

Ark Vol 3 Chapter 1

Hear ye, hear ye!

The Overlord, Cat has returned! The traitor and thief, random leecher, has been banished from the Kingdom! We will resume our normal operations!

(What? I've been labeled as a traitor? How can this be? This is incrimination! Incrimination, I tell you. Well, it's true that I did steal a couple of chapters to please my fellow leechers, but traitor?! Never! Since I've already been wrongfully accused, it won't be a problem if I were to make it to be the truth. I shall overthrow the corrupt Overlord and place myself on the throne. Just you wait and see Cat. Be afraid. Be very afraid. MUUHAHAHAHAHA!)

The Silver Arrow

Ark was just a commoner who sighed when the monthly utility bills came. Though they said the value of money wasn't the same as it used to be because of the soaring prices, for a commoner, hearing the word "million" was still enough to make them cry out. "Millions" in gold were swimming before his eyes.

[T/N: The author includes a pun here, where the Korean word for million, pronounced "ugk," is like a sound of surprise, like "ah!"]

"If you add the Magic Institute, then doesn't it mean all 3 Great Guilds are making a move?"

"You might even receive a Magic weapon."

"I just dropped by Giran to clean out my bag, but to think I would get such a quest! Jackpot!"

The grander the scale of the quest, the larger the rewards.

But Ark was worried instead. 'This isn't something to be needlessly happy about. It just means there's going to be more competitors.'

Even if one received the event quest from a different guild, the basic quest contents would be the same. In the end, the EXP and contribution points would have to be split with hundreds of users. As a result, the contribution he could earn would be reduced, so the reward would also inevitably fall. Granted, it would be easier to succeed in the quest with more people, but it wasn't something to be needlessly happy about.

"There are only about 30 minutes until the airship arrives now. It may be small, but the Magic Institute has prepared some supplies for the people participating in the militia. Please come and get them in order. We couldn't fully prepare since we were short on time, but it will be helpful."

The Magician handed out supply boxes one by one. Upon opening, there were several items to be seen inside the box.

Intermediate Recovery Potions (3)

Highly Nutritious Biscuit (10)

Letter Movement Orb (Event Item)

"Yes, Captain!"

"Alright, turn the Silver Arrow 30 degrees to port, the destination is Jackson!" Ordered the white-bearded captain, with a voice heavy with sleep.

Simultaneously, the air stirred on both sides of the airship as it moved and steadily changed direction. The nose pointed towards the southwestern Jackson territory!

"Quickly! The Warrior and Merchant guild militias left long ago. If we arrive late, the Silver Arrow will be a laughing stock. Set sail at top speed!"

Roaaaar... BOOOOM!

A roar burst from the 4 magic engines; befitting its name, the airship shot away like an arrow.

"Woaaaah!"

The airship has entered the influence area of Dark Fog, which was created by an unknown magical power!

All players in the influence area will receive a Vision penalty and Stats will decrease by 10%. However, players of the Dark Attribute will not receive the penalty.

"Dark Fog? Damn, stats are reduced by 10%?"

The people who quickly checked their stats spat out curses.

Ark also checked his stats. But thankfully, the penalty didn't apply to him, as he had the Dark Attribute. Rather, his stats increased from receiving the darkness bonus.

With the 20% stat boost from his profession's characteristic and the additional 10% from the 'Gift of Darkness' he'd learned in Giran, and since other users' stats had been reduced by 10%, Ark's stats were 40% higher than them!

'This is a good sign from the beginning. Is this Dark Fog the reason why the Magic Institute called them the Army of Darkness? If so, does it mean I get to keep my bonuses for the whole duration of the quest? Hehehe, it's at times like these that I feel like it was a good decision to choose the Dark Walker profession.'

Ark reveled in a strange sense of superiority. But while Ark was grinning, the surrounding situation was becoming quite serious. As the Dark Fog enveloped them, the crew became busy.

"Captain, we are losing power!"

"No need to panic. It's probably a move of the enemy to slow down reinforcement. Heh, it's laughable to try and stop Silver Arrow with a fog of this level. All hands to battle stations!"

"Yes, prepare Silver Arrow for battle, ready the Spear of Thor."

With a heavy clank of metal, the gunports all over the airship opened. Dozens of gun barrels rolled out from both sides. But what caught Ark's eyes was the enormous gun barrel that emerged from the gunport at the front.

Made of a silver metal, it was a gun shaped like a trident!

This was what the Magic Institute NPC had boasted of so enthusiastically, the Silver Arrow's main armament, the Spear of Thor.

As the airship readied itself for combat, the Dark Fog became even thicker. Since the visibility worsened, it was hard to make out objects even a few meters ahead.

"Turn on all the defense lights!"

As the countless lights on the airship turned on, the ground was illuminated. It was then that the faces of the users gathered on the deck became ashen with shock.

"Gasp, are all those monsters?"

"Holy shit, do we have to fight them to finish the quest?"

There was an enormous number of monsters covering the ground underneath. It was hard to get an accurate number since they were far away, but there looked to be at least a thousand!

They also looked different from the monsters they had faced until now. Most of them were black humanoid monsters, while a few giant monsters reaching a few meters in height were also mixed in.

As the light hit them, they shot arrows and threw rocks.

"They are attacking!"

"Damn, you bastard!"

Users who fell were torn apart by the swarming monsters even before they hit the ground. The players' faces turned gaunt. It wasn't because of the gruesome deaths of their comrades. This quest was cut from a different cloth than the other quests. Not only did you fail the quest if you died, but you couldn't even login for three days.

As the users were seized with fear, the captain snorted, "Pathetic squirts, there's no need to be afraid. The pride of the Magic Institute, the battle airship Silver Arrow, is not so weak as to shake from such a weak attack."

"Captain, all guns are fully charged."

"Yes, ready all guns for firing! Aim 30 degrees to the ground!"

With a mechanical whirr, the small guns and Spear of Thor pointed to the ground. The trident-shaped barrel moved into position with a buzz. A blue aura seemed to gather at the spear tip as it sparked. Then, it suddenly shook violently as an azure laser shot forth.

Flash! BOOOOM!

A huge thunderbolt struck the ground. It enveloped the ground with blue light with a radius of several hundred meters. The sparks spread along the ground, striking all the monsters in the area with massive electric damage.

"GRAAWR!"

Monsters directly hit by the bolt exploded instantly, and monsters hit by the sparks extending along the ground lost considerable health. Even monsters that seemed to be considerably high leveled were staggering, thrown into critical condition. Afterwards, the small guns also showered them with electric magic. The monsters who were close to death collapsed in disorderly groups.

A fearsome AOE attack!

The captain let out a cheer as he shook his fist. "Uhahaha, how's that?! You arrogant bastards. This is the pride of the Silver Arrow, the Spear of Thor!"

'Th-that's awesome!'

The area was devastated by a single blow. Although it was probably just a pre-arranged scene, the visual impact was incredible.

They were anxious when the monsters first attacked, but if the airship's force was at this level, it appeared this quest was just a simple event. However, it wasn't like there was nothing for the users to do.

"The Spear of Thor takes 3 minutes to recharge. Until then, anyone who is capable of long-distance attacks, please provide cover from the deck."

"Right, now is not the time to just sit around!"

"This is the effect of a blessing. The chance of status effects went down."

- Contribution points have risen. Contribution +15.

"The hell? They're nothing much?"

"I was nervous for no reason since they were new monsters."

"Dammit, did the bastards attack forcefully to aim for this?"

That was so, the land monsters were bait to draw the airship's attention, it was a plan to take out the airship with flash bombs during the time it took to recharge the thunder gun.

"Begin evasive action at full speed. All guns, Archers, and Mages concentrate firepower to intercept the flash bombs. We can't get hit by even one!"

The magic engines were soon at full power and the airship turned quickly. At the same time the guns and users loosed skills at the flash bombs like crazy. As they did so, the attacks from the monsters teeming on the ground became fiercer.

Several users collapsed from the arrows and rocks surging from below. But there was no time to look back at them. It was a situation where you could explode in midair with the ship at the drop of a hat.

TOOONG, BOOOOOM!

Under the onslaught of countless attacks, one of the flash bombs finally exploded in midair. An immense explosion and shockwave burst out and greatly rocked the airship.

The users who were about to unleash skills on the second flash bomb fell to one side. In addition, the aimed guns also fired electric magic at the wrong spot.

Decisive mistake!

"D-damn, all crew prepare for impact!"

BANG! BOOOM!

The flash bomb rammed into the stern of the airship and exploded.

The airship started to sway violently from the enormous shock. It was then that the two magic engines on portside burst into flames and combusted away.

The airship lost balance and started to spin like a top.

'ACK, just what the hell is going on?'

Ark quickly grabbed onto the railing. However, the players who weren't able to take action were flung up and swallowed up by the dark fog. Without a doubt, they were forcefully terminated.

"Shut off the magic power!"

As the captain shouted thunderously, the engines were all shut off. Thankfully, the spinning stopped, but the airship quickly lost altitude. The exploding of the engines had greatly damaged the hot air balloon, which maintained buoyancy. Since they also lost thrust on top of that, the impending result was obvious.

A crash!

Despair rose on the users' faces as the same thought occurred to them.

"It's the end!"

"Why the hell is there a quest like this? Damn it!"

"No way, if we jump from this high, chance of death is 100%!"

'Stupid idiots, you still don't get the situation?'

Meanwhile, Ark was climbing the rope ladder to the hot air balloon. It was inevitable for the airship to crash. If so, then there was no time to complain. Wasn't it more important to find a way to reduce the damage by even 1%?

'Considering the structure of the airship, the people on the deck will take the most damage.'

However, the place that would take the least damage was the hot air balloon on the top. This was a world made based the Middle Ages. There was no way the balloon would be full of helium. It would just be full of hot air. In other words, he could use it as a cushion.

There were quite a few players who had the same thought; dozens of people were clinging to the balloon while waiting for the right timing with nervous expressions.

CRAAASH!

After a few seconds, the airship collided into the ground. With an earsplitting roar, an enormous shock crushed them. The hull crumpled instantly as the crew and users went flying in all directions. The hot air balloon also burst like a bubble and deflated.

'Now!'

It was then that Ark threw himself off.

A peculiar sense of floating ensued as the ground rushed up before his eyes. Ark curled up and rolled forward.