

Ark Vol 24 C 3

Chapter 3

ACT 3 Charge, Charge, Charge!

“Huck, huck, huck!”

Someone was breathing roughly in a dark space. The man’s eyes, nose and mouth was covered with a cloth as he dug above him with a shovel. How long had he spent just shovelling? Blisters would appear and disappear until he learnt the ‘shovelling’ skill. After that, his skill understandably became more sharp and natural. He breathed accurately as he shovelled between bricks! Any ordinary wall would’ve collapsed after being dug at with a sharp shovel for a long time. But the wall the man was digging at didn’t even look like it had a dent in it.

“Damn, just open even a little bit!”

The man growled angrily as he slammed the shovel into the ceiling. Then a pile of dust poured down.

“Cough, cough.....t-this is.....cough.....”

The dust covered man coughed and withdrew. He took off the cloth and revealed his face. He then gazed towards a place where dozens of people were gathered. However, they were just staring blankly. The man stared at them angrily.

‘Damn, why? They’re messing with the wrong guy.’

“Hey, maknae (youngest). Why don’t I hear you shovelling?”

One of them turned to him and asked. The man’s face crumpled before he replied.

“There’s some dust falling down hyung-nim. I will start again right now.”

“Work hard. Your hyungnims are bored.”

“I understand.”

The man held the shovel and started working again.

‘Dammit, I was called the ghost of the police agency and now I’m a criminal’s minion.....’

The man thought angrily as he lifted his shovel. The police agency’s ghost!

That’s right. The man’s identity was none other than the special agent of the cyber division, Isyuram. But why was Isyuram shovelling at the ceiling in a dark room? Isyuram had to go back a few months in order to explain. In fact, the situation for Isyuram completely changed after obtaining the video. It was expected that Isyuram would finish the infiltration investigation at this stage. He thought the full scale of the organization would be revealed after the police detectives watched the hideout 24 hours a day. However, most of the criminals were surprisingly cautious. The organization members at the hideout never once made contact with Jepeteu. He couldn’t discontinue the investigation until Jepeteu was caught. Therefore he had immediately resumed the investigation after helping Ark recapture Silvana. However, he needed to join the criminal organization to get the information he wanted. After the video was obtained and a subordinate capture, the criminal organization had become even more careful. Therefore Isyuram had gone through some painful efforts over the past few months to gain their trust.

‘.....Every day was humiliating.’

A sigh naturally flowed from Isyuram’s mouth as he thought about it again. That’s right. Every day over the last few months had been humiliating for Isyuram. Once again, getting information about Jepeteu wasn’t easy unless he was in the organization. Furthermore, quite a few members of the organization still saw Isyuram as an ‘outsider.’ So Isyuram knew that he needed to gain the trust of the organization first. After reuniting with Jepeteu again, Isyuram suggested that he wanted to join the criminal organization.

“Hmm, you want to formally join our organization?”

“Yes. I’ll like to formally enter the organization so that I can sincerely call you hyungnim.”

“Well, your intentions are admirable.....”

Jepeteu scratched his head as he gazed at Isyuram. Then Garam who believed that Isyuram was a friend of the heart interrupted.

“Jepeteu hyungnim, Isyuram is a totally reliable guy. Don’t you know after seeing hyungnim in the meantime? A guy like this won’t be easy to find. And Isyuram has already revealed his address and phone number to us. I know that hyungnim is worried but how can you be when he made his address and telephone number public?”

“.....I guess so.”

Jepeteu nodded. No matter how much they acted together in the game, there was a difference between being a friend or an organization member. The criminal organization didn’t accept anyone who didn’t disclose their personal information. So Isyuram had told Jepeteu his address and phone number in advance. Of course, Jepeteu didn’t really have his address and phone number. That information was something fake that the police agency had authorized. Anyway, giving his address and phone number solved any doubts.

“That idiot was arrested last month so we’re down one member. But it is impossible to explain everything in detail. We can’t just accept an outsider so easily.”

“If hyungnim calls then I’ll drop everything to come running.”

Isyuram quickly replied to Jepeteu. This was exactly what he wanted. If he met Jepeteu outside then wouldn’t everything end? However, it wasn’t resolved that easily.

“That is a bit..... Okay, then let’s do this. Life in the organization isn’t as simple as you think. You might think that we just play the game and earn money but it’s not like that. We need professionals with specialized knowledge. I have to confirm whether you can adapt to life in the organization.”

“T-then?”

“I’ll be watching and if you adapt within one or two months then I will formally accept you into the organization.”

‘That’s it. Soon I will know the information about the organization!’

Isyuram inwardly cried out with joy at Jepeteu’s suggestion. However, that didn’t take long to change to screams.

“Hey Isyuram. Give me some water.”

“Hyungnim is covered in dust. Hurry and get it off me.”

“What are you doing? If hyungnim gets out a cigarette then you should automatically offer a fire.”

After Isyuram became a probationary member, the attitude towards him changed by 180 degrees. When he was a colleague then they treated him with a small amount of respect but once he joined they treated Isyuram like a minion. It was to educate Isyuram about his ranking in the group. Therefore Isyuram started the life of a minion. He had to be resolute if he wanted to succeed in the infiltration investigation. But it was difficult once he actually experience it. He was sent on various errands, cursed at and was beaten up under the excuse of training. There was a few times where he wanted to give up the infiltration in order to kill all of them.

‘Patience, by patient. This is a job. I have to endure it. If I get angry then I’ll lose.’

No matter the humiliation, Isyuram endured it all without a single cry. And his efforts were rewarded after a few months.

“Well, I’ve been watching and you really are quite useable. Okay, if it is this degree then you will fit within the organization. I’ll see you sometime outside in the near future. Then you will formally join the organization.”

He finally had the chance to arrest Jepeteu.

‘Huhuhu, when will he come out? I’ll make him pay for the humiliation.’

He would shut Jepeteu up in a dim room (interrogation) and beat him up. But there still remained one trail for Isyuram. In fact, this time the criminal organization was just killing time in New World. Originally they started New World in order to launder money. However, martial law was initiated in the game so it was difficult to launder money since trade was prohibited and the value of gold also fell on the auction site. Then Takosu made a proposal.

“Hyungnim, shall we excavate a dungeon I found?”

“Excavate a dungeon?”

“It is difficult to go anywhere with the expedition army fighting the demons. But the expedition army didn’t find the dungeon. If we’re lucky then we can gain some items in the dungeon, earn money and even level up. So isn’t it like killing three birds with one stone? Recently there is no income so making a livelihood is difficult.”

“That’s not bad? Where is the dungeon?”

“Yes. I found it in the northern desert a while ago.”

Takosu smiled and replied. The members of the criminal organization didn’t like meeting other players. Well, it was natural since they were criminals. Therefore they were normally in areas that didn’t have a lot of players such as the northern desert in the Sinus Principality. And Takosu had found a weird old castle in one corner of the desert. It was a castle that looked hundreds of years old! Of course, it wasn’t rare to find dungeons shaped like castles in New World. The problem was that he had crossed that area a short time ago and the castle hadn’t been there. In other words, an old castle had suddenly appeared in the middle of the desert in a few days.

“That castle definitely wasn’t there before. Then we might be the first people to enter the dungeon. Hopefully we can get huge shares of profit between us.”

“There’s no need to hesitate. Okay, let’s go!”

The criminals departed towards the castle in the desert. The Sinus Principality was empty of demons thanks to the expedition's victory. Thanks to the expedition army clearing the demons, the criminals arrived at the desert in the Sinus Principality with no problems.

"Now, let's charge in. Treasures are waiting for us!"

Jepeteu shouted and led his subordinates towards the old castle. They were imagining the treasures piled up in the castle.....

But the sense of expectation soon turned to disappointment after entering the castle.

"What? Isn't it empty?"

"Did someone else already enter this castle?"

"Dammit, did we come here in vain?"

The expected treasures and monsters inside the temple couldn't be seen.

"But I don't see any traces of other people."

"Then where are the monsters?"

"Perhaps there is a secret passageway leading towards the real dungeon?"

"Hmm, I have heard things like that before. Somethings it might look like there is nothing but there is actually a secret passage. Okay, go search."

The criminals started to search around the area. After a moment, one of the warriors examining a wall shouted.

“Hyungnim, there is a secret passage here!”

“Oho, indeed.....does the secret passage lead to the basement? Somehow I can smell treasure.”

The criminals dived into the basement.

-Grrrrrrr!

.....It was a mistake. They were surrounded by a huge number of demons once they entered the basement. The basement was filled with intricate passages and the number of demons that appeared wasn't easy to face.

“Huck! H-hyungnim, we can't stop these guys!”

The criminal group wasn't that high levelled thanks to the Demonic War. Therefore the criminals couldn't face the demons flowing out.

“D-damn. Let's run!”

Jepeteu hurriedly screamed. However, the castle basement had a complex structure like a maze. Furthermore, only a few of the criminals wanted to go explore the dungeon. In addition, the demons had blocked the exit so they couldn't escape from the dungeon. They wandered around lost while avoiding the demons and soon reached a critical condition.

“Ugh, we'll be wiped out at this rate!”

“Hyung-nim, this way!”

Takosu shouted while standing in front of a small stone room. The group quickly ran into the room and Takosu operated the switch. Then a thick iron door fell with a roar.

“W-we lived!”

Now the group could take a break. But after sighing with relief, they realized that the situation wasn’t over.

“Wait? How are we going to leave?”

The group instantly became distressed. The door was able to block the demons. But they were stuck in the stone room at the same time. If they opened the door to leave then the demons would just kill them.

“Do we have to just die?”

Jepeteu worried about it for a while. Then Garam shook his head with a serious expression.

“But didn’t we register our resurrection place in the south of the Sinus Principality? The expedition members are crowded there right now. If we resurrect while being chaotic then everything will be ruined. We will also drop equipment since we are chaotic.”

“But we can’t just rot here!”

Jepeteu shouted angrily. Then Takosu offered another idea.

“Wait? This is a stone room on the 1st floor underground. And weren’t there no demons upstairs?”

Then if we bore through the ceiling then we should be able to escape the demons.

“Bore through the ceiling? Is that possible?”

“The entire ceiling shouldn’t be made out of stone. If we take off a few stones from the ceiling then the rest is likely to be dust. Isn’t it better to take a little time to escape than to die?”

“That makes sense.”

Jepeteu nodded and agreed. Thus the party was determined to dig through the first floor ceiling. Naturally, the task of digging through the ceiling was left to the maknae Isyuram. This was the story of Isyuram’s painful fate. Isyuram had been shovelling for five days. However, the ceiling was still strong and the group could barely climb halfway. Isyuram’s blood pressure had already crossed 200 from being a minion and now he had to keep on digging.

“Hey maknae, when will you hyungnims be able to see the sun?”

‘Dammit, they’ll see. Sooner or later I’ll make it so that they won’t be able to see sunlight for their entire life.’

“I’m working hard hyungnims!”

Despite grinding his teeth fiercely, Isyuram replied with a fake bright expression. Then he pushed all his anger into the ceiling and hit it with all his strength.

Kwa kwa kwa kwa, kwa kwa kwa kwa!

There was a tremendous roar and the stone room started shaking. Cracks spread throughout the stone room and stones fell from the ceiling like hail. The criminals screamed and ran around the room.

“Wah! What, what, what the?”

“Isyuram, what did you do?”

“Are you trying to bury us?”

“Ah, no, I didn’t mean to.....”

Isyuram who avoided the stones tried to explain but suddenly stopped. He suddenly felt some wind flowing in from somewhere. There was a stone room underground so there was no place for the wind to enter. Then? Isyuram hurriedly raised his eyes.

“The ceiling is.....?”

That’s right. Isyuram had finally dug through the ceiling! After 5 hard days of shovelling, half of the stones in the ceiling had fallen down. Only a thin slab with cracks in it appeared after the ceiling had fallen. The wind was coming through those cracks from the outside.

“That’s good! Now we can get out!”

“W-what?”

Jepeteu and the criminals gathered after hearing his words. They shouted with joy after confirming the cracked ceiling.

“Waaaaah Isyuram! You finally did it!”

“Okay, then let’s leave! Isyuram, break through the ceiling!”

“Understood!”

After experiencing a range of emotions over the last 5 days, Isyuram gripped his shovel tightly and nodded. He looked at the ceiling with eyes that showed his every humiliation and shouted.

“Haaayaahh, shoryuken!”

Isyuram had become one with the shovel and attacked perfectly. The shovel crashed into the ceiling. After a short time, Isyuram's anger filled shovel finally drove through the ceiling.

"Ugh!"

He suddenly heard screams from outside.

Kwa kwa kwa kwa, kwa kwa kwa kwa!

There was a huge roar and the ground shook up and down.

"The no 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 defense towers have overloaded!"

"Shangri-La is shaking excessively. It won't hold on much longer!"

The engineers from the Magic Institute shouted desperately. Wormer frantically manipulated and modified several things before yelling.

"Not yet, not yet! That Shangri-La that I converted isn't that weak!"

"Even if you say so....."

"Shut up, shut up, you're noisy! Press on!"

Wormer made Shangri-La continue rushing. In this situation there was no other choice. But no matter how hard he looked, the present situation was hopeless.

"Is it really impossible?"

Ark bit his lip and looked at the Truth Crystal. The state of Shangri-La shown in the Truth Crystal was terrible. After colliding with Rwigenberg's shield, the sparking towers were overloaded and emitting black smoke. In such a situation, Shangri-La.....

"That damn old man!"

Ark glared at the old man standing near the altar on Rwigenberg.

"The black souls of those born in darkness....."

The black magician changed the spell and waved his dagger. That's right. The present situation was because of that black magician. Shangri-La's defense ward should exceed the shield's recovery rate according to Wormer's calculations. In fact, the defense ward had actually melted Rwigenberg's shield and had been slowly entering. But that damn black magician had sacrificed the lives of the demons to amplify the recovery rate in that specific area. Therefore the recovery rate of the shield became faster than the damage from the defense ward. The result was shown in the Truth Crystal.

"What is that guy's identity? Why is he doing nonsense like this?"

Bread asked with an absurd expression. Then Timosi glared at the Truth Crystal and muttered.

"He is the Archbishop of the dark church, Maseutyu."

"The archbishop of the dark church?"

"He is the guy who dragged Alan into darkness and betrayed him."

Timosi replied though clenched teeth. Ark opened his mouth to reply to Timosi.

"The black magician is starting the ceremony again!"

"If the recovery rate of the shield is amplified again then the defense ward won't be able to hold on anymore!"

An engineer from the Magic Institute screamed. Ark flinched and gazed at the scene of the magician wielding his dagger in the Truth Crystal. Like the engineer said, if the shield was amplified even more then everything was over. Shangri-La who rushed in would be shattered and would disappear without a trace.

'If we can't stop that black magician.....'

Ark's mouth dried up. Then Bread who had been watching the Truth Crystal shouted.

"Why are we just letting the old man do what he wants?"

"You idiot, do you have a brain at all? Please think for a moment. Do you think we want to do nothing? If we can't penetrate the shield then how can we kill the old man?"

Redian cursed after hearing Bread's words. But nobody else could say anything to Bread. This was a serious situation.

'Do we have to just sit and watch as Shangri-La is destroyed?'

Maseutyu's sacrifice ritual was almost over. The lives of thousands of demons would be consumed and the shield recovery rate boosted.

".....Great powers of darkness, I offer you these fallen souls.....!"

Maseutyu's spell was completed. No, the moment it was about to be complete. Something metallic suddenly appeared beneath Maseutyu's feet. And it hit exactly between his legs?

"Ugh!"

Maseutyu who was reciting the spell shrieked. At the same time, all the men watching through the Truth Crystal simultaneously let out a groan.

“Ow!”

A pain that only men could share! Although he was the enemy, they could all sympathize with the enormous pain. But now wasn’t the time to worry about the pain. He didn’t know what had emerged from Maseutyu’s feet. However, it was still good.

“The ceremony has been suspended!”

“The amplification speed of the shield is sharply falling!”

Ark turned his head after hearing Wormer and the engineers’ words.

“Charge!”

“I know. Increase Shangri-La’s defense wards to the maximum output! Attack!”

Wormer manipulated the buttons at a frantic speed and shouted. Shangri-La’s defense wards emitted an intense lightning attack at the same time. Shangri-La’s attack started to overwhelm the shield and it began to dissolve. After a while, the surface of the shield became as thin as paper as Shangri-La pushed inside. And it felt like the shield had broken as Shangri-La steadily advanced.

“Oooh.....!”

Maseutyu couldn’t understand what had just happened. If he had completed the sacrificial offering then Shangri-La would be turned to dust. However, he had suddenly been hit ‘there’ by a tremendous force. Maseutyu’s spirit automatically flew away to Andromeda. Any man would react the same as Maseutyu.

“What on earth.....?”

Maseutyu who was rolling around on the ground finally recovered slightly and determined what had hit him.

“.....Shovel?”

Maseutyu murmured in a dumbfounded voice. That’s right. Maseutyu had been hit ‘there’ by a shovel that had emerged from the ground. Why the hell would a shovel emerge to hit ‘that’ place? Maseutyu couldn’t understand the situation. Then the ground where the shovel emerged from started to shake. And a man slowly crawled out.

“Eh? Where are we?”

The man covered in dust looked around restlessly. The man was Isyuram who had been concentrating on shovelling for 5 days.

“Isyuram, what the? Get out of the way!”

Then dozens of other people crawled out from the hole. It was Jepeteu and his group of criminals. How on earth did Isyuram and the criminal organization emerge from Maseutyu’s feet? The reason was simple. In fact, the Red Man had hidden the Rwigenberg in a corner of the northern desert in order to hide it from the expedition army. Rwigenberg had been buried beneath the sand until only the castle was left exposed. That’s right. The old castle the criminals found was the castle built on Rwigenberg’s back. That was the reason why the criminals couldn’t find any treasures or monsters inside the old castle. The Red Man owned the property so it wouldn’t have any treasures or monsters. The demons were gathered in the basement so they didn’t spot the criminals until they entered the basement. However, no one would’ve imagined that the criminal group would have entered the stone room and be trapped inside. The Rwigenberg had flown to Kwarian shortly afterwards in order to start the resurrection ceremony while Isyuram was digging through the ceiling. When Shangri-La had collided with Rwigenberg, the impact had caused part of the ceiling to collapse. But Maseutyu couldn’t know such matters.

“Y-you guys..... What on earth? Why that place.....did you come out?”

Maseutyu grinded his teeth together as he glared at them. He had been hit in 'that' place by the shovel.

"What's with that old man?"

"Why is he glaring at us?"

"Why is the mood turning uncomfortable?"

The wanted criminals muttered as they stared at Maseutyu.

"Y-you guys....what you did.....how dare.....I'm going to kill you!"

Maseutyu said angrily as he chanted a spell.

"Ack! That old man is a magician!"

"Damn, what the hell is going on? Who is that guy and where is this place? Why is everything strange?"

"We'll check it later. Just kill that old man for the moment!"

The criminals hurriedly pulled out their weapons.

"Impertinent.....I'll crush you like mayflies....huck!"

Maseutyu flinched and stopped chanting his spell. Then he recited another spell at tremendous speed and disappeared.

"Eh? Warp magic?"

“What the! Why is he running away?”

“Huck! H-h-h-hyungnim!”

Takosu turned his head and stuttered with a sickly expression. Jepeteu and the other criminals also turned their heads and paled.

“W-what is going on?”

A huge land mass was reflected in the eyes of the criminals. A land mass at least 1 kilometre in size was rushing towards them. That’s right. It was Shangri-La who had rushed through Rwigenberg’s shield after Maseutyu’s spell was interrupted. Maseutyu had seen it and escaped using Warp.

“Huck! S-scatter!”

“I-it’s too late.....”

Kwa kwa kwa kwa, kwa kwa kwa kwa, kwa kwa kwa kwang!

The criminals’ cries of distress were buried under the loud roaring sound. Isyuram who had played a vital role in interrupting the ritual and allowed Shangri-La to penetrate Rwigenberg’s shield. However, they were rewarded by being squished between Shangri-La and Rwigenberg. This was the moment when another history originated in New World.

Kwa kwa kwa kwa, kwa kwa kwa kwa, kwa kwa kwa kwang!

Shangri-La was a 1 kilometre land mass while the Rwigenberg was several kilometres wide. The two objects with an astronomical mass collided in the air. The whole space shook and a roaring sound swept through the battlefield. The shock wave spread and the airships and demons fighting moved like they

were fighting on stormy seas. The aftermath around the crash was crazy. More than half of Shangri-La had been destroyed by the collision. Cracks also spread on the white tower because of the impact.

“Danger!”

“Owaaaaah!”

The heroes’ descendants and the engineers fell and rolled all over the place. However, Ark grabbed the control device firmly and stared at the Truth Crystal.

‘Unbelievable.....!’

Ark moaned as the dust disappeared and the scene was revealed on the crystal. After melting the shield with the lightning attack, Shangri-La had crashed into the side of the Rwigenberg. More than half of Shangri-La broke from the impact. It was natural. This was a massive conflict.

“Ah ah ah, S-Shangri-La.....the legacy of the ancient prophet clan.....”

“Damn, the Shangri-La that I meticulously converted.....my aerial fortress that is a man’s dream.....”

The prophet clan and Wormer murmured as they yanked the hair on their heads. The problem was that only Shangri-La was being smashed. Was it due to the shield? Or the defense of Rwigenberg’s shield transcended imagination? The exact reason was unknown but Rwigenberg was still fine. Of course, it had collided with Shangri-La directly so the top part of the building had been crushed. Rwigenberg was also gushing blood from a cut in its side. But when looking at Rwigenberg’s huge figure, it was just a scar. Despite Shangri-La being smashed into its side, the Rwigenberg was still flying. Ark thought it was slightly disappointing that the Rwigenberg didn’t crash.

‘At least the defense shield is pierced!’

He had still achieved his purpose.

"No. 1 system out, no. 2 system out, no. 3 system out."

"All the circuits connected to the Ark of Creation have stopped working."

"The buoyancy of Shangri-La has been destroyed. We're going to fall within a few minutes!"

The voice of the Magic Institute's engineers shook his ears.

"Damn, there's no room to breathe. Everybody escape from Shangri-La!"

"To where?"

".....There's only one place we can go."

Ark looked at the Rwigenberg through the Truth Crystal and replied. That's right. There was only one place where Ark's group could go. If Shangri-La collided with the Rwigenberg and fell with them still in it then the mission would still be a failure. Even though the altar was hit, it hadn't been completely destroyed. There was a huge amount of magic concentrated on the Rwigenberg so the shield would slowly recover. Of course, the shield would be weaker than before but it would be impossible to shoot down the Rwigenberg within the time limit. There was only one way left!

"We just have to prevent the resurrection ceremony directly!"

"Stop it directly? I like it. In the end I wanted that as well."

Bread grabbed his greatsword and laughed.

"There's no time. Quickly!"

"Good. Let's go!"

Each of the heroes' descendants took out their weapons and followed Ark. Then Lariette and the prophet clan shouted.

"Wait, I have to take the Ark of Creation!"

"That's right. I almost forgot. Where is the Ark of Creation?"

"It's in the underground power chamber."

"Underground power chamber....."

Ark narrowed his eyes and muttered. He forgot because the Ark of Creation had been used as a power source for Shangri-La but it was one of the key weapons in the Demonic War. It couldn't be allowed to be destroyed with Shangri-La. There was no guarantee what would happen to it if it stayed within the underground room.

'This is the middle of enemy lines.'

The Ark of Creation can stop the effect of the Demonic Sphere of influence within 10 kilometres! He couldn't give up such an artifact when he had to plunge into enemy lines. Of course, he couldn't use it while the Ark of Creation was a power source for Shangri-La. But now the circuits were destroyed so it couldn't be used as a power source anymore.

'The reason Shangri-La hasn't fallen immediately is because it is stuck in the Rwigenberg. The Ark of Creation would be no use if left inside Shangri-La's power room.'

Ark hurriedly organized the situation.

"Shambala and Bread, you take the others and escape towards the Rwigenberg first. I'll go and retrieve the Ark of Creation with Lariette and the prophet clan."

“Understood.”

Shambala and Bread led the White Tiger clan and the Magic Institute’s engineers outside. At the same time, Ark headed towards the underground power chamber with Lariette and the prophet clan. He saw the Ark of Creation shining brilliantly on an altar and took it.

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

Then the power chamber shook violently and the walls cracked. Shangri-La’s collapse quickly accelerated.

“Hurry!”

The prophet clan holding the Ark of Creation quickly ran out after hearing Ark’s words. The situation was even more situation when they went outside. The ground had split here and there and sparks were flying up everywhere. The forest surrounding the white tower was being devastated by the flying sparks. It was a scene like an earthquake and wildfire was happening at the same time! The air was clogged with smoke, making it difficult to breathe.

‘But we have to go forward!’

“Lariette-nim, please increase the fire resistance!”

“Holy Breathing which stops the flames!”

-Your fire resistance has increased thanks to ‘Holy Breathing which stops the flames.’

“Everybody stay behind me!”

Ark shouted as he jumped into the forest of flames. An extravagant hot wind hit them but it was somewhat bearable thanks to Lariette's magic. They didn't receive that much damage even if the flames reached them. But it wasn't just flames threatening Ark.

Ujik, ujik, kwadududuk!

The trees rapidly collapsed because of the flames.

"Ack, Riposte! Riposte! Riposte!"

Ark blew back the trees using Riposte as he ran through the forest. After running around for a while, the Rwigenberg finally appeared in several hundred metres in front of him. He also saw the forms of Shambala and Bread at his destination.

"Nearly there. Exert yourself a bit more!"

Ark shouted when he saw the prophet clan who was carrying the Ark of Creation gasping for breath. There was a violent sound and the ground suddenly became unstable. Ark felt something strange as the ground trembled. It felt like he was riding an elevator. Ark's face stiffened as he moved his gaze.

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

The piece of land stuck in the Rwigenberg had started to collapse. Shangri-La was deprived of its support and was starting to fall from the Rwigenberg. Ark had felt the strange sensation of falling.

'Damn, I'm too late!'

Panic appeared on Ark's face. He was 100 metres away from the Rwigenberg! 100 metres more and he could escape. Of course, he could escape the crisis if he rode on the transformed Pendragon. And he could somehow help a few people. However, Lariette and the prophet clan were 11 people. He wouldn't be able to save the remaining 9~10 people. Furthermore, the prophet clan needed to activate the Ark of Creation so he would have to give up on that.

‘Although I can’t save the Ark of Creation or the prophet clan, I should at least rescue Lariette.’

“Burning Soul, transform into Pendrag.....”

Ark was about to shout for Burning Soul when he suddenly closed his mouth. Shambala, Bread and their group who had arrived on the Rwigenberg had been surrounded by demons. While a lot of demons had died in the collision between Shangri-La and Rwigenberg, there were still at least 2,000 remaining. Furthermore, Bread and Shambala’s group only had 100 people. However, Ark felt the perfect chance in that desperate situation.

“Demonic Distortion!”

Ark’s bag opened and black equipment flew into the sky. It formed a large pentagram and exploded before a message window appeared.

-You have used Demonic Distortion.

The released demonic energy from the equipment will distort the space, changing the location of allies and enemies.

Please designate an enemy target when changing locations.

“The demons 100 metres away!”

That’s right. It was Demonic Distortion! At the same time Ark, Lariette and the prophet clan were sucked into a vortex. They were sucked into thin air and appeared on the Rwigenberg. And 12 demons were transferred to Shangri-La and fell along with it.

“Lariette-nim!”

The prophet clan surrounded Lariette and the Ark of Creation and started to chant a spell.

“Saran naburan heiradu naradu.....”

“Dirudo baguran herena boradu baram.....”

When the prophets started chanting their spells, a light immediately began to flow around the ark. The Ark of Creation was starting to activate.

“The Ark of Creation! Exterminate them before the Ark of Creation is triggered!”

A voice ordered from the rear of the demons. It was the hooded archbishop Maseutyu. Just before Shangri-La crashed into the altar, he had used Warp to escape. The 2,000 demons shrieked and flocked after hearing Maseutyu’s order.

“The White Tiger clan will form a defensive barrier around the Ark of Creation!”

After the defense formation was formed, Ark took out the Feather of Whispering. And he sent a whisper to JusticeMan.

-JusticeMan ajusshi, what is the situation now?

-We saw Shangri-La fall. Has the shield been completely destroyed?

-We penetrated but it is closing up again.

Ark replied while watching the shield gradually close up.

-The altar has been destroyed and the recovery rate has suffered enormous damage so it should be completely closed up after 10 minutes. It will be impossible to penetrate again within the time limit. Now there’s only one chance. Don’t worry about supporting the airships and just send all the flying boat squadrons here as quickly as possible.

That was the reason why Ark sent the whisper to JusticeMan as soon as he landed on the Rwigenberg. It was to send the flying boat squadrons inside before the shield closed up. Of course, if the flying boat squadrons entered then the airships wouldn't be guarded anymore. But now wasn't the time to worry about the airships. The most important thing was stopping the resurrection ceremony! Even if that meant the expedition forces had to be wiped out.

-Understood.

The flying boat squadrons obeyed his order as soon as the communication ended. They turned sharply and began to rush towards Rwigenberg's shield. The demons then flocked towards the rushing flying boat. The airships fired the Spear of Thor to cover them but it couldn't stop all the demons. 100 flying boats were instantly shot down by the demons. However, the flying boat squadrons didn't fight back. They just headed towards the hole in the shield which had narrowed to a few dozen metres.

"Charge towards the Rwigenberg at top speed!"

Buaaaaa! Buaaaaa!

After a while, the flying boats led by JusticeMan and the rehabilitation members poured in through the shield. However, not all the flying boats could enter. About 1,000 flying boats entered before the shield was closed off so the others re-joined the airships.

"All formations line up! Bombard the demons on the ground!"

JusticeMan flew over the Rwigenberg and shouted. Then the 1,000 flying boats fired their guns towards the demons. It was a bombardment from the sky! The demons that had been attacking the White Tigers and the heroes' descendants started to scream. There was a huge flash of light from behind the defense formation at the same time. The image of a mysterious goddess appeared and opened her pure white wings. At first it was a small and soft light until it spread and exploded like a big bang.

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

At the same time, an information window appeared in front of Ark.

-The Ark of creation has been triggered!

The holy power of the creator has been exercised. However, it is just the holy magic contained in the Ark of Creation. Therefore the Ark of Creation can't completely purify the Demonic sphere of influence. It is only possible to purify the sphere of influence within 500 metres.

* Saint Knight's special ability 'Sanctuary: Saint' has been triggered.

Thanks to the tremendous magic concentrated on this place, the Ark of Creation couldn't exert its full force and was limited to 500 metres. However, it did deal 1~2,000 damage to all demons within 500 metres. Plus all allies recovered 1~1,000 health, had their abnormal statuses released and their morale increased by 50%! When the Ark of Creation was used after the bombing, the health of the demons quickly fell. On the other hand, Ark's party recovered 1,000 health.

"Now charge!"

Ark rushed with the White Tiger clan and Shambala. JusticeMan and the 1,000 flying boats also began to attack the demons. With the bombardment and Sanctuary, the demons who received the attacks quickly collapsed. The demons were no longer opponents for the expedition. The demons rushed back and forth while being slowly destroyed. After the demons were almost wiped out, Maseutyu clicked his tongue and turned around.

"Che!"

"Do you think I will miss? I'll get revenge for Alan! Matanyi Shooter no. 1, Devil Penetrating Arrow!"

Timosi who had discovered Maseutyu shot her arrows. Maseutyu used Warp to avoid the damage and hid his body.

"Leave the rest of the demons to the flying boat and chase after him!"

Ark shouted as he belatedly discovered Maseutyu. If he left Maseutyu alone then there was no telling what black magic he would use. After a moment, it was possible to find Maseutyu in front of a square building among the rubble of other buildings. However Maseutyu ran into the building before they could reach him. The building was the size of a soccer stadium. The dome over it had weird magic characters carved on it. He thought the red light shooting down from the sky had been concentrated on the castle. But it was actually hitting the four spires around the dome. He didn't know what the red light concentrated on the dome was but that wasn't important now. The power to resurrect the Dark Lord was concentrated on that dome! Then it wasn't necessary to consider the dome's identity.

"That is the place where the Dark Lord's resurrection ceremony is taking place."

Ark instantly examined the blinking warning message in the upper right corner.

-Somewhere in the darkness of the world, the Dark Lord's resurrection ceremony has begun!

There was 12 hours remaining until the resurrection ceremony was complete.

'Now I don't need to worry about time anymore. When combined with the 1,000 flying boats, the 1,200 troops should be enough to stop the ceremony.'

The dome where the ceremony was taking place was the size of a soccer stadium. The size was only around 10 metres. Even if it was entirely filled with demons, there would only be hundreds of them. The 1,200 troops should be sufficient to take care of those numbers.

'But isn't something strange? Why aren't there any demons around the dome where the resurrection ceremony is taking place?'

"Ark, demons are flocking from the Rwigenberg!"

JusticeMan and the flying boat squadrons flew by and shouted. He looked away from the dome and raised his head.

“The numbers?”

“I can’t grasp it accurately but they should be in the thousands.”

“.....There’s no other choice.”

Ark muttered as he eyed the dome. He already found the building where the resurrection ceremony was taking place so there was no time to deal with the demons. He couldn’t expect any more reinforcements. The best way to prevent any more troops is to march into the dome and stop the resurrection. Of course, they would still be surrounded by thousands of demons even if the ceremony was stopped. But if he stopped the resurrection ceremony then it would be the victory of the expedition army. JusticeMan ajusshi, please land the flying boat squadrons. Enter the dome before the demons arrive!”

“I understand. Everybody land!”

JusticeMan and the flying boat squadrons landed in front of the dome. Then someone ran towards Ark from one of the ships that landed. The girl running with her long hair waving behind her was Roco.

“Ark oppa!”

“Roco? Why are you here?”

“Why did I come? Of course it is to help Oppa.”

Roco quickly grabbed Ark’s arm and send a sharp look towards Lariette. Then Lariette looked at Ark before sighing and glancing away. Ark also sensed Lariette’s attitude. The strange atmosphere between the two girls had appeared again. However, Ark shook his head and got rid of those thoughts. The strange atmosphere between Roco and Lariette was because of Ark. Ark knew that he had to put his

emotions in order. He needed to fully realize his feelings before clearing up the situation with both Roco and Lariette. However, now wasn't the right time.

"Roco, don't get distracted."

Ark removed Roco's arm and spoke in a serious voice. He looked at all the soldiers gathered in front of the dome and shouted.

"Now it is the final battle. All soldiers, enter the dome!"

"Waaaaaaaah!"

Ark led the White Tiger clan, 1,000 of Nagaran's allied forces and the heroes' descendants into the dome. Just as they passed the entrance of the dome. The magic characters carved on the wall starting shining and there was the heavy sound of something falling.

"W-what is this?"

Confusion emerged from Ark's mouth. Once again, the dome was just the size of a soccer stadium. It was only 10 metres in height yet an unimaginable wide space appeared in front of them once they walked in the entrance. The inside of the dome was a strange chaos space. All sorts of strange objects were floating in the dark space. Complex paths also appeared all over the place. Some were twisted like pretzels and some doors floated in the sky. Other places were also upside down or had mushrooms growing from it. Then he heard a voice in the darkness.

"This space embodies the spirit of the great dark god. Traps beyond your imagination are strewn all over this maze. You guys will never be able to get out of here."

'Maseutyu! That guy lured us into a trap?'

Ark looked around with a dumbfounded expression. There was a ringing sound and the information window appeared in front of him.

-Idea Maze

You fell for the scheme of the archbishop of the dark church and have been trapped in the maze. The maze reflects the thoughts of the dark god who made it. The common sense of New World isn't applied in this space. Everything that exists in here moves according to the will of the dark god.

If you want to escape from the Idea Maze then you should find the hidden truth. But existences that you haven't experienced yet are present in this dark maze. Those existences created by the dark god won't approve of intruders.