

Ark Vol 23 C 2

Chapter 2

ACT 2 Flood, Hell River (I)

‘Doppelganger?’

Ark asked as he checked the information window. Even after seeing it with his eyes, he couldn’t understand what had happened. All the information Ark knew about the doppelgangers passed through his head. In fact, the biggest reason the kingdom had for initiating martial law and closing the checkpoints was because of the doppelgangers. There was an outbreak of doppelgangers stealing the faces of travelling merchants and hiding in villages to eat the residents. But most of those incidents disappeared after martial law was initiated and the checkpoints closed. Ark had never seen an actual doppelganger so far.....

‘Then Alan also brought some doppelgangers into the secret dungeon?’

Ark hurriedly looked around. Ark saw that of the dead Avenger members also had their bodies turn to dough.

.....They weren’t simply mixed in. Alan and all of the Avengers were doppelgangers.

‘The doppelgangers wouldn’t have selfishly copied Alan’s appearance. Then the doppelgangers’ transformations must be due to Alan’s order. If that’s the case?’

This situation was a trap made by Alan? Ark thought of something and the hairs on his body suddenly raised. Alan had the doppelganger transform into him to lure Ark here!

“The detachment should build a defense around Shambala and I!”

Ark yelled before looking at Curio.

“Curio, use satellite surveillance mode and look for Alan’s position!”

“Eh? Eh? U-understood!”

Curio flew down from the ceiling and used satellite surveillance mode. There was only one reason Ark could think of for Alan to use the doppelganger to lure Ark to the battlefield. It was to hide behind the doppelganger for a surprise attack on Ark. So Ark immediately switched to a defense formation to prepare for Alan’s attack. However, the demons were the only ones to attack Ark’s group.

“I can’t see him. There is no signs of Alan on the battlefield.”

“Nothing? That’s impossible.....”

Ark became even more baffled after hearing Curio’s report. Why did Alan lure Ark to the battlefield if not to attack him? If it wasn’t to lure him then why did the doppelgangers transform into him and exposed themselves? No, this was a good chance so where on earth was Alan?

‘Something.....it must be something obvious. What’s going on?’

-Kuaaaa!

Ark worried about it while attacking the monsters coming from all directions. Although the confused Cyclops were still running wild, sooner or later they would end up being surrounded by thousands of demons.

“Jeez, what are you doing? This is the middle of enemy territory! Don’t just stand there!”

Shambala shouted as he fought the encroaching demons. However Ark couldn’t easily decide his next move. Ark couldn’t grasp Alan’s scheme for removing him for the fortress so he couldn’t easily move.

‘It is imperative that I determine Alan’s location!’

“Curio, search the 60th floor thoroughly using satellite surveillance mode. Find Alan!”

Ark shouted when he suddenly heard.

-Ark-nim, there is a surprise attack!

Boramae's voice shook his eardrums sharply. Ark flinched and looked at the fortress as he asked.

-Surprise? Surprise attack? What does that mean? The demons crossed the walls from outside?

-It isn't from outside. From behind.....is it the Avenger guild!

-Avenger? That.....

What did that mean? The Avengers suddenly appeared in the fortress out of nowhere? But Ark was surrounded by demons and couldn't properly determine what was happening inside the fortress. The situation wasn't calm enough for him to ask.

"Everybody gather around me!"

Ark shouted after hearing Boramae's words. At the same time, he used Demonic Distortion and dozens of cursed japtem flew from his bag. Ark used Demonic Distortion and swapped with the group of demons gathered by the wall. Even if he wanted to move inside the fortress, there were no demons inside for him to switch with. So Ark and the detachment suddenly appeared in a fierce battlefield.

"Damn, there's nowhere to place my foot. Torrential Sword!"

"Maintain defense formation and retreat to the fortress. Riposte!"

Ark, Shambala and the soldiers pushed back the demons and retreated to the fortress. But he couldn't see the Avengers that appeared inside the fort anymore.

"Boramae, what the hell happened?"

Ark ran up to Boramae and asked. Then Boramae answered with a puzzled expression.

“It happened so suddenly that I don’t understand the situation myself. Those guys appeared behind the fortress and headed towards the Hell Door. I belatedly discovered them but couldn’t chase after them with so troops because of the demons’ attacks. And Ark-nim also left some troops to guard the Hell Door so.....”

“Where did those guys appear?”

“T-that is.....”

“Did they appear inside the fortress? Do you know how? The 60th floor is a valley! It is impossible to come here without climbing over the walls! Even if they used some inconspicuous method, hundreds of Avengers crossing the walls should be noticed.....”

Ark shouted when he winced and shut his mouth. Then he looked around with stupid eyes before running somewhere. He rushed to the place where the Cyclops had thrown the giant maggots and examined the bodies of the dead Kurak. A desperate light filled Ark’s eyes as he saw the dead bodies.

“This is.....!”

Ark murmured as he bit his lip. The demons all-out attack, the doppelgangers transforming into Alan to lure Ark out.....the whole situation was for only one purpose. To allow Alan and the Avengers to infiltrate the fortress! That’s right. Like Ark said before, there was no reach for Alan to reach the Hell Door unless he passed through the fortress. The walls had various devices on them while the sky was blocked by the metal lattice. And even if some monsters crossed the walls, the Hell Door was defended by 400 elite members. There was no way for even an ant to enter the Hell Door unless the fortress fell. At least that’s what Ark thought. But there was a gap. No, to be exact a gap had been made. That’s right. This battle had proceeded under Alan’s scenario from the beginning.

‘The attack on the fortress wasn’t to prevent us from building it up.’

That was what Ark had thought at the time. When Ark saw the strategy of the Cyclops and Kurak, he just thought that Alan was impatient. In fact, the strategy of throwing the Kurak into the fortress wasn't meaningless. It dealt damage to the fortress and the Kurak also shaved away some of the soldiers' health.

"But the Kurak's main purpose is different."

"Main purpose?"

"The Kurak was used to secretly transport Alan and the Avengers."

Ark muttered sharply.

"Transport? What.....huck! D-don't tell me.....?"

Shambala who was looking confused suddenly flinched as he saw the Kurak. He ran to the one of the Kurak and wielded his dagger. The side of the Kurak was split and revealed a large, empty space. The stomach of the Kurak was large enough that 10 adult men could sufficiently hide in it.

"Unbelievable.....!"

Shambala finally understood the situation. The Kurak were huge demons dozens of metres large. And they possessed the habit of swallowing their prey. Alan used this habit of the Kurak. Alan had divided the Avengers into units of 10 and put them inside the Kurak. Then the Cyclops had thrown the Kurak inside the fortress. Ark thought Alan was trying to damage the fortress and deliberately lured them to the rear of the fortress. The rear of the fortress.....right on the doorstep of hell.

However, there was a checkpoint Alan and the Avengers still had to cross before they could enter the Hell Door. It was the 400 elite members that Shambala had selected to protect the Hell Door.

Around 50 Kurak had fallen into the fortress before Ark had neutralized the Cyclops using Confusion. If he calculated that there were 10 in each Kurak, that was 500 Avenger members. If those many enemies launched a surprise attack then they could penetrate the elite crew. However, Ark's group was inside

the fortress. If Alan's group conflicted with Ark then they would receive the concentrated attack of 1,500 people. If Alan died in battle then the situation would end. That was why Alan lured out Ark using the doppelgangers.

"This is Alan's plan. He knew that the doppelgangers would be discovered by Curio after the Cyclops became confused. Then I would obviously move out. And I would take some troops with me to deal with the doppelgangers. Meanwhile they can take care of the elite troops guarding the Hell Door.....dammit!"

Ark cursed and kicked the Kurak's body. That's right. While Ark and Shambala were dealing with the doppelgangers, Alan and the Avengers had strolled right through the door into hell. It was like the Trojan Horse in the myths.

"Damn, then what did we do all that work for?"

"What happens now? We should pursue them immediately....."

Boramae started calling for soldiers.

"I will only pursue them with Shambala and the selected detachment."

"Huh?"

"We've only been able to stop the 6,000 monsters with 2,000 troops because of the fortress. The moment we give up the fortress then we'll become the demons' prey. We have to defend the fortress until the very last moment."

This was also a part of Alan's plan. Even if Ark read Alan's movements, he would only be able to mobilize 400 people. Alan's plan to tie up the ankles of the soldiers had worked.

"Looking at the Kurak, Alan should only have 500 people. If I catch him before he floods the Hell River then I can win against those numbers. Shambala and the detachment will enter the Hell Door with me.

Boramae, this is Alan's plan so the attack from the demons will strengthen from now on. Defend this fortress unless I give any orders."

He didn't have time to consider various situations any more. Ark immediately led Shambala and the detachment through the Hell Door. It had been 5 minutes since Alan and the Avengers pass through the Hell Door. Yet when he had previously entered the Hell Door, he hadn't seen any device to make the river flood. He hadn't seen anything at the crystal temple that he destroyed.

'Then the device which will flood the Hell River must be hidden somewhere. Hopefully Alan will wander around trying to find the device.'

This was Ark's only hope. But even those expectations were crushed when he passed through the Hell Door.

"What on earth?"

Ark muttered with a foolish expression. When Ark first came here, the Hell River had been right in front of the entrance. But now the Hell River in front of him was divided in half just like Moses divided the Red Sea. And a long passage stretched in the centre of the divided Hell River. One word floated in Ark's head at the sight of the divided Hell River.

"Hell Stone!"

The Hell Stone was the mysterious artifact Alan had seized from Shangri-La. According to the information from the History Crystal, the Hell Stone had the power to control the Hell River. The Hell Stone parting like the Red Sea was due to the Hell Stone.

".....Is it already too late?"

"The Hell River hasn't flooded yet!"

Shambala tapped Ark's shoulder while he was making a hopeless expression and ran down the passage. Ark followed Shambala using Sprint and muttered.

“Yes, it’s still.....not over yet!”

So they ran down the passage created by the split hell river. When the passage widened, an even more amazing scene appeared in front of them. At the end of the Hell River was the black crystal temple! The black crystal temple had been replicated at the end of the passage. And before the crystal temple.....

“Alan!”

Ark cried out as he rushed down the passage towards the crystal temple. The person standing before an altar turned around.

“..... It’s too late.”

Alan, the man wearing black armour muttered. Timosi and the 500 Avenger members were gathered around Alan. But Ark and Shambala weren’t looking at them.

“W-what is going on?”

One of the soldiers muttered with a puzzled voice. Ark flinched and took a step back as he saw a huge object in front of Alan.

Dukong, dukong, dukong, dukong.

A huge black heart was in front of Alan. It was a huge heart at least 10 metres in size! The heart was placed on the altar that was carved in the shape of a beast like an offering. The crystal temple vibrated with each pounding of the heart. Ark’s group was 100 metres away and they could clearly feel the vibration. Ark gazed at the heart warmly before beginning to talk.

“You figured out my purpose and came here. But the heart is already in my hands.”

“Heart? Your purpose is the heart?”

What was he saying? Alan made an absurd expression after seeing Ark's bewildered look.

"What? You didn't know about the heart? Then.....aha, you thought I came all this way just to flood the Hell River and submerge Nagaran. Kukuku, what silly behaviour. I overestimated you. I thought you've changed but you're still just a little bug trembling for money. Well, okay. I will step on the bug and kill it."

"You're still chattering on. As you said, I don't know your purpose. But I'm not interested. If you're going to keep on talking about your purpose then that will change. Talking like that is a big mistake."

Ark smiled and muttered. In fact, Ark had thought Alan's purpose was to flood the Hell River. Then it would've been the end if Alan arrived at the altar first. But if Alan kept on talking about the heart then it changed. The heart that was 10 metres large was more like a structure than an item. In other words, a user would be unable to put it in their bags. The fact that Alan was watching the heart meant he couldn't place it in his bag. If Alan's purpose was to flood the river then he would've already achieved it. However, it would be more difficult if he wanted to seize the heart. It meant Ark just had to snatch the huge heart.

'If I stop him from getting the heart then I can prevent the river from flooding!'

That was the reason Ark recovered his spirit. Then Alan giggled and said.

"I know what you're thinking. But didn't I already say it? You're too late."

At the same time, an intense glare occurred behind Alan. And intense sparks spread over the huge black heart and it disappeared. Ark, Shambala and their group couldn't understand what had happened. Wormer who was watching from behind ran out and shouted.

"Ah! T-that.....that's mine? It is my quantum transmitter that was located at my secret base!"

That's right. The device hidden behind the heart was the quantum machine that Wormer invented. The quantum machine had moved the heart somewhere else. But how did Alan get his hands on the transmitter? The answer was simple. Ark and Wormer had trapped Alan in the underground base. When

they visited the base again later, Ark and Wormer found that all the inventions were smashed. The thing they hadn't considered was that Alan smashed all the inventions to hide that he stole the quantum transmitter.

'That's right. Alan ignored the troops and headed straight to the heart because he had the quantum transmitter. Damn, is he going to flood the Hell River now?'

Ark considered the situation and quickly shouted.

"Everybody, the target is Alan! Kill Alan!"

"I said it was too late."

Alan said as Ark and Shambala flew towards him. Alan laughed and laid a black stone on the altar. Then the altar made of bone split in half and revealed a lever. Alan pulled the lever and smiled.

"Kukuku, this is my gift to you. Your ruin."

A red warning message appeared in front of Ark.

-The Hell Altar has been used!

The Hell Altar is the device to flood the Hell River. When the device is used, the magic of the Hell River will go out of control and will gradually rise. It can't be stopped until the whole area is flooded.

"You, you bastard!"

"This degree is enough for now."

Alan made a playful expression and struck the altar with his sword. Then cracks like spider webs spread on the Hell Altar.

Ku ku ku ku, ku ku ku ku!

The river that was split in half started shaking. It was the sound of destruction in Ark's head.

"T-the Hell River is moving....."

The soldiers looked around with confused eyes. As soon as the Hell Altar broke, the river surrounding the temple started changing. It fluctuated like it was a living creature. No, to be exact it was the humans and beasts floating on the Hell River.....the transparent existences convulsed as they rubbed against each other. The hundreds and thousands of souls suddenly opened their eyes. At the same time, tears of blood started falling from their eyes. It was an eerie scene from a horror movie! An unearthly scream rocked the area.

Kkiyaaaaaah, kkiyaaaaaah!

It was a sharp scream which pierced the eardrums!

"Kuaaaak!"

"Huk, what the? This sound?"

"Ugh! It feels like my head is breaking!"

The soldiers moaned and blocked their ears after hearing the scream from the Hell River. But they couldn't block out the sound. The scream from the Hell River made their brains feel like it was going to explode. Therefore Ark, Shambala, the soldiers and even Alan and the Avenger members screamed from the shock to their brains. All the people around the crystal temple fell into a state of panic as 'it' began. Millions.....the screams that burst from incalculable number of souls turned into a huge shockwave.

Kwa kwa kwa kwa, jjajjjajjang, jjajjjajjang!

The soldiers were thrown back onto the ground from the enormous invisible power. The shockwave caused cracks to spread on the pillars and floor of the temple. However, that was just the beginning. The Hell River started to vibrate. It started to tremble like pudding. When the screams continued, it started to shake and gradually became bigger like a surging tsunami. And a huge whirlpool was produced with the crystal temple in the centre.

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

“The temple is rising!”

One of the soldiers moaning on the ground muttered. His words were correct. He couldn't sense it clearly inside the crystal temple but it was rising. It was like a huge raft floating back and forth in the centre of the swirling Hell River.

“The Hell River.....it is flooding.....”

Ark muttered with a foolish expression. The situation became when he looked at the rising temple. The Hell River was like the floodgates to a dam blocking a huge river had been released. At this speed it would fill the hell immediately. And the place the Hell River was heading towards was the only exit, the Hell Door. No, it was the secret dungeon, Silvana and then Nagaran. It was the true meaning of ruin.

“Now it's all over.....”

Ark looked at the Hell Altar with a blank expression. The Hell Altar was the ancient device which controlled the Hell River..... Despite all his efforts, the altar had been triggered. And it was broken. That's right. That was important. The trigger had been broken. Now all Ark could do was watch as the Hell River flooded Nagaran.

‘Wait?’

It was at that moment. Ark who was struggling in a sea of despair felt a spark of light in his head. Ark quickly looked around him. Thanks to the shockwave, his group was scattered all over the place. The shock wave didn't do any damage but they were also in despair from witnessing the Hell River flooding. However Ark wasn't looking for them.

'Where on earth is he? Ah, there he is!'

Ark eyed a prone body on the ground near a pillar. Ark immediately rushed over and shook the body while shouting.

"Wormer!"

"Ugh, don't shout! It feels like my ears will break!"

The lump of flesh.....Wormer shouted angrily.

"I don't have time to talk. Did you see the Hell Altar?"

"Hell Altar? That thing?"

Wormer looked at the altar split in half. Ark nodded and said.

"Can it be repaired?"

That's right. This was the method Ark came up with. The altar had been activated but Silvana wasn't submerged yet. This was the lowest layer of the secret dungeon. The Hell River was out of control but didn't he still have time before it left? Then what if he could seal the altar back up? He might be able to stop the Hell River from going out of control. The problem is that the altar had been destroyed in hell right away! Ark had thought everything was ended.....too many incidents happened in a short time that he could hardly think. Broken things could be repaired. This was the idea that passed through his head. And didn't Ark have a great mechanic with him? But Wormer looked at the Hell Altar and shook his head.

“I don’t know. I can’t imagine the type of mechanism that could control the Hell River.”

“Huh? Then?”

“But.....”

Wormer took out a spanner and laughed.

“The altar that Alan broke is nothing but a huge switch. So the altar is just a mechanical device. If I repair the broken circuits and replace the gear then it should be enough to fix it. Well, it is possible for me.”

‘That’s it. Then there is still hope!’

Ark asked with eager eyes.

“How long will it take?”

“I can’t know until I examine it myself.”

“Then hurry up!”

“Understood. But can you really stop the Hell River if I repair the altar?”

Wormer’s question reminded him about the warning message that appeared. In fact, Ark had thought everything ended when the Hell Altar was triggered. But the warning message said that the magic had gone out of control and wouldn’t stop until the whole area was submerged. In other words, wasn’t there something to stop the magic from going out of control? That’s right. The warning message let him know that something could stop the Hell River.

“It can stop. No, it’s going to stop!”

Ark exclaimed in a decisive voice.

“That confidence can’t appear out of nowhere. Okay, I’ll display my capabilities.”

Wormer smiled and ran towards the altar.

If Wormer repaired the altar then the problem of the Hell River flooring would be solved. However, he had to leave it to Wormer.

‘Then the work I have to do.....’

Ark pulled out his sword and turned around. Wormer needed time to repair the altar to stop the flooding. The Hell Altar was just a mechanical device. And the Hell Stone was the artifact that controlled the Hell River. It was the black stone Alan was holding in his hand. Alan and the Avengers were also scattered because of the shock wave. While Wormer was running to the altar, Alan laughed and raised the Hell Stone.

“I can guess what your idea is. Do you want this?”

Ark grinned and nodded.

“I want it. I will cut your neck to get it.”

“Didn’t you confirm the other day that your skills aren’t enough?”

“Why don’t we confirm it again?”

“I would love to but.....”

Alan stared at him before shaking his head.

“I don’t have time to play with you today.”

“What?”

“Ark, that is.....the magic charger!”

Wormer shouted from the altar. Ark’s eyes caught Jewel quickly moving towards Alan. No, he saw the object Jewel was holding. It was a large cylindrical object made with a silver metal. Ark had previously seen it in Wormer’s secret base.

If Ark’s memory was correct.....

-Magic Charger

Type: 3rd grade invention

Design and Production: Wormer

A type of battery that can store magic energy. It can store 5,000 MG at one time. If all the MG is consumed then it is possible to charge it and use it again. This magic charger was made using Wormer’s specific standards.

“Damn, that’s mine. These thieves!”

Wormer grinded his teeth together. However, Ark didn’t care about who was the owner of the charger.

‘MG battery! Don’t tell me.....?’

Panic spread on Ark's face as he remembered the information about the magic charger. In fact, Ark had come up with the way to stop the Hell River by assuming that Alan couldn't use the quantum transmitter again. Once the quantum machine was used, it needed to be charged with MG to be used again. Therefore the quantum transmitter became like scrap iron after it was used once. That was Ark's reasoning. However, the situation was different if Alan had a magic charger.

"Why do you look surprised?"

Alan grinned and muttered.

"Didn't I say it? The reason I came here was to look for the heart as well as flooding the Hell River. The heart is ours now. Did you really think we wouldn't come prepared to use the quantum transmitter twice? Did you expect that I would flood the Hell River and die along with you? I don't regard my life that cheaply."

Alan raised a finger. Jewel smiled and placed the charger into the quantum transmitter. Sparks flew from the antenna attached to the top of the machine. Alan was going to disappear with the Hell Stone! Ark instantly used Sprint and shouted.

"Wait. You bastard, are you running away?"

"The dog who lost the fight is barking louder."

Alan muttered with a smug expression. Timosi hooked her arms with Alan's and shouted.

"Bye. You guys can enjoy swimming in the Hell River!"

The sparks gradually intensified as they revolved around Alan and the Avengers. At the same time, Alan and the Avengers turned into light and was sucked into the antenna. Ark's eyes darkened as he saw the scene from dozens of metres away.

"U-unbelievable.....!"

Alan had run away. And there was no method to chase after them.

Jiiiiiiik, kwa kwa kwa kwa kwa kwa!

500 lights spun towards the ceiling. This was the moment Nagaran was confirmed to be 'ruined.' No, just as he thought that.

.....Kwa kwa kwa kwa kwa kwa!

"What, what the?"

Ark's eyes widened as he heard a thud. Alan and the Avengers had been successfully converted to quantum matter. And they were moving somewhere through the antenna. At this point, there were no problems and everything was as it should be. Yet some unexpected developments occurred. The beam fired from the antenna hit the ceiling and bounced around several places. After bouncing around for a while, the light was sucked back into the antenna. There was a huge flash and sparks rose on the quantum transmitter. The sparks soon turned into Alan and the Avenger members.

"What is this?"

"Ugh, this is?"

Ark watched with bewilderment as Alan appeared on the ground again. The reaction of the Avenger guild members and Wormer who was the inventor of the quantum machine was the same. No one could understand what had happened. Jewel looked at the quantum machine and murmured.

"Strange. It says that the frequency of the receiver wasn't caught!"

"What do you mean? Didn't the heart disappear without any problems just now?"

"I don't know.....the machine must be broken if the frequency can't be caught."

“What? Broken? The inventions I made won’t break so easily!”

Wormer shouted angrily after hearing Jewel’s words. The quantum transmitter was a machine which allowed spatial movement. Once the receiver was placed then the quantum material would be transmitted along that frequency. If the frequency wasn’t caught then the spatial movement would be cancelled. He didn’t know why the frequency of the receiver placed beforehand wasn’t working. The reason wasn’t important to Ark. The important thing was that Alan had failed to disappear!

“Summon Demon, Curio! Go!”

“Okay, Dark Dash!”

Curio shot forward like an arrow. He flew dozens of metres and crashed into Alan’s head while he was looking at Jewel.

The crash to the skull caused a dark fog to cover his eyes. The sudden blow would cause him to be in a ‘blinded’ state.

“Ugh! T-this bastard...!”

Alan belatedly noticed and swung his sword. However, swinging his sword randomly wouldn’t work against Curio.

“Bah, take this! Nostril destruction!”

Curio avoided the sword and lowered his body. Then he extended both arms and thrust his fingers into Alan’s nostrils. The blinded Alan couldn’t imagine the situation and fell to the ground from the attack.

“Kekekeke. That’s what you get for throwing me to Infector.”

Curio laughed as he removed his fingers from the bloody nose. The sight of a bat taking down the cocky Alan would stay with him for at least 10 years. But Ark didn’t have time to enjoy the spectacle. When Alan fell to the ground, the Hell Stone had been thrown into the air and bounced off a rock.

“Sprint!”

“S-stop him!”

Ark sprinted forward with his eyes locked on the Hell Stone. The Avenger members belatedly realized the situation and got up before rushing towards Ark. They formed a wall in front of him while some of them threw their bodies and tried to tackle Ark.

“Dark Dance!”

Ark used Dark Dance to avoid the assault. When he faced the human wall, he used their knees and shoulders as a springboard to jump towards the Hell Stone.

“Matanyi Shooter no. 1 Devil Penetrating Arrow!”

Timosi who had been watching from afar shot an arrow. However, the goal of the arrow wasn't Ark. The arrow struck the Hell Stone. Thanks to that, the Hell Stone was thrown in the opposite direction.

“Kuack, dammit! Curio!”

Ark quickly commanded Curio to retrieve the Hell Stone. Meanwhile Timosi was continuously rotating her body and unleashing a barrage of arrows.

“Bah, that stupid bat! Matanyi Shooter no. 2, Devil's Chasing Arrow!”

“Hik! Why does that Dark Elf keep on shooting arrows at me?”

Curio screamed as the arrows flew towards him. Curio flapped his wings and turned but the Devil's Chasing Arrow was an arrow that pursued until the target was hit. The arrow moved like a guided missile towards Curio's butt. Just before it hit Curio's butt!

Syu syu syu syu, chaengkang!

A sharp metal impacted with the arrow. Another dagger also flew towards Timosi who was unleashing another arrow. Timosi did a handspring and avoided the arrow.

“That abnormal bastard.....!”

“You stupid female, I won’t let you freely run wild.”

Shambala raised his dagger and muttered. Thanks to Shambala distracting Timosi, Curio was able to reach the Hell Stone.

No, just as he was about to grab it.

“Hehehehe, I will grab this.”

“Blast of Wind!”

Jewel raised his staff and shouted. A gust of wind wound around Curio and pushed him back several metres.

“Ugh, that damn magician!”

Curio glared at Jewel. However, Jewel was looking elsewhere. It wasn’t just Jewel. Ark and Shambala’s group had 400 people. Including Timosi and Jewel, the Avengers had 500 people. The 900 pairs of eyes were focused on one spot.....

Tuk, tuk tuk, degul degul.

The Hell Stone was rolling around the floor of the crystal temple. The fate of Nagaran depended on that Hell Stone! Everybody here knew how important the Hell Stone was.

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

Meanwhile, the Hell River was being larger and even more unstable. The walls of the hell wasn't able to withstand it and was cracking. However, none of the soldiers were looking at the Hell River anymore. Their bodies tensed as they started at the place where the Hell Stone had fallen. After a moment, the Avengers and the soldiers simultaneously moved towards the Hell Stone.

"Waaaaahhhhh!"

"Grab the Hell Stone!"

"Don't allow them to get the Hell Stone!" The 900 soldiers scattered all over the place all flocked towards the Hell Stone. One Avenger that was closest threw his body towards the Hell Stone and shouted.

"I got it! The Hell Stone....kuack!"

But the Avenger's words instantly turned to a scream. Dozens of soldiers had jumped onto his body. Therefore the Avenger was crushed like a frog and missed the Hell Stone. The soldiers threw their body, was crushed, another one threw their body and the situation repeated many times..... In the end, the 900 soldiers were layered on top of each other like a small mountain.

"Kuack! Out of my way!"

"Where is the Hell Stone?"

"Dammit, is somebody stepping on my face?"

"Who is touching my ass?"

Screams emerged here and there from the pile of bodies. They were so jumbled up that nobody could distinguish friend from foe. And there was no need to verify it. They only came for one thing, the Hell Stone! The soldiers crowded and stepped on each other to find the Hell Stone.

‘Hell Stone, Hell Stone....find it!’

Ark also dug into the huge mountain of flesh to look for the Hell Stone. However, it was impossible to even distinguish the ground from the bodies.

Ssak ssak ssak, ssak ssak ssak ssak!

Then Radun suddenly flicked his tongue and moved somewhere. He crawled through the many piles of soldiers.

‘Yes, Radun’s Stalking! Radun has found the Hell Stone!’

Ark watched gleefully as Radun continued moving. After a moment, he could finally see the Hell Stone stuck between some soldiers. Ark was 3 metres away from it. However, it felt like 300 metres away thanks to the crush of soldiers. He could only depend on Radun to get the Hell Stone. No matter how mixed up the soldiers were, Radun was determined to make it through. Radun’s unique flexibility allowed him to reach the Hell Stone little by little.

‘Well done Radun. A bit more.....a bit more.....!’

Just as Radun was almost at the Hell Stone.

Kwa kwa kwa kwang, kwa kwa kwa kwang!

There was an abrupt roar and the whole temple shook. The soldiers flew all over the place from the impact. And the Hell Stone that had almost entered Radun’s mouth flew somewhere.

“D-dammit!”

Ark cursed as he rolled along the ground. Then he raised his head and stiffened. Ark wasn't the only one with this reaction. The 900 soldiers scattered all around also looked surprised.

.....It was collapsing. The Hell Door that had been blocking the Hell River until now was collapsing. The Hell River had strong curse magic and the Hell Door couldn't withstand it any longer. When the Hell Door collapsed, the crystal temple was caught up in the swirl of water. The walls surrounding the Hell Door also started to collapse. With the only barrier gone, there was nothing stopping the Hell River anymore. The continuously rising Hell River would be pushed outside the Hell Door.

Now the countdown to Nagaran's ruin had begun.