

### **Ark Vol 2 Chapter 3**

#### **Underwater City of Nodelesse**

"Yeah, it's been a while. Nothing out of the ordinary?"

"I'm fine as always."

"Yes, perhaps because my body is getting better, I've been feeling good too."

His mother laboriously tried to smile.

Looking at her haggard face pained his heart. His mother was already in her mid forties, but before the accident, everyone had told her she was beautiful. However, five years of life in the hospital had snatched away her past appearance.

'No matter what, I have to return mother back to her old self.'

Even if Hyun Woo gave up on everything else, this was the one thing he wanted.

As a shadow crossed Hyun Woo's face, his mother said in a sad voice, "I'm sorry, this isn't the time for me to be like this....."

His mother always started with those words when she saw him.

Hyun Woo hadn't said a word, but his mother knew. No, there was no reason why she wouldn't know.

After her admittance to the hospital, relatives had only visited two or three times. Also, they only chattered about how difficult life was these days and other nonsense before leaving.

No matter how sick she was, there was no reason for her to think relatives would constantly be paying the hospital bills. Those relatives had a big impact on why Hyun Woo had closed himself off to people.

In the end, the entire burden was his.

She couldn't show him she knew this, since she was sorry for all the hardship she caused him.

"Please don't say such things. Just concentrate on getting better sooner, even if it's just by a day. Also, I am no longer a child. I'm 22 now. I can make a decent living for myself.

"You're right, you're not a kid anymore."

As she stroked Hyun Woo's hand, her voice became teary with emotion.

5 years... for an old person to whom today was the same as yesterday, it might be an inconsequential amount of time. But Hyun Woo, who had been a high school sophomore, had become an adult at the age of twenty-two. It was the time when youths experiences the most changes.

How would she feel, having to watch her son change as the weight on his shoulders crushed him from her sickbed.

Hyun Woo shook his head as he changed the topic.

"I see Detective Gwon comes by often."

"Yes, it would have been really hard for me as well if not for Detective Gwon."

Hyun Woo sincerely thought of Detective Gwon, Gwon Hwa Rang, as his benefactor.

The accident his father had caused five years ago had shaken Hyun Woo's life to its roots.

His father passed away and the victim died. A chain collision occurred, causing over 10 people to be seriously injured. It was only for a few seconds, but the accident had even been on the news. The anchorman mentioned a Mr. Kim while babbling his kind of irresponsible driving was hard to accomplish.

The impact from just a few seconds of news was amazing.

Criticism had poured in from all directions. Even family turned their backs.

The life Hyun Woo had believed in and thought would last forever crumbled so very easily. For the high school sophomore Hyun Woo, it was too heavy of a reality to accept.

From then on, Hyun Woo began to stray. He drank and he smoked. He even fought on the streets. He hated his father who caused the accident, and he hated the world who pointed fingers.

At that time, the one who found Hyun Woo, grabbed him by the collar, and set him right was the detective in charge of investigating the

accident, Gwon Hwa Rang. For the first time in his life, Hyun Woo was beaten to a pulp.

Then he was dragged by Gwon Hwa Rang to the hospital.

The truth was he was running away from there.

The truth Hyun Woo had to acknowledge wasn't in the night streets flashing with neon lights. In the intensive care ward, barely maintaining life through multiple IVs and a respirator, was his mother.

That day, Hyun Woo cried without restraint for the first time.

Gwon Hwa Rang always took care of Hyun Woo after the incident. When there was a problem at school, he put everything aside to come, and he used his connections to introduce Hyun Woo to a part time job with a decent pay. When Hyun Woo urgently needed a loan, he volunteered to stand as a guarantor. It was thanks to him Hyun Woo was able to safely graduate from high school.

For Hyun Woo, Gwon Hwa Rang was a savior— no, he was more than that.

"It's just that I always felt sorry toward Detective Gwon."

"Me too. But you don't have to think that way, Mother."

"What do you mean?"

"The reason Detective Gwon comes to the hospital probably isn't because he feels responsible. He may be like a bear on the outside, but he harbors a sly intention inside. You know this too, right?"

As Hyun Woo smiled wickedly, his mother blushed to the tips of her ears.

"This guy, teasing his mother?"

"Mother."

Suddenly Hyun Woo spoke heavily with a sombre tone.

His mother made a slightly tense expression.

"I'm not against it."

"Hahaha, I'll be back in a bit after meeting Detective Gwon."

Hyun Woo pulled his hand free from the mother he'd been teasing and left the sickroom.

Detective Gwon, who'd been sitting next to the hospital ward, laughed as he asked, "What do you think? She's gotten much better, right?"

"Yes, her mood has brightened a lot too. Thank you."

"Yes?"

"I heard from the doctor rehabilitation treatment will soon start, but... well... I'm talking about the rehab treatment. From what I've heard,

they say it takes a ton of money. You're not being covered by insurance. So, well, I actually have more money than it looks."

Detective Gwon laughed awkwardly as he babbled. "Hahaha, that's right, I have quite a lot of money. That's it. I've got quite a bit left from the retirement pay I got from quitting detective work, and I get pension, and the pay from my current job is good too...No, I'm not saying I'm well off, but I have money and nothing else to spend it on. So what I mean is..."

"It's alright." Hyun Woo shook his head.

"I understand what you want to say. I'm really grateful, but it's alright. I can handle my mother's hospital bills somehow on my own."

"No, you see, don't misunderstand. I just have nothing to spend money on.

"Detective-nim. You like my mother, right?"

Pierced by Hyun Woo's bullseye, Gwon Hwa Rang was startled.

"Th, That is...."

"What's there to apologize for? If it's you, Detective Gwon, I'll welcome you anytime."

"Then, what's the problem?"

"Me liking you and this issue are different. Do you remember when you beat me to a pulp and dragged me to the hospital?"

"Yeah, something like that did happen."

"After seeing my mother lying in the intensive care ward, I realized how thoughtlessly I had been living. Then I made a vow. No matter what happens, I will make her better with my strength. It's not because I feel uncomfortable about using your money, or because it hurts my pride. I just want to keep my vow. Because it's about my mother, and not just anyone."

Gwon Hwa Rang gazed at him wordlessly and patted Hyun Woo's shoulder.

"Commendable lad."

"What you've said made you commendable."

Gwon Hwa Rang nodded as he rose from his seat.

"I understand. If you're a man, you've gotta be stubborn. Do as you want, but promise me one thing. If something gets too difficult to handle alone comes up, you must come to me first. You can promise me, right?"

"Yes, Detective Gwon."

"Game?"

Gwon Hwa Rang tilted his head wondering what was being said out of the blue.

"Well, I played a little in the past, but..."

"Yes, you will also like it if you try it."

"New World, I did hear about it..." Detective nodded without much thought. "Okay. When I have time, I'll try it."

"You must."

Shark Fin Soup, a food made by Survivor Cooking

Sharkman's Shackle (Magic)

Defense Type

Rock Boots

Defense



Durability



20/20



Weight



100



Usage Restriction



At least 120 Strength

The shackle the Sharkman leader wore; because it is made of considerably heavy rock, it will slow the movement if worn.

The defense is also low, so it's difficult to hope it will be useful in combat. However, because of its weight, you can keep your balance even if a storm rages upon you.

Mermaid's Scale (Special): (Quantity 5)

The scale of Mermaids, inhabitants of the ocean; if you hold it with your mouth, you can breathe underwater.

The quest has been updated.

The Mysterious Mirror's Whisper → Entrance to a New World

- You have received a critical hit from the Devil Fish. 180 points of damage.

- Your attack has failed because of the Devil Fish's elasticity.

- You have landed a critical hit!

Coral Dagger

Weapon Type



Dagger



Attack Damage



1~4



Durability



15



Weight



15



Usage Restriction



None

A dagger made by sharpening the coral. The blade has satisfactory luster and shape. Excellent for use as a decoration. Because the

material is coral, it is impossible to repair with the usual method.

- You have landed a critical hit!

"Damn, but they're probably tasty!"

"Please just be quiet. You're driving me mad."

Ark shook his head back and forth with an obstinate expression.

It wasn't just the Mermaid guard. He spoke to several Mermaids after entering the city, but the reactions were all the same.

Just by hearing the name Christin they got into a temper and didn't want to talk anymore.

He had thought once he arrived here, the quest would naturally solve itself. And the very same thought hadn't changed yet.

The Mermaids showed such sensitive reactions meant there was some kind of story behind it. However, since they got mad just by mentioning the name, there was no way he could find out.