

Ark Vol 21 C 4

Chapter 4

ACT 4 Alan's Resurrection

"Indeed....."

Ark stared at the ruins in front of him and sighed. Then Shambala and Lariette looked at him with doubtful eyes.

"What one earth? What are we doing here?"

"Did this use to be a village?"

".....Nuran village."

Ark responded like he was thinking out loud. Ark had two purposes when he started this mission. The first one was to blow up the Black Obelisk Forest in order to help the Schudenberg army. The other reason was to visit a village related to the quest that was located on the other side of the Albana Mountains. That's right. The destination of the quest was a village on the border of the Sinus Principality. It was the Lore quest he received after collecting 10 ☆'s. If he completed it then a big prize would be waiting! But after he arrived at the destination, the whole village along with the NPCs had disappeared. However, Ark didn't look hopeless as he looked around the devastated village.

"It has been more than 10 days since the darkness started spreading....."

In fact, Ark had already guessed that it would reach here. The Sinus Principality was flooded with darkness and monsters had attacked every village and city. Only a few fortified cities managed to barely stop the monsters' attacks. A small mountain village in the mountains wouldn't be able to survive it. The destruction of Nuran village was expected. Yet the reason he came here was that this wasn't the final destination of Ark's quest.

'In order to meet the prophet clan to complete the quest, I have to meet with some NPCs on the outside first. Since the prophets live in a hidden village.'

But detailed information about Nuran village was written on the information and it was even marked on the map of the Sinius Principality. In other words, the sequence was 'Nuran village= Prophet Clan.' Then the answer was that he could get information about the prophet clan from Nuran village.

'I need to get information from Nuran village so there might be a way even if it is in ruins. There might even be NPCs who survived the attack from the monsters.'

It was the reason why Ark looked for this location despite his busy schedule. If the Schudenberg expedition moved on after capturing Pabiun Fortress then he would have to go with them. That meant this was his only chance to explore Nuran village. And Ark had 200 expert users as his subordinates. He could also have the users search for him. If there was a clue remaining then it wouldn't be difficult to find.

'Fortunately it hasn't been a long time since the village was attacked.'

"Everybody concentrate! From now on everyone should search through the ruins.

This task is very important so notify me immediately if there are any survivors."

The soldiers scattered at Ark's order and looked through the rubble. Then Shambala looked at him with suspicious eyes.

"This task is very important? Really?"

"Are you questioning your leader?"

"Master!"

Ark had retorted in a sharp voice. Then Racard who had been scouting the area hurriedly flew back while shouting.

“What? Monsters?”

“N-no, a monster is a monster..... That guy! It’s him!”

“That guy? What do you mean?”

“A-A-A.....”

Racard stuttered breathlessly. Then Shambala flinched and spat out a string of curses.

“Uh? Holy shit! Ark, we’re surrounded!”

“Surrounded? What.....”

Ark looked around with a confused expression. Hundreds of monsters were surrounding the ruins where the special forces were? Monsters with the body of a human and a lion and the head of a bull.....there were 800 of the demonic monsters!

‘Damn! How did we get surrounded by so many monsters?’

Ark made a puzzled expression.

“I’m glad that I found you.”

Ark turned his head as he heard a voice from behind him.

Ttukuk, ttukuk..... Somebody slowly emerged from among the monsters. It was a knight wearing bony black armour while riding a skeletal horse. When the knight lifted his helmet, Ark and Shambala shouted at the same time.

“Alan!”

“I’m also glad that you haven’t forgotten my name.”

Alan who was inside the black armour muttered.

‘What the hell? How did he appear in a place like this? Didn’t he quit the game? No, what’s with the monsters? Alan is travelling around with monsters? In addition, it looks like Alan is the one commanding them. A user is controlling that many monsters? Such a thing is impossible. Although it is impossible.....’

Ark looked at Alan and had a thought pop into his head.

‘Ah, is it that?’

Ark narrowed his eyes and nodded.

“This type of situation can’t be considered an error but it more like a type of bug in the system. Several users seem to be intentionally abusing this bug.”

That was what he heard when he visited Global Exos not long ago. Users were exploiting the bug!

‘Then Alan is one of those users?’

If Alan was controlling the monsters than that explained their strategic movements at Pabiun Fortress. Then Alan led a squad of monsters and appeared here.....

“What business do you have with me?”

“What do you think?”

Alan asked as he stared at Ark. Although his voice was calm, anger was obvious in every line of his body. It was natural. Ark was the person who stepped on Alan in the past. It was a situation that couldn't be helped but Alan received enormous damage from Ark. Silvana was taken away and his guild disbanded. He also became a criminal in the eyes of every user. He had been buried in New World. It was a grudge that was impossible to forget in 1 year.

'It's not an exaggeration to say that we're mortal enemies.

Neither one of us can endure each other.' But Ark didn't know the reason behind Alan's biggest grudge against him.

"Ah, Alan-nim?"

Lariette who had been observing the atmosphere between the two people said carefully. At the same time, Alan shouted in a rough voice.

"Shut up!"

Lariette paled and retreated after hearing Alan's shout. But Lariette wasn't the only one surprised. Ark was also shocked by Alan's violent reaction. Ark had thought that Alan and Lariette were still lovers. Thanks to the misunderstanding, they had intentionally avoided mentioned Alan's name to each other. Despite examining his feelings for Lariette many times, he was still blocked by the presence of Alan. A meeting between Lariette and Alan had weighed on his mind. But that idea quickly shattered after Ark saw Alan's reaction.

'What the, this reaction is? Well, anyone would be angry if their girlfriend was with the enemy but isn't this reaction too severe? Does that guy have an abnormal character? Or....."

Had he been misunderstanding the relationship between Lariette and Alan? It was the first time Ark had that thought in 1 year. But Ark had no more time to continue that thought.

"It's starting now. Ark, Lariette and Shambala! I'll make you realize what a big mistake you made antagonizing me. I'll pay you back one hundred, no one thousand times!"

Alan stared at Lariette before raising his sword and shouting.

“Step on all of them! Don’t let even one person escape!”

Kuaaaa! Awooooo!

The hundreds of monsters yelled and rushed forward. Therefore Ark no longer had any time to think about various situations. Currently 800 monsters were surrounding them. There was a reason the special forces couldn’t die. Did they have to fight if the odds weren’t in their favour?

‘I have to find some way to escape!’

“Damn, defense formation!”

The users in the special forces were specially chosen from 30,000 troops. They were warriors with excellent levels and skills. Rather than falling into a panic, the soldiers neatly formed the defense formation at Ark’s command. The warriors used their large shields to form a circle with the archers and magicians in the middle. A perfect circular camp had been formed in seconds.

“Lariette-nim, your buffs!”

“Warrior’s Soul, Shining Sword, Light of Vitality!”

-The Innocence Knight has used the Warrior’s Soul.

-The Innocence Knight has used Shining Sword.

-The Innocence Knight has used Light of Vitality.

The set of three buffs were scattered around the circular camp. Thanks to the three buffs being piled off, the combat power of the soldiers increased by 20%. Just before the soldiers collided with the monsters, Ark threw the Saw blade and shouted.

“Summon Demon, Razak. Sword transformation release. Iron Fire Wall!”

Ttadak, ttadadadak, tadadak!

The Saw blade flew through the air and transformed into Razak. Razak raised his shield as soon as he transformed. It was the Blazing Fire Draconian Shield.

Clack clack clack clack, clack clack clack clack!

Kwa kwa kwang, hwarrrruk!

Razak roared (?) and slammed the shield into the ground using his strength. Giant wings of fire opened on both sides of the shield like a Firebird. The wings fluttered and hit 100 monsters that approached. At the same time, the flames from the wings jumped to the monsters' bodies. It was the special skill of the Blazing Fire Draconian Shield, Iron Fire Wall! The 100 monsters that blindly rushed in were enveloped in flames and became 'stunned.' It was a great opportunity! Ark's eyes flashed and he shouted.

“Now! Archers and magicians, use your wide area skills!”

The wide area skill did less damage than general skills but could attack all enemies in range. But the wide area skill couldn't designate the target. So it could be used in the midst of confused fighting where friends and foes were mixed together. That's why Ark lured the monsters first and then stunned them using the Iron Fire Wall.

“The dead sea, unleash the storm of your power..... Tornado!”

“Arrow shower!”

The wide area skills concentrated on the stunned monsters. Tornados tore through the area, hail poured down like a blizzard and there was a shower of arrows! Dozens of wide area skills were concentrated on one area. It was a death space! The monsters confined in that space lost 50% of their health instantly.

“Move to a battle formation and kill the monsters that already have their health decreased!”

“Ohhhhhh!”

The soldiers rushed at Ark’s command while maintaining the circular formation. Currently they were surrounded by 800 monsters. If they broke their formation in such a situation then the soldiers would probably be driven back into a defensive position. With the numbers overwhelming superior to them, it would certainly be instant defeat.

‘I should maintain a 7:3 ratio of defense and attack and reduce the number of enemies.’

But as expected, it was just a temporary solution. The special forces only had 200 people while the monsters were 4 times that with 800 of them. Of course the special forces consisted of elite users with most of them over level 350. But the monsters Alan brought with him had an average level of 400. Furthermore, the demonic sphere of influence meant the special forces had their stats decreased by 20% and the monsters increased by 20%.

‘It is impossible to win in this state. Even if we can win, the special forces will be almost wiped out. But as long as one person has the Starlight Bomb, they can succeed in blowing up the 50 black obelisks. In that case, we just have to fight and look for an opportunity to run away. But the problem is.....’

The soldiers had successfully taken care of the first wave of monsters. That.....

“Ark, behind you!”

Then he heard Shambala's voice. Ark flinched and turned around, seeing a sword aimed at his back. Alan had charge forward on his skeletal horse and swung his sword. Ark reflexively lifted his sword and blocked it. He hadn't expected it and lost his balance, rolling across the snowfield. Then Alan's sword fell vertically again. Ark tried to kick the ground to get up but his foot slipped on the ice and he fell again. The sword aimed towards the crown of Ark's head. No, it was about to split him in half.

Syu syu syu syuk, ka ka ka kak, chaeng!

Three or four daggers flew through the space and hit the sword. The orbit of the sword was changed and it passed by Ark's head. Alan tried to attack again when his first one failed but he moved back with an irritated look as daggers kept on flying at him. Ark finally got up and regained his posture. Then Shambala who had thrown the daggers appeared next to him.

"I hope you haven't forgotten that your friends are here."

"You're a good friend so take as much as you want."

"I have to respectfully decline."

"Really?"

Ark smiled and looked at Alan.

'This is a chance!'

Ark's current goal was to minimize the loss of troops and to run away. And the biggest obstacle wasn't the monsters but Alan. Currently Ark was in the complicated Pabiun Canyon. It would be easy to use the terrain to defeat the monsters following them. However it wouldn't be that simple if the opponent was a user. A user wasn't stupid so they wouldn't be tricked easily. Moreover, the person commanding the monsters was Alan. If he ran away without a plan then it was possible the situation would worsen. Ark had to deal with Alan first before they could escape.

'I was really concerned that Alan would hide in the rear behind all the monsters. Then it would be harder to find an opportunity to catch him. Yet he appeared right in front of me.....'

Perhaps it was because of his Alan's grudge and pride.

'Your grudge will be your fatal mistake!'

Ark quickly glanced at Shambala. Shambala lifted a corner of his mouth and nodded. Attack Alan using the pincer movement. That arrangement was decided with one look. Fair and square? There was no need for something like that. Whether it was reality or a game, he had to do whatever it took to win. How could he worry about fairness when he was close to bankruptcy? It was important to deal with Alan and escape here quickly.

"I'll take the right side and you'll take the left!"

Ark and Shambala rushed towards Alan from different sides. Alan turned his body without any hesitation towards Ark.

"Sheesh, wasn't Ark more scary then this? I'll show you true power. Arrow!"

Just as Shambala was about to drive his dagger into Alan.

Syu syu syu syuk, syu syu syu syuk!

Dozens of arrows suddenly shot towards Shambala. Shambala hurriedly twisted his dagger but one arrow still lodged in his shoulder. Shambala withdrew and glared at the space where the arrow was shot from.

"Stealth?"

While Shambala was glaring at that space, a woman appeared. The woman with black skin and pointy ears was a Dark Elf. Shambala pulled out the arrow in his shoulder and asked in a cold voice.

“What, you are?”

“What are you going to do? Ask for a date?”

“You think I want to date a girl like you who shoots arrows randomly?”

“I’m glad, I also have no interest in weak guys.”

“I’m weak?”

Shambala curled his lip as he looked at the dark elf. No, the moment he looked he flew towards the Dark Elf like a projectile. It was Shambala’s high speed skill, Blink! Shambala swung his dagger with an exaggerated movement and the snow flew forward like a wave. It was a momentum which seemed to tear the sky apart. But the Dark Elf was already gone.

“Kalkalkal, a woman can run away like a wild boar!”

“Dammit. Torrential Sword!”

When he heard the Dark Elf’s voice from behind him, Shambala cursed and rotated his body while instantly using a skill. Hundreds of daggers sprung from a dark area and covered the entire space. The Dark Elf just used a fire arrow and snorted.

“Shall we see if quantity beats quality? Explosion Arrow!”

The arrow she fired exploded and the daggers caught by the shock wave fell to the ground. Shambala was also caught by the explosion. The Dark Elf shot an arrow that flew through the sky.

“Matanyi Shooter no. 1, Devil Penetrating Arrow!”

Beondduk!

The arrow flew at a speed that couldn't be avoided. It was the light speed! Shambala couldn't even move a finger as the arrow pierced his chest. No, it seemed to pierce him. Shambala's body blurred and disappeared.

"What, what the? Alter ego?"

"The joke is over. You stupid woman!"

Shambala appeared behind the baffled Dark Elf. The surprised Dark Elf rolled along the ground and successively shot some arrows. Since she was rolling on the ground, the arrows flew in all directions and Shambala smirked.

"Heh, I never thought I would have to fight seriously against a woman....."

"Are you really qualified to say that? Matanyi Shooter no. 2, Devil's Chasing Arrow!"

The Dark Elf shouted as she got up. Then the arrows flying all over the place turned around and headed towards Shambala like a guided missile.

"What, what the?"

Shambala hurriedly moved his body but the arrows followed him.

"Sun, Gae, Yeol, Seom!"

In the end, Shambala had to use 100% of his assassination footwork to outrun the arrows. From then on the real battle between Shambala and the Dark Elf began in earnest. However, the fight between the two of them was different from a fight between warriors. While a warrior's fight was a battle of strength and stamina, the two of them used deception and agility to counterattack against each other. So it was difficult to anticipate who would win in the battle.

‘To be able to fight Shambala to this extent, who on earth is that Dark Elf?’

Ark stared with an open mouth at the fight between Shambala and the Dark Elf. Fights in New World were 60% level and 40% skills. Levels and abilities were important but the actual movement ability was also significant. Even Ark admitted that Shambala was an expert at kung fu. But the Dark Elf wasn’t pushed by Shambala’s movements.

“Where are you looking?”

At that time Alan charged towards him on the skeletal horse. His sword swept up from the ground! Ark hurriedly turned his body and defended. His whole body shook from the impact and he was pushed back several metres. The impact felt like he had been hit by a truck.

‘Ugh! What on earth, this impact is?’

Ark groaned as he barely maintained his balance. In fact, Ark had been contemptuous of Alan until now. When Ark met him for the first time, he felt like Alan was a wall which couldn’t be crossed. But after a lot of experiences, his skills had become equal to Alan’s. Then Alan lost everything and remained hidden in New World for a while. At this point Ark already thought that Alan wasn’t a worthy rival anymore. Even with Alan in front of him, Ark thought he could deal with him easily. However, it turned out that Alan was a tougher opponent than Ark thought. No, they were almost equal if he was judging by the impact he felt.

‘What on earth is going on?’

Their power being equal meant they had comparable stats. Ark’s current level was 432 and with the dark attribute bonus it was 648. Even if he hunted 24 hours for the last year, it was impossible for Alan to reach level 648.

‘How did he get this power? Damn, I’ll check his information window…….’

Ark used Eyes of the Cat to determine Alan’s information. But the information window just blurred when he tried to look at it. The only time the information couldn’t be seen was when a scroll or a special skill

like Shambala's was used. It also happened when there was a difference of 100 levels. But he didn't feel a lot of difference so it couldn't be a special skill or scroll.

'There can't be a 100 level difference between me and that guy. Then did he receive stat bonuses like my dark attribute bonus?'

That's right. Alan was able to show abilities equal to Ark because of a bonus. Alan's bonus depended on his Hate stat.

-Hatred (+ 10): The most powerful emotion a human can have is hate. A

t the height of your ruin, you didn't stop hating your opponent. It is the most appropriate power for revenge.

This was the ability Alan received when he changed to a Ruin Knight. The Hate stat meant he received a 0.1% stat bonus for every chaotic point he gained. To put it simply, if he had 100 Hate and 100 Chaotic points then he would get 10 bonus stats. In fact, this stat wasn't useful when it was first created. But Alan had commanded monsters and indiscriminately killed NPCs in the Sinius Principality so his chaotic value was in the tens of thousands. Therefore Alan had thousands of bonus stats applied.

"Sheesh! That skeletal horse is annoying."

Ark spat on the ground and murmured. He didn't understand the reason but their abilities were similar. Anyway, Ark had confidence that he could defeat Alan. Ark had experienced a lot in order to reach this level. Yet Ark was struggling because of the skeletal horse. The main method of attack for a cavalry soldier was to charge, attack and then retreat. It was very simple but different for an infantry soldier to counter. Besides, Alan was someone who had ridden horses from the beginning because it was stylish. He was accustomed to fighting on horseback.

'First I have to draw him down from the horse.'

“Is that it?”

Alan laughed and rushed again. Ark raised his sword like a baseball player about to strike the ball and shouted.

“Summon release, Racard. Summon Demon, Racard!”

“Ack, what, what the?”

Racard who had been using satellite surveillance mode to report the movements of the monsters to Lariette was summoned in front of Ark. At the same time, Ark hit Racard sharply in the bum with his sword.

“Go, Bat Missile!”

“Kuaaaaack! What the, Master I will die!”

Racard screamed as he flew forward like a bullet. Ark had aimed at Alan’s face. However Alan just sneered and hit Racard with his arm, sending him flying.

‘Damn, is it a failure? Useless bat!’

Ark clicked his tongue and muttered. After suddenly being hit by the sword and then Alan, the sniffing Racard with a runny nose flew back towards Alan’s face. Alan reflexively closed his eyes.

“This is a chance!”

Ark wasn’t the type to miss this opportunity. The moment Alan’s eyes closed, Ark ran towards the skeletal horse. He stepped on the skeletal body and jumped up, slamming into Alan’s jaw with his knee.

“Cough!”

Alan's head shot backwards as his jaw was hit and he fell off the horse. Ark aimed his sword at Alan's chest while they were falling. Alan opened his eyes and shouted.

"Ugh, this bastard..... Evil Insight!"

Deep red rays shot from Alan's eyes. Before Ark could react to the attack, the light had penetrated his shoulder. At that moment, the landscape jumbled up and he suddenly became busy. Alan's face seemed to multiply dozens of times and became distorted.

'What, what the? What just happened?'

Ark wobbled backwards and used Skill Penetration.

-Gore Knight skill: The Gore Knights are demons living in basements of old buildings.

Those fellows hide in the darkness and use Evil Insight to draw travellers into a world of hallucinations. While the travellers are caught by the hallucinations, they would be devoured by the Gore Knight.

'Gore Knight skill?'

Ark was stunned after verifying the information. The Gore Knight was a monster Ark had encountered several times in dungeons. So he was familiar with the effects of Evil Insight. The problem was how Alan managed to use Evil Insight. And that was just the beginning.

"You thought it would be better if you got me off the horse?"

Alan smirked as he ran up to Ark. Thanks to Evil Insight, it seemed like hundreds of copies of Alan were running from every direction. The confused Ark swung his sword wildly around him. But his sword never struck Alan. Alan avoided Ark's sword and yelled.

“Devil’s Breath!”

This time smoke spewed from Alan’s mouth. Ark’s skin turned black the moment the smoke touched it and a message window appeared.

-You’ve become addicted to the Devil’s Breath.

‘Oh my god! This time ‘Devil’s Breath’ as well?’

Ark couldn’t grasp the situation. Devil’s Breath was a poisonous skill used by the Lamias. It was a deadly poison then continued until without a time limit and was one that users feared most. But the problem wasn’t the Devil’s Breath. Ark was concerned about how Alan was able to use the skill of a Gore Knight and a Lamia.

‘What on earth is going on?’ How is this guy able to use the abilities of monsters?’

“Huhuhu, this was worth changing to a Ruin Knight.”

Alan smiled and muttered as Ark was poisoned by the Devil’s Breath. That’s right. The Ruin Knight was a unique profession in New World and its true power was the ability to use the skills of monsters. The name was ‘Predator of Demons.’ This ability combined with the Devil’s Jewel meant that he could freely use the skills of monsters. Alan had absorbed abilities from 60 different types of monsters in order to get revenge on Ark. But Ark couldn’t understand those circumstances.

‘Damn, I don’t know what’s happening but I should keep my distance and observe.’

Ark instinctively sensed the crisis and withdrew. He couldn’t find blindly when the opponent could use any type of skill.

“Not a chance. Inferno!”

Alan blew fire from his mouth towards Ark.

'This time it is fire? It is too strange. There's something strange about this guy!'

Ark used Dark Dance to remove himself from Alan's range. Alan had the basic attributes of a knight. He wore metal armour so his movements were slower than Ark's. If Ark gave up on attacking and just used Dark Dance then Alan wouldn't be able to catch him. That was Ark's idea.

"It really is very pitiful. It is impossible for you."

Alan frowned as Ark continued to run away. Then he touched his closed fist to his chest and shouted.

"Hate aura!"

When his fist touched his chest, a strange aura appeared around it. The black aura crawled over Alan's body like a living organism. It would around his arms, legs and body like a snake and hardened into a sort of armour. Ark used Skill Penetration and the information window floated in front of him.

-Set Equipment Option Skill: [Hate Set] Hate Aura

The Hate Set are cursed equipment with the souls of angry warriors lodged inside. The vengeful spirits are normally sleeping within the set equipment. When gathered together, the Hate Set has a fearful power.

Once all of the set is gathered, the users can amplify the power of the vengeful spirits and aim their hatred at the real world. When triggered, the defense of the Hate Set will decrease by 50% for 24 hours.

* Hate Aura can only be used by someone with the Hate stat.

'Set equipment effect!'

Ark stared at Alan with astonishment. Alan looked different from before. The Hate Aura from his equipment was wrapped around Alan's whole body. It caused a sinister atmosphere around him.

"This is my favourite."

Alan smirked and approached Ark. Yet Alan seemed to explosively burst towards Ark at a tremendous speed. Ark hurriedly used Dark Dance to retreat. When he previously used Dark Dance, he could avoid the attacks and maintain a distance. But this time Alan had no trouble catching up and attacking.

"Huk! What, what the? This speed? Is this really 30% increase?"

When he looked at the information for Hate Aura, 30% didn't feel that large. But when they were already in similar conditions, the 30% increase made a huge difference.

'Damn, now I can't even escape?'

"Okay, let's see who dies first!"

Ark clenched his teeth tightly and swung his sword. Ark instantly narrowed the distance and started fighting in earnest. "Dark Blade!"

"The Devil's Fang!"

Kwa kwa kwa kwang, kwa kwa kwa kwang!

The two swords clashed and caused a loud ringing sound. There was only 50 centimetres between Ark and Alan. They stood facing each other without backing down. The snowstorm whirled around them and blocked the battle from outside view. After a few minutes.....

Ka ka ka kak, cha chaeng, kwa kwa kwa kwang!

Somebody was suddenly pushed out of the snowstorm.

“Dammit.....!”

The person who was pushed was none other than Ark.

“I seem to have overestimated you.”

Alan muttered as he stepped out of the snowstorm. Anger swelled up inside Ark at the sight of that arrogant expression. Ark had played the game eagerly and he had confidence in himself. Yet he had been pushed by Alan who had been a figure of his past.

‘All my struggles to get this far.....’

It was an exhausting thought. However Ark soon clenched his teeth and shook his head.

‘No, my level and skills are still superior. I’m being pushed back by his strange monster skills and the set item effect.’

That’s right. Ark wasn’t pushed back using skills. If Alan hadn’t used the Hate Aura then Ark would have a 6:4 advantage. Thanks to the Hate Aura and strange skills, this had been flipped to 4:6.

‘Damn, to think I was the ones who sold him those.....’

Anger exploded at the sight of the metal gloves that Alan was wearing. Alan was using the ‘Plated Gauntlets of Corrupted Hatred’ that Ark had sold in the auction. He was only able to use Hate Aura because he had gathered the Hate Set. In the end Ark brought this on himself by selling Alan the gloves. It was really a situation for cursing. But now wasn’t the time for regrets.

'The odds aren't in my favour.'

The only way to win was to use Area Declaration and Descent of the Fire Draconian. But Alan must have a 2nd stage profession judging from his abilities so it would be useless.

'Is there really no way?'

Ark got up and checked the surroundings. Ark wasn't the only one in a bad position. The special forces were surrounded by hundreds of monsters and more than 50 people had already died. Area Declarations couldn't be overlapped so teammates in the same area with a 2nd stage profession were rotating the uses. However, the health of the special forces had almost reached their limits. If a dozen more users fell then the rest would quickly be killed like dominoes.

'Even Shambala can't help.....'

Shambala was still playing tag with the Dark Elf.

'Damn! I made a mistake!'

Ark's initial plan was to deal with Alan before running into the canyon and misleading the monsters. But that was under the premise that he could defeat Alan. That condition had failed so it was now the worst situation. While the special forces had killed 300 monsters with 50 of them killed, their health and mana were really low. Ark also only had 20% health and mana left. In this situation it would've been better if he had escaped from the beginning.

'Should I stay here? Or do I run away?'

The answer to this question was a no-brainer.

If they continued fighting then the special forces would 100% be wiped out. But if they ran away then at least 1% was likely to survive. Ark's purpose of 'killing Alan and escaping' changed. However, it wasn't an easy thing.

‘Alan is faster than me right now. I also only have 20% health left. If I can stop Alan from moving for a short time.....’

The rubble of the ruins suddenly caught Ark’s eyes. At that moment a similar situation from the Evil Silrion rose in Ark’s head.

‘Maybe.....!’

Ark immediately used Feather of Whispering to contact Shambala.

-Shambala, let’s swap!

-What?

-There’s no time to explain. Please run to the designated place when I count to three.

-What are you suddenly saying? Hey, hey!

Shambala screamed but Ark had already stopped the whisper. Alan then ran towards Ark with his sword raised.

“What are you talking so secretly about?”

“How to hurt you!”

Ark rolled on the ground and ran towards the rubble he spotted before. Shambala also used Torrential Sword on the Dark Elf and ran towards the same place. After 10 seconds, they reached the area where a plank was acting like a seesaw in the middle of the rubble. It was the plank that had caught Ark’s eyes.

“Shambala, go up the plank!”

Shambala instantly noticed Ark's intention. Shambala smiled and used Blink to go on the plank. Ark sprinted towards the other side of the plank. Shambala who was waiting on the seesaw flew into the air after Ark jumped on the plank.

"What, what the?"

Alan who had been chasing after Ark followed Shambala's trajectory with puzzled eyes. He belatedly noticed and raised his sword too late!

"Petrification of Blood!"

Shambala rotated his body in the air and used the skill Petrification of Blood was a skill which increase defense by 500% for 20 seconds but made the target unable to move! Alan looked like a stone statue with his sword raised.

"Alan!"

The Dark Elf shouted as she noticed Alan's situation.

"I am your opponent. Jump! Dark Blade!"

Ark used Jump to fly towards the Dark Elf and then used Dark Blade. It was the Jump and Dark Blade chain skill 'Adol!' While the Dark Elf had tremendous agility equal to Shambala, the attack was unexpected and she fell down.

"Do you understand now? This is called teamwork!"

Ark taunted the frozen Alan and joined the special forces. While he wanted to attack Alan, that state would only last 20 seconds.

"Ark-nim, Shambala-nim!"

Lariette shouted tearfully as Ark and Shambala joined her. The special forces were tired from fighting the monsters.

“Rush towards the canyon while Alan and the Dark Elf are immobile!”

Ark’s pride didn’t allow him to say that it was running away. Anyway, Ark pulled some Creative Cooking dishes from his bag and threw them at the monsters. The Hell Bomb, Pepper Beehives, etc.....the monsters were in a state of chaos from the explosion of Creative Cooking dishes.

“Everybody rush using the wedge formation!”

“Waaaaahhhhh!”

The special forces ran forward at Ark’s command. The magicians and archers were fragile so the warriors made a path using their shields. However, it wasn’t an easy task breaking through the monsters while they had low health. Some warriors, magicians and archers died from the monsters’ counterattacks.

“H-help!”

The soldiers who were in a critical condition murmured as they were dragged back by monsters. But if they delayed even a few seconds then the special forces would be wiped out.

‘Damn, if I had some cursed maces then I could break through the siege easily.....’

Ark thought painfully after hearing the cries from the soldiers. If he had maces then he could use Demonic Manifestations for the ‘Power Charge’ effect which increased charging speed by 50% and blew away enemies. However it required three spears and two maces to use Power Charge. He had quite a lot of spears but only one mace so he couldn’t trigger Power Charge. It was because he had reduced the number of cursed japtem collected while testing out various combinations.

‘Damn, I ran out of cursed japtem just when I need it.’

He had to just hope that the soldiers could endure.

“Don’t turn around! Give up on any stragglers! Rush forward blindly!”

While there were 30 stragglers, the remaining special forces members managed to escape the siege of monsters.

“Demonic Manifestations, shoes, shoes, shoes, shoes, shoes!”

-Demonic energy has been extracted from the offerings (Shoes, shoes, shoes, shoes, shoes)

The effect exercised by this combination is ‘Wind Dash.’

Wind Dash: All allies within 100 metres will have their movement speed increased by 50% for 5 minutes.

However the same effect can’t be stacked.

When he triggered Wind Dash, the soldiers now moved incredibly fast. Therefore they were able to safely escape the monsters and entered the canyon.