Speed +10%, 'Jump' is available

*

Promised Sword(Two-handed Sword): Strength +20, Stamina +10

Warrior's Transcripts (Shoulder Blades): Strength + 3

Galgashi's Fur (Mantle): Cold resistance + 100%, Agility +20, 'Magic Protection' is automatically activated when health is less than 50%.

Adelaine's Necklace (Necklace): Defense + 40, Affection +10, 'Blessing of the Sea' available

Rarukan's Ring (Ring): Agility + 10, Attack Speed +10%, Critical Hit +8%, 'Dark Protection' available

Ark's Ring (Ring): Strength + 5, Agility + 5, Stamina + 5, Wisdom + 5, Intelligence + 5, 'Sudden Increase in Power' available

Amulet of Vitality (Bracelet): Health + 50, Health recovers by 5 every 20 seconds

Gladiator's Honour (Bracelet): Strength, Agility, Stamina +10, Fame +500, Sword-based Skill Growth +5%
* All abilities will increase by 50% in the dark
* You have the ability to hide in the darkness (30 minutes duration. Cancelled when you get into combat)
* Resistance to Fear, Darkness, Blind, and Seduction spells is increased by 50%.
* You can bring out the true abilities from all types of tools.
* Shock absorption is increased by 20%.
* Poison resistance has increased by 50%.
* 10% increased attack and defense.
'Isn't this like swimming on land?'
Ark's eyes lit up at the sight of the information window. It had only been 3 day since thy entered the secret dungeon. During that time he had gained 8 levels. This was because only elite monsters appeared in the secret dungeon. Of course, 3,800 people had entered the dungeon. Even if they were split into units of 500, the experience was still being divided by 500. However, Ark was the leader of the 3,800 attack group. In New World, the commander of a group received bonus experience. In other words, he didn't have to share that experience with 3,800 people. Naturally, his troops also grew during those 3

days. The hunting speed of the troops was also quite quick so they sped through the dungeon at an absurd speed. After hunting so many monsters, they now received no penalty on the amount of experience gained. Thanks to that, the troops managed to gain an average of 5 people by the 3rd day.

'But having a lot of troops isn't always a good thing.'



In fact, Ark only had 153 Knowledge of Ancient Relics when he entered the dungeon. However, he gained 10 points every time he identified a sculpture so he currently had 173 points. While the requirements for the sculpture increased with every boss, it wasn't a problem for Ark as his Knowledge of Ancient Relics also increased. Since it increased when investigating ancient relics, he actually welcomed it when this item dropped. And Ark was the only one who could identify the sculptures so wasn't it right that Ark monopolized it?

'In other words, isn't it an item that only I can grab?'
When Ark grabbed the sculpture, it vibrated and a new message window occurred.
The Black Stone Sculpture has been identified using Knowledge of Ancient Relics.
-Stone Sculpture containing the Secrets of the Abyss (Level: 3)
An unknown dark power can be felt from this unrefined stone sculpture. While the sculpture looks rough at first, looking closely you can tell that it has been carefully trimmed. A weird shape is depicted on the surface but it cannot be clearly determined. The purpose of this sculpture is still unknown.
"I don't understand at all."
Even after confirming the sculpture, he couldn't understand the information at all. The information stated that there was something drawn on the surface.But all Ark could see was a few black lines drawr roughly on the surface.
"But clearly this is a clue to unravel the secret of the secret dungeon."

So far Ark had succeeded in captured dozens of dungeons. Among those were dungeons where a mystery had to be solved to clear the dungeon. Thanks to that prior experience, Ark was sure that the sculptures were the clues to this secret dungeon.

"But clearly this is a clue to unravel the secret of the secret dungeon." "But what is this level three that appeared this time? There must be a few more sculptures. If all the pieces are found then it will probably merge into one piece." Ark packed the sculpture away while deep in thought. Then he looked at the scattered soldiers who were taking a break. "I guess I need to rearrange the formation." While they've managed to capture up to the 24th floor, it wasn't without a lot of damage. The monsters levels were higher and they also had special skills. So the Justice Division received quite a bit of damage. Of course they could re-join after 24 hours but by the time they reached the 20th floor, more people were dying than re-joining. Ark gathered the leaders together and said. "From the next floor onwards, we'll be advancing in units composed of 700 people. Reorganize your troops." "Huh? We're already continuing?" "Already? Did we come all the way here just to leave?" "That's not it..... Hasn't it already been 20 hours since we started invading this dungeon?" "So?" "No, it's just the time is already 4 a.m. I'm a student....." "Take a vacation."

from the sidelines just sighed and got up.
"It is useless."
"Didn't you previously ask why Ark's level was so high? Do you understand now?"
"Well, that guy is like this once he starts."
"It's better to just go along without any useless remarks."
That's right. There was a reason why the rehabilitation group looked agonized when Ark mentioned the dungeon invasion. They had experience invading dungeons with Ark before. So JusticeMan used the excuse of meeting with So-mi and escaped to Lancel village with Roco. Bread and Redian used the excuse of challenging the dungeon they failed to capture when Seutandal rose in order to escape. With both JusticeMan and the rehabilitation members gone, there was no one to lead the autonomous group so Lariette and Shambala managed to stealthily escape. However, Isyuram and the rehabilitation members didn't have an excuse so they were forced to accompany Ark on this death march.
"Now, now! The leaders should tell their troops to get up. Hurry!"
"Ooooooh"
"The break was only for 10 minutes"
"Is this the reason our group leader is so strong?"
"It is already the third day. I haven't seen sunlight for three days."
"Today I dreamed that wandering the dungeon was a dream."

Ark sounded like he didn't know what the problem was. The rehabilitation members who were watching

"Should I purposely die so I can rest a little bit?"

"Knock it off. That man will even measure the time until the dead person returns. You will die in vain, come in again and want to die even more. It can't be helped. Let's just go down a few more layers. And pray that it finishes soon."

The rehabilitation members said as they stood up. So under Ark's instructions, the troops were divided into 700 people and they entered the next floor.

"Let's go. To receive fighting experience and loot!"

Ark's voice rang out loudly in the dark space. This death march would continue until the bottom floor of the dungeon could be seen.

Ku ku ku ku, ku ku ku ku!

Not far from the Sinius Principality's northeast coast. A violent shaking started to occur in the sea. The waves vibrated so much that is seemed like a tsunami was going to occur. Eventually the ocean parted like Moses' miracle and a huge object rose up. The object was a clear dome with its size reaching hundreds of kilometres. It was two instead of one. After the huge vibration and storm settled, a huge object was floating on the ocean. After it completed emerged from the ocean. Cracks started to form on the transparent dome and it broke. Surprisingly, what appeared inside was a continent. It was a continent with mountains, plains, rivers and even flying beasts. Two continents had abruptly appeared in the huge ocean. The continents which rose from the ocean formed one continent which made contact with Sinius' coast.

Snap, snap, snap, snap!

It was at that moment. Suddenly an intense spark occurred in the space above the continent. The atmosphere seemed to be split apart and showed a huge shape. What emerged from the torn space was a skyray dozens of kilometres long! The most surprising thing was on the back of the skyray. A huge

castle had been erected on its back. Even in New World, this skyray was one of a kind. It was the legendary aerial fortress Rwigenberg!

"How is it? Seeing a torn continent becomes one again?"

The voice came from the top floor of the castle on Rwigenberg's back. The man with red hair flying in the wind asked as he looked at the continent. Then a man with black hair answered in a cynical voice.

"It is decent. It's not a scene which stirs up my feelings."

The man with dark hair frowned.

"Rather, I remember a difficult memory after seeing it so I feel troubled instead."

The man with red hair and the one with black hair looked down on the continent from the Rwigenberg. They were the Red Man and Alan. And there was a reason they were looking at the continent. It was because they were the ones to pull the two continents up from the other dimension. That's right. These two continents had risen from a lower dimension. Those continents were Scale and Underworld! Thanks to the ultimate magic the Dark Lord used at the end of the Dark Century, many parts of the continent sank to a lower dimension. However, the Red Man and Alan had resurrected their World Trees which caused the land to rise up to middle earth.

"You should enjoy the outcome. You had quite a lot of troubles there but doesn't it look quite pleasant now?"

The Red Man looked down with pleased eyes. The two dimensions looked different from when they first arrived. Now a blue light covered the mountains and the plains couldn't be seen. In the bright daylight, an unidentified black aura was spreading through the continent. In addition, there were any common wild animals or birds. They were suspicious looking creatures with black auras.

"From now on this will be our home."

"Hmm, our home is an unpleasant place. It makes us look evil."



obelisk was driven into the ground, its effects instantly started to spread. The ground blackened by the obelisk started to crawl with hundreds and thousands of bizarre creatures. "Come! All you demons called gamers, it is time to collect the price for your sins!" The Red Man's eyes became distorted with anger. This was the turbulent start to the period where New World's history was changed. "Team Chief-nim!" At the same time in the Planning Department of Global Exos. Kim Gwon-tae's scream resounded through the quiet office. Ho Myung-hwan who had been dozing at his desk jumped up with surprise. "Hik! K-Kim Gwon-tae? Why are you suddenly calling for the Team Chief of the Planning Department?" "Bring him here right now!" "Huh? What do you need....?" "I don't have time to explain! Hurry!" Kim Gwon-tae spat out urgently and Ho Myung-hwan rushed towards an office. After a while, Ha Myung-woo approached Kim Gwon-tae. "What the, what is it? What's going on?"

"I-I'm not sure. A few minutes ago the system started to go out of control."

The object which fell and lodged into the ground was an obelisk with a dark aura. When the black

Kim Gwon-tae replied while frantically tapping on the keyboard. An incomprehensible phenomenon was occurring in front of them. While there were many phenomenons involving New World's systems that they didn't understand, this time it was on a completely different level. Kim Gwon-tae typed in a huge amount of commands on the monitor at a tremendous speed. Kim Gwon-tae and Ha Myung-woo had never encountered this before.

"Event? Did an event start?"
"No, this is not an event."
Kim Gwon-tae answered like he was in a trance as he continued starting at the data on the monitor.
A few minutes ago, the A level security of New World had been released. At the same time, dozens of processes had been unlocked. The only think they could think was that this wasn't an event, but something affecting the system.
"If this continues"
"Continues? What on earth?"
Ha Myung-woo shouted nervously. Kim Gwon-tae then muttered with a pale, stricken face.
"It is impossible for the main system to process all these operations at once. If it continues then the main server would overheat and blow up."
The computing power of New World's main server was enough that it could search New World's entire population in 10 minutes. It was a monster like machine. But the data occurring in front of Kim Gwontae was enough that not even that monster system could handle it. It was like a nuclear bomb had been dropped It was like a bomb of data had hit the system.

"What, what the? Explode? What are you saying?"

"No, an explosion might be better. If the defense systems of the main server malfunctions and the enormous amount of data flows back into the units....."

Ha Myung-woo's face stiffened at Kim Gwon-tae's words. Even the dirt on the side of the road in New World required an absurd amount of data. If that absurd data flowed back into the user's brain then the result was obvious. The explosion of data would go beyond the brain's tolerance and the brains would be smashed like tofu. Ha Myung-woo grabbed Kim Gwon-tae's shirt and yelled.

"Stop it! Do whatever it takes! Stop it even if you have to break the server!"

"B-but.....It is already too late...... The amount of data is already beyond the tolerance limit....."

Kim Gwon-tae yanked at his hair with a hopeless expression. Pak! All of a sudden there was a blackout as the power was turned off in the Planning Department. After 0.1 seconds, the power supply turned back on.

"Eh? What is this?"

The various staff throughout the Planning Department were puzzled. The phenomenon which occurred on Kim Gwon-tae's monitor had spread to dozens of other monitors in the Planning Department. The staff looked bewildered by the phenomenon. But only one person was making a different expression.

"I-it is impossible.....!"

Kim Gwon-tae hurriedly connected his laptop to the main computer. But the same phenomenon occurred to his laptop as soon as it was connected. Kim Gwon-tae's face turned pale with fear.

"U-unbelievable.....!"

"What? What's going on?"

"The main system of New World has hacked into the computer network.
"Hacking?"
"Yes. The computer handling the main system judged it couldn't handle the data alone so it dispersed it to other computers on the network. All the computers at headquarters as well as the Planning Department are probably in the same situation. Maybe even to servers of different games. This isThis isIt's not a monster but a devil! Even if all the hackers in the world are collected, such a thing is impossible!"
Kim Gwon-tae spoke with a lot of fear. Ha Myung-woo felt a little relieved after hearing Kim Gwon-tae's words.
"Anyway, now the chance of the data flowing back into the unit is blocked. However"
Ha Myung-woo looked at the date on the monitor with unsure eyes. He couldn't help exclaiming.
"What the hell is going on?"
"Rururu, lalala~!"
While other situations were progressing here and there. Sid was on the deck of a boat and humming while feeling the cool sea breezes.
"Huhuhu, this is fantastic."
The goods on the item were changed for items in Seutandal's warehouse. After trading in Seutandal, those goods were now being transported to Reuben Harbour in Schudenberg. The reason Sid could

trade so quickly was because Ark was the owner of the trading office in Seutandal. So there was no reason to bargain about the price. By trading goods at one place, they could move it to another place

could triple the profit.
"I've earned 6,000 gold just by changing the goods in Seutandal."
That profit also showed up as experience for Sid so he quickly levelled up. And he would be able to gain experience like this for a while.
"Now my troubles have ended and it is time to be happy! Let's go, Gold Dream!"
Sid jumped and shouted after felling the overwhelming emotions. It was at that moment. The ocean in front of him suddenly turned white.
"Eh? What the?"
Bugul bugul, bugul bugul.
When he concentrated his eyes, bubbles were rising from under the ocean.
"What's this? What is boiling underneath the water?"
Sid said without any traces of his former joy. At first only 1^2 air bubbles appeared. But after a while, there were an absurd number of bubbles and the ocean looked like it was boiling. Another a moment, something huge appeared from under the ocean.
Chwaaaaak!
"Eh eh eh? Eh eh eh eh?"
Sid raised his head with a bemused expression. Then he continuously looked the object up and down

before screaming. After a while, the movements of the huge object suddenly stopped. It was huge! No,

even the word huge was insufficient. Compared to the size of the huge object, the huge boat with 6 sails
looked like a toy. Then a circular object in the centre started moving. Eyes! That's right. It was the eyes
of a huge object. And the enormous object which rose from the ocean was!

Roaaaaar!

The lower part of the monster's mouth opened. At the same time, sea water was swept in to the monster's mouth as the merchant ship approached it.

"Waaaaah.....!"

Sid screamed like crazy. That was the only piece of resistance Sid could do.