

Ark Vol 3 Chapter 5

Operation Bomb the Scorch Cannons

Hero Assembly!

- Quest success conditions: This quest is split into A and B groups. All players in the defense of Jackson must choose between the A and B group. Upon completion of the quest, all players in the group will be awarded bonus experience and contribution.

- Quest failure conditions: Quest automatically fails if all players are killed during the operation or if they are unable to complete mission within the time limit. Also, if both A and B group fail and the 2 cannons get within range, and start attacking Jackson Castle, then the main quest will fail even if there are still surviving players.

"We will as well..."

After seeing the look in Alan's eyes, the commanders from Platoons 2 and 3 quickly answered.

The young Lord spoke with a shocked expression, "What? Wouldn't that be a problem? If the whole force goes to Group A, then what is Group B supposed to do?"

"Isn't there still the Militia and the Jackson Guard remaining?"

"But the Militia only amount to 20. The Guard is only 30, and even combined they only amount to 50."

On the other hand, Platoons 1, 2, and 3 combined amounted to around 120. Though there had been casualties over two days of battle, their numbers were still twice that of Group B. Moreover, there were up to 300 monsters escorting each scorch cannon. Against that many monsters, all hell would break loose if there was a battle. In such a melee, no matter how sturdy their organization was, the Militia of level 35 players on average would be no help.

Alan answered with a smirk, "That is no concern of mine. They just choose the leader with the higher chance of survival. They don't trust someone who hid in a corner and racked up points with the management with petty tasks."

"But..."

"And rather than catching two rabbits, it should be less burdensome for Jackson as well to organize the forces to ensure that we can succeed with one. After taking care of one, the other shouldn't be hard to get rid of, after all. Of course, Group B is needed, since it would be hard if the enemy concentrated their forces. So, don't be foolish and just buy time until Group A takes care of one scorch cannon and comes to help. You should be able to do that much with 50 people, yes? How does that sound?"

The quest had a high degree of freedom, and Alan had struck its weakness precisely.

The quest said there had to be two groups, but it didn't specify that each group had to take down a scorch cannon. So it didn't matter if one group took down both, and even if they ran out of time and couldn't take down one of them, the quest wouldn't be unsuccessful.

Alan had nothing to lose from concentrating the power to Group A. Rather, it was a method that would ensure him EXP and contribution. Moreover, since the Guard led by Cross were NPCs, they couldn't be controlled by a player's whim, and the low leveled Militia would only be in their way. Therefore, he took the useful Platoons 2 and 3 and left those two for Ark.

'Alan, you bastard...!'

Curses were surging to his tongue. But JusticeMan spat out with a heavy voice before Ark could.

"This young little nipple-sucker talks dirty, how rude."

"What?"

"I get the gist of it from hearing you talk. There is always one like you, living for the taste of superiority. It's hopeless bastards like you that I hate the most."

"Hmph, thank goodness. I was worried the Militia would come crying to ask me to let them into Group A."

"What bullshit. I wouldn't join you even if you asked."

As JusticeMan snorted, Roco also gave him a tongue-lashing. But with no acquaintances among the players, there was no way Ark could sway the leaders of Platoons 2 and 3 anyway. Rather, they seemed to think Ark took the commander position of Group B unfairly, as their looks towards Ark were less than friendly. Thanks to that, Ark had no options.

He had no choice but to face 300 monsters with just 50 troops, half of which were the level 30 Militia.

There was nothing he could do about it, so he didn't want to seem like the troops were dumped onto him by Alan's coercion.

In the end, Ark nodded his agreement. "I understand, I will move out with the Militia and the Jackson Guard."

The young Lord nodded with a troubled expression. "Alright. If you accept it, then I have nothing more to say either. Let's proceed with what Sir Alan said for now. Operation starts in 1 hour. After you're done preparing, go to the Quartermaster. I will have him prepare the goods necessary for this operation."

"Well, yes."

"The Magic Institute's help is absolutely necessary to save Jackson Castle. Will you help?"

"If it's something we can do, then of course. We are alive thanks you, Ark. In addition, we are people who came to save Jackson Castle. As the crewmen of the honorable Silver Arrow, it is our duty."

Jabel answered courageously, as befitting of the brave Captain's subordinate.

'All right then. It's not guaranteed yet, but at least there's some hope now.'

As expected, if you think about it, an answer will come. It was the advantage of a game with a high degree of freedom.

Having found a clue for the solution, he was able to relax a little and think about the situation more deeply.

'But even if I finish the quest, nothing will change in the end.'

Since Alan had swept up all the volunteer troops, that he would finish the quest was already no different from a proven fact. It meant the situation wouldn't change even if Ark succeeded; there would be no change in the rankings.

The best thing that could happen to Ark was if he succeeded and Group A failed. But this was Group A with 120 users at an average level of 80. Even for them, it wouldn't be easy, but there was little chance they would fail.

'I have to strengthen my resolve!'

Ark clenched his teeth. Truthfully, he had made a plan to make Group A fail. To be precise, it was a method he had thought of after meeting Shambala. But then again, if Group A ended up failing and Group B also failed, then the main quest would end in failure.

It would cause Alan despair but everything Ark had done for the past few days would turn to dust.

'However, I can't beat Alan without taking some risks.'

The quest wasn't the problem now. It had turned into a grudge fight with Alan, and that wasn't all. There was even Andel, none the worse for it even after being chewed and swallowed, sticking to Alan. It wasn't a time to hold back for fear of the losses.

'Alan, and Andel. You guys chose the wrong person to mess with.'

Ark made up his mind.

To be willing to use any and all methods, no matter how cheap...

Ark immediately took out his pot in an empty alley. Then he shook out the ingredients left in his bag and started cooking.

Howling Seasoned Chilies

"A magic bomb?"

"Yes, the scorch cannon is encased in a layer stronger than steel. It would take a few hours to break it with your weapons. But if this magic bomb is installed in the machinery, it can turn a scorch cannon into scrap metal in one go. But, there is one thing you have to be careful about. Because we produced it in a rush, we weren't able to put proper safety devices on it. It should last a while, but... if you discover some kind of weird symptom from the magic bomb, throw it away and flee to a safe place."

"Understood."

Magic Bomb

You have learned a new skill.

A new Chain Skill has been registered.

* Current usable chain skills

Riposte (Parry + Counter Attack)

An advanced counter that sharply parries an enemy's attack and counters back.

- Mini boss monster 'Gun Captain Narak' has appeared!

The magic bomb's Mana is going off!

Time left until the magic bomb's explosion: 59 seconds.

Narak's special skill 'Howling' has taken effect.

All players and NPCs in range have been paralyzed by violent Fear that seizes the mind and body for 1 minute!

You are in critical condition, so Indomitable Will and Indomitable Body have activated.

* The set effect 'Adrenaline' has activated. Immunity to Fear has increased by 50% and you have broken free of the effect 'Howling.' Reaction speed has increased by 20%.

- You have dealt a critical hit X2 with Double Critical Chance.

- Your level has risen.

Bloodied Old Key

Written Instructions Stamped with Lord of Darkness Valderas' Approval

Resurrecting Spirit (Magic)

Item Type

Ring

Usage Restriction

Level 70

The ring Narak dredged the last of his magic power to lay a curse on. If any player touches the ring, then the curse skill 'Ultimatum' that Narak invoked will activate. When the curse is released, it can be used as a normal magic ring.

Narak's 'Ultimatum' skill has activated.

By the power of the curse laid by Narak, all dead monsters within a 500 meter radius will revive as Undead for 30 minutes. Revived Undead will harbor great animosity towards living beings.