

## Ark Vol 5 C 9

### Chapter 9

#### ACT 9 The Evil Silrion Arena

'Huumm, it is very vague.

Ark sighed as he messed around with a dark red key. Travelling with JusticeMan and the rehabilitation group, Roco and Sid took longer than expected. Roco took a break when she had to work at her part time job. When Roco wasn't there, the party had to stop to set up a camp while Ark concentrated on hunting, but with Roco they could just ignore the monsters and head straight to Selebrid. The party was finally able to reach Giran on the third day. While Roco was away, Ark reported to the Giran Institute of Magic.

"Hopefully I'm not too late."

Shannen welcomed Ark with a face that indicated he had been suffering a lot.

"Yes, did you find what was requested?"

“The Heartsoul Bead was found.”

“Ooh, is that true?”

“But there is a little problem.”

“A problem? What’s the matter?”

“The Heartsoul Bead broke so the magic is gone.”

Ark explained the situation calmly. He encountered the monsters that had been changed thanks to the beads and it broke during the fight.....he didn't tell them that through the raccoon clan's sacrifice, Nídhöggur was sealed underneath Subarutalp. The reason was that Yggdrasil had asked him to keep it a secret to preserve the stability of the Northern Continent.

Shannen blew out a sigh and looked depressed.

“.....If that was the situation then it can't be helped.”

“I'm sorry.”

“No, it is better to control it before its influence spreads even wider. I hope you don't mind that the Magic Institute will take care of the rest.”

Shannen shook his head in case Ark tried to reject it.

He had done everything to search for the Heartsoul Bead so that there would be no political problems. The Magic Institute was worried about those 'facts.' Nobody knows how the Heartsoul Bead could affect the continent. In the end, the Magic Institute taking responsibility for any disaster caused by the Heartsoul Bead was avoided. However, if the Heartsoul Bead broke then it was a different matter. The Magic Institute was partly responsible for the loss thanks to improper care. But at least they could avoid any of the predictions of the disasters that would have occurred.

“We will bear responsibility for not managing the Heartsoul Bead properly. But the problem for the Magic Institute is the power that had disappeared. For the moment, we will make up an excuse for why we can't show the bead to the royals and the other guilds.....anyway good job. My eyes were definitely correct.”

“I hope I didn't betray your expectations.”

“Of course, rewards and achievements would follow.”

Ark was glad as Shannen continued talking. It was a linked quest that had the difficulty of the quest increased to +C. When the quest was completed, he immediately gained 4 levels. The dissatisfied feeling when he didn't receive any experience for the Lore Quest was quickly solved. However, Ark wasn't satisfied with just that. First the Heartsoul Bead made him search for a group of thieves, before leading him to Kairote and then the Underground World, with a total time of one month spent on it. He didn't go through all that trouble just to increase his level. Ark stared with greedy eyes as he waited for Shannen's next words.

‘Maybe I can gain access to the Magic Institute's treasure house once again.’

However, Shannen's only reward was an old key.

[The Dimensional Key of Magaro (Special)A long time ago, the genius alchemist Magaro left this behind as his legacy. Magaro was a genius that could be counted on the fingers of one hand, despite the long history of the Magic Institute. He was well known for his unique ideas and eccentricities as well as his genius. In his later years, the challenge that the genius was interested in was the organisms that lived in other dimensions. Magaro vanished while hiding the materials he kept at the Magic Institute to study. After that, no one knew his whereabouts. The fact that no one knew whether he was dead or alive was more painful. However, the key was delivered to the Magic Institute under the name of Magaro several years later.]

“What is this?”

“Why, didn’t you previously tell me that you were interested in the biology of your creature?”

It was the time when he was looking for a way to end Snake’s metamorphosis. Of course, the problem was solved and Ark forgot that he had even asked the question. But it seemed like Shannen didn’t forget.

“After that, I looked for materials in the library but couldn’t find anything. Then I remembered about the key. In fact, the Magic Institute doesn’t really have a lot of information related to biodiversity. When Magaro went missing a long time ago, he took all the books related to that subject. If you seek out his laboratory then you can gain the knowledge that you wanted to know.”

“But.....”

Was this a joke? He almost died and suffered to complete the +C rank difficulty quest and the only reward was information about creature biology? Ark made a dissatisfied expression and began to open his mouth.

“It is not just a book. Magaro lived in the prosperous time when magic was flourishing. Yet he was still one of the top five alchemists on the continent. In particular, he was a genius at inventing new ideas. The scrolls and magic sold at the Magic Institute were all made from ideas that he produced. Obviously there would be amazing magical knowledge piled up in his laboratory.”

Ark quickly closed his mouth. He could smell money from Shannen’s words. He had no interest in acquiring different knowledge. But if the legacy of the genius magician in his laboratory was still intact. Who knows what might be in there? With any luck, he could find new magical items or learn a new skill.

“Where is the laboratory?”

“Do you remember how I said Magaro went missing?”

Shannen shook his head and added.

“After that, the Magic Institute gathered many magicians and tried to visit the laboratory.” But after decades of finding no traces, it was abandoned. Even the key has been forgotten by now. Along with the legacy he left behind.”

“.....”

“I wasn’t the only one who decided to give you this key. It is the key to the laboratory where all of Magaro’s research was kept. Although the location hasn’t been discovered yet, it is an important asset to the Magic Institute. It wasn’t easy for my heart to give it to a foreigner.”

“What do you mean?”

“At a meeting of the Magic Institute, Grand Master decided to give you the key. The Grand Master decided that if you solved the robbery case then you would be given Magaro’s key.”

Shannen was the president of the Magic Institute’s branch in Schudenberg, while it had a separate rank for the highest magicians. The chief of the Magic Institute in Bristol was a Grand Master.

“I don’t understand. I’ve never even met the Grand Master. If the key is so important then why are you giving it to me?”

“The magicians have faith in you as a person. They wouldn’t have decided to leave such a thing in the hands of a trivial person otherwise. Why waste thousands of warriors searching for it when you could use just one.”

Isn’t that a separate thing? Ark did not believe those words. People should work for it themselves if they wanted something. However, in mediaeval times thoughts like Shannen’s were common. It was similar to when Arthur became a king after he pulled out the sword from the stone. And New World was based on the medieval times. He could understand Shannen’s rationale on a theoretical basis. Anyway, his words were like the language of a shopkeeper who would say things like ‘these clothes fit you perfectly,’ so Ark nodded his head.

“So this key will give me a clue?”

“Nobody knows. But you are already managed to do impossible things twice. You created a miracle in Jackson and managed to regain the Heartsoul Bead with just a small clue. So we judged that you would be able to handle it and entrust the key to you.”

Then Ark found himself offended from a part of Shannen’s words. Shannen ‘gave’ the key to him a while ago but now it was only ‘entrusted.’ Although the difference was small, he trusted his intuition.

“This compensation isn’t so simple is it?”



Ark asked with narrowed eyes at the smile on Shannen's lips.

"You're insightful as expected. That's right, the key is the compensation for settling my request, as commissioned by the Grand Master of the Magic Institute."

"Commission?"

"Yes, after the genius Magaro disappeared the Magic Institute lost all access to his research. It is a legacy that the Magic Institute can't give up on. So I want to ask you to please look for the laboratory. Of course, I don't know how difficult the work will be. No, definitely not. Although it might be hard to believe, but trust in your talent and development. Therefore, we'll recognize your right to all the goods in the laboratory. How is it?" Will you try?"

Shannen offered him another linked quest. An alchemist was a profession that could create scrolls and various magical items. If it was a genius alchemist, then it could be assumed that there would be many items piled up in his laboratory. If the Magic Institute gave him all the rights to it.....

'It is a quest with a huge reward!'

“I understand. It might take a while but I’ll do it.”

Ark nodded and soon the quest was registered.

[Genius Alchemist’s laboratory. Shannen has told you about a genius alchemist that went missing a long time ago. He has asked you to find Magaro’s laboratory. When he disappeared a long time ago, he left no clues to his whereabouts. This is expected to be a difficult quest. However, if you manage to find the laboratory you will receive the absolute trust of the Magic Institute and receive appropriate compensation.]

When he completed the Heartsoul Bead quest, his friendship with the Magic Institute went up by 100 points. When he rescued the crew of the event quest, his friendship points were raised by 50 for each crew member. Thanks to the 200 points, he received the quest for the genius alchemist’s laboratory.

‘If a friendship of 200 is needed for the quest then I’ll definitely receive compensation.’

“And that Red Man you previously spoke about.”

“Yes, did you find anything?”

Ark fixed his posture and asked again. The Red Man, an unidentified NPC who tried to use the Heartsoul Bead to revive Nídhöggur. It was probably the most important NPC for the Global Exos entrance examination.....the unknown person. However, he was unable to find any clues in the Underground World. Before leaving for Cairo, he had asked the Magic Institute about the Red Man but they had no answers.

“Even the Magic Institute’s information network couldn’t discover anything about his identity.”

‘Of course, it wouldn’t be that easy to obtain information about him.’

While Ark was disappointed, Shannen said something else.

“But the Magic Institute also wants to discover how the Red Man is connected. Although I’ve said it before, for some reason there is an ominous feeling. We’ll continue to collect information using the Magic Institute’s networks. Perhaps we will come into contact with some new information.”

He had received the Magic Institute's promise of cooperation. And Yggdrasil even offered to use its roots that stretched throughout the continent to look for the whereabouts of the Red Man.

He had a huge information network at hand.

'When it is to this degree, my information isn't delayed compared to other users who rely on organizations. It was even a possibility of finding the way to pass the entrance examination faster than other users.'

"While you are looking for the Red Man or Magaro's laboratory, occasionally send me a progress report. We will set up a transfer mailbox in your name."

-Ark has established a 'transfer mailbox.'

It will become more comfortable to receive and send mail and items.

An unforeseen bonus was added. Ark had considered establishing a transfer mailbox. However, it was postponed because it requires 50 gold to register.

'If I had wasted money to establish it I would've cried.'

Anyhow, just like that Ark got a new quest. Before leaving the Magic Institute, he was suddenly reminded of something and asked.

“Do you have any information about the flora and fauna that inhabit the continent?”

“We have a few materials I think. Do you need it?”

“Yes, I think it would certainly help.”

“Really? But the Magic Institute prohibits any material being taken out.....all right. Therefore you can browse and mail a copy to yourself. Therefore you can browse and mail a copy to yourself.”

“Thank you.”

Ark bowed and exited the Magic Institute. He required data on flora and fauna because of the 'Shining Slime Essence' recipe he created in the Underground World. Therefore he had the idea to use the wide information network of the Magic Institute. Anyway after he joined his colleagues again to head to Selebrid, he couldn't help feeling somewhat tricked. It was a laboratory that the Magic Institute had stopped searching for. And the only clue was the key. He also didn't know what to do or where to go.

'Damn. What the? What if he failed to find the lab after all? It would mean that completing the +C rank quest was useless because all he received was the key.....'

"Oppa, what are you doing?"

Then, Roco's voice was heard from in front of him. Ark quickly woke up from his thoughts and made Snake eat the key and then shook his head.

"Eung? Forget about it."

"Do you know how many times I called? Were you zoning out again?"

"No, I was just having other thoughts.....but why?"

“Didn’t you see the system window?”

“The system window?”

“We arrived at Selebrid.”

At Roco’s voice, Ark belatedly looked at the system window.

The map information that was previously in the eastern area had changed to Selebrid.

“JusticeMan ajusshi and the oppas are waiting. Come quickly.”

Without even waiting for an answer, Roco pulled him by his arm. Just.....after being tricked by JusticeMan, he had reluctantly been forced to have a date with Roco. She had become casual with Ark, which was why she was able to interlock their arms. But deep down, Roco’s attention didn’t feel unpleasant. He was dragged by Roco to the hills to the south where the rehabilitation group was waiting.

“Ark-nim. We’ve finally arrived. This is Selebrid.”

Sid pointed down with an overwhelmed face.

Ark cried out without thinking.

“Ah………!”

At the heart of the forest at the bottom of the hill, a huge fort city stretched out. Selebrid…….Indeed, the capital of the Schudenberg kingdom was on a different scale.

Huge white walls reached a height that was 3~4 times that of a commercial city. It was neatly organized into different compartments, with the market, auction house, cathedral, guild office and various other buildings showing a colourful appearance. But above all, the beautiful streamlined shape of the city was what attracted Ark’s attention. It was at the moment that he truly felt like he arrived in the Schudenberg kingdom.

“………We’ve finally arrived.”



It was only one week after they left Cairo.

“Everybody make sure to meet here again after 1 hour.”

The party was scattered in front of Selebrid’s gate.

“Oppa, I have to go to my part-time job. I’ll log on at 11 o’clock this evening.

“Ark-nim, I have report my merchant exclusive quest that I received in Giran.”

Roco logged out while Sid walked to the business district with a jangling noise. JusticeMan led the rehabilitation group to the tavern. The tavern was the place that multiple players used to gather information from NPCs. It was to gather more information about the thieves threatening Lorenzo.

‘I still have some time before the promise to meet Shambala. In the meantime, what should I do in Selebrid?’

In fact, Ark and Shambala had never clearly made an appointment. When Shambala left Jackson, he had one-sidedly left a note to meet at the arena. That was nearly a month ago. Yet Shambala talked about the next month. October hadn't ended but he had arrived after 29 days. Ark had established the transfer mailbox. Then he made sure the NPC confirmed that Shambala was registered. Fortunately, Shambala was registered as a customer of this mailbox. Ark immediately sent a letter to Shambala. The content was that they would meet at the front gates of Selebrid on the afternoon of the 29th.

'There was no reply so it is possible that he may have left for other areas.....'

Ark spent some time looking around.

-Wow, great. Look at those buildings. The people here must be freezing!

Popo exclaimed with shining eyes. He had only lived in the Underground World, so the appearance of Selebrid was an amazing sight for him. In fact, Ark was the same. Selebrid was a different area where level 50~70 players gathered compared to Giran. There were thousands of users, but there were many above level 80 and even above level 100. His eyeballs rolled back. Until now, he had been hunting around Giran so Ark couldn't imagine seeing so many users that were level 100.

'It isn't easy to get past level 100.'

The region also had NPCs that sold high level items. The types and number of stores were less than Giran's, but each sold only high level restricted items! The armour sets that could be sold at the best value in Giran were only sold at the intermediate level in Selebrid. The items on sale by the users were also at least level 80.

"Ara? That's the shoulder!"

Ark stopped walking in front of a flea market stand. Among the armour sets, there were also pieces that could be worn on the shoulders. However, the shoulder items were still not common in New World. The NPC had insufficient awareness so the shoulder piece wasn't treated well, and the drop rate from monsters was also atrocious. In addition, the lowest restriction on wearing it was level 80. It wasn't even possible to see it in Giran. But there was quite a lot of high level shoulder armour gathered.

'Leather shoulder blade. The option was quite good, with a defense of 25.'

When he saw the new equippable item, he automatically swallowed saliva.

'The price is 300 gold. That is quite expensive but it would be a good defensive armour to have.....'

But now Ark was broke. He had used all his money investing in items from Cairo, so he only had a few gold left in his wallet.

'Well, after Sid finishes clearing out all the items then gold would come rushing in again. Until then, there is no time for shopping. It is almost time for the appointment so let's go back to the gate.'

Ark guessed the time and returned to the gate. The gate was crowding with thousands of people coming and going. Then someone tapped his shoulder and after he turned his head, there was a user wearing a black mask.

"Hey, you're late."

"Shambala!"

Ark grinned widely and shouted.

Fortunately, he had checked his mailbox.

“You left it until the last day of the month.....isn’t that terrible?”

“I’m sorry, I was a little busy.”

“Although you went to all that trouble, I’m afraid it might be for nothing?”

“Why? Do you have other business?”

“No, it’s not.....”

Shambala scratched his head.

“Actually, I’ve already signed up for another tournament.”

The reason that Ark and Shambala arranged to meet in Selebrid wasn’t simply to look or talk to each other. It was only to compete, because they wanted to see each other’s skills in front of spectators. However, Shambala had already applied for another match before he checked the mailbox.

“Another fight?”

“Yes, the fight is starting tomorrow.”

“When it is finished then we can have a drink.

“But it doesn’t finish with just one battle, it is a tournament system this time. The progress of the games would take over three days in real time. And if I cancel the tournament application then I can’t apply for another fight.”

“I can’t participate in this contest?”

“It is possible. But this fight won’t be fair.”

“Fair?”

“The game I’m participating in is 2 against 1.”

Shambala and Ark thought for a moment. The reason why Ark wanted to meet Shambala was to formally fight against him. That was also true for Shambala as well. However, Ark already found more meaning in meeting Shambala than he previously had. A proverb was handed down in martial arts. If one practices one hundred times more than they thought, then a single encounter was ten times better than that practice. It was indeed the truth. Sometimes the instructors of martial arts would teach mental training, and people would go home claiming it was a waste of time. It was all silly talk. What are martial arts? In the end, the thing being honoured was the techniques. If you looked at history for the period where martial arts were flourishing, was it the Warring States Period? But that context doesn’t fit as recently people claimed that it was the technique that beat the opponent. So he’d rather train his body and mind a thousand times than just rely on technique. A former member of the taekwondo national team and current SWAT team leader, it was at Lee Myung-ryong’s insistence that Ark master both.

.....Well, after a while he waited for the next words.

Anyway, the key to building martial arts skills was practice. That was the reason Ark was looking forward to sparring with Shambala. Shambala was proficient in Kung Fu. By sparring him, he would obtain more than if he just fought ordinary monsters or users. Just a few nights ago he had received severe training

from Lee Myung-ryong. It was common that if he spent one day practicing, he would have to lie down for the next few days.....it was so severe that after the first 2~3 times, Ark was frightened to visit the gym. However, suffering through such training instilled confidence in Ark. Ark had wanted to test the results though Shambala.

‘Three days.....it wasn’t a short time, but it was a special opportunity.’

Ark nodded and replied.

“I can’t complain since I was very late. Okay, I’ll wait. If we don’t take this opportunity then who knows when the next chance would be.”

“What will you do in the meantime?”

“I will probably just go hunting in this area.”

While he was thinking, Shambala opened his mouth and said something else.



“Instead of exiting the city, why don’t you try the tournament?”

“The tournament?”

“Yes, you should become familiar with the arena. Is it your first time? Contestants who are unfamiliar with the arena would tend to lose in their first exhibition match. That would make it difficult when you fight against me. If I fully explain it then it would become too long.....Now, you should come with me to look at it.

Shambala suddenly pulled Ark. After crossing the busy streets of Selebrid for 10 minutes, they finally arrived at a large amphitheatre that looked just like a roman colosseum. The field was quite popular as there were huge crowds flocked around the area. Shambala made his way through the crowd as he explained.

“This is Selebrid Arena, the evil Silrion.”

“There are quite a lot of people.”

“Naturally. In one day, dozens of fights are held on the evil Silrion stage. And every competition has prizes that you can’t get anywhere else, and sometimes the supplementary prize will give rare items. In order to get the jackpot, it depends more on your luck and skill than your hunting ability.”

It wasn’t just a simple match. The Evil Silrion arena was a speculative market that combined the odds of gambling. While the fight of user against user was unable to be manipulated, monster against user or NPC against user were ways for the spectators to make money. And just like horse racing, the dividend was determined and the prize money was given based on that. Because of odds were high, users and NPCs in the Evil Silrion arena instantly became celebrities.

“Now, it’s here. It is better than me explaining it a hundred times. The procedure is simple. Before you go out for a match, you should determine the compensation and prizes. However, each match has different rules so you should read the explanations, then after you select a tournament then you should hand in an application form to the NPC.”

Ark looked at the flyers that Shambala was pointing to.

He carefully read all the rules for the Evil Silrion arena on the flyers.

The first match held in the Evil Silrion was divided into two. The match ends after a single fight and among the players that won, a gambling system was used to determine the final winner of the prize. It was a single match against an NPC or PVP and those users who obtained certain qualifications could apply. However, for the PVP single match there was no prize.

Of course, in addition to PK, there was also the PVP duel system. However, the duel wouldn’t be fair because it didn’t account for the level difference. On the other hand, the Evil Silrion match was a fair fight because it was subject to level restrictions. In addition, even though there is no reward for the

fight, they could accumulate 'honour' points which could be used to appeal to various NPCs. If their honour accumulates then it would also affect their quest system. The single match was also used for pure fun and games. But the tournament that most users were excited to join was the one where NPCs participates with a large number of users. The tournament was divided into solo, pair, party and guild and prizes or rare items were given as supplementary prizes. It was the tournament that was connected to enjoyable gambling.

The 231st tournament individual match. Participation restriction: Level 70 ~ 75 Warriors.

Game system: Items prohibited.

Winner's prize and Supplementary prize: 100 gold and a Glory gauntlet.

Registration date: Closed competition! Currently in progress.

The 147th Party Tournament. Participation restriction: Level cap of 50, limited to 10~12 people.

Game system: Items prohibited and level equalized (All participates fixed at level 50).

Winner's prize and Supplementary prize: 500 gold, Rare vision (random)

Registration date: Deadline imminent! On the 31st at 5 p.m.

'Hum, it is fairly decent?'

Ark glanced at the leaflets with curiosity. Attached to the leaflet was a picture of the supplementary prize. There wasn't a detailed explanation, but just looking at the item it could be seen that it was an item of considerable standard.

'But since the reward is the supplementary prize, it won't be so easy?'

The number of people who usually participated in a tournament was 100. Using the tournament system, there were at least seven chances to win. While the tournament was ranked high among most levelling systems, the winning average wasn't high. The outcome depended on your real skills. Such a condition meant that winning over 100 people wasn't an easy task.

'The basic rule of the Evil Silrion. After a user applies for a match, they can't apply for another one for 72 hours. If there wasn't such a restriction, I would blindly apply for every match.'

"How is it? Is that a tournament that you would like to fight in?"

Shambala asked from beside him.

“Let’s see, I’m still not sure yet. I have to look around a little more.”

Ark shook his head and turned to the other flyers. Then, Ark looked at a tournament flyer that attracted his interest.

“Ara? Surely it can’t be……?”

Ark pushed people out of the way as he ran towards the flyer.

The 186th Pairs tournament. Participation restriction: Level 100 restriction. Must be 2 people.

Game system: Consumption items prohibited (However, skill relevant items are excluded). Level equalization (All participants fixed at level 100).

Winner’s prize and Supplementary prize: 200 gold, Magaro’s secret map.

Registration date: Deadline imminent! 6 p.m. today.

'Magaro's secret map!'

Ark was surprised to the extent that goose bumps rose on his body. Magaro! A few days ago he had received the quest from the Magic Institute and wasn't that where the name was discussed? But now that name was on a secret map.....?

'Magaro might have written the map and indicated the location of the hidden laboratory!'

Shannen had given him the key and said that fate would guide him to the clues. Of course, those words were certainly true. Although it was a bit vague, this was a part of the common game system used in other games. In other words, specific quests are created only after clues that relate to the quest appear. There was also only one quest item made as a measure to prevent it from disappearing. Ark had also expected this quest to proceed that way. If he had the key, then he was sure to have a chance encounter with the clue. But this opportunity wasn't perfect. In New World, it wasn't possible to complete a quest just by relaxing and thinking that because it is a game, things would happen. They would have to devise the method and personally go look for the clue. In the end they might finally catch a clue. That would determine the success or failure of the quest. But in a place like this, he had never expected to find a clue in this way.

"What happened suddenly? Did you find a favourite supplementary prize or something? Eh? What the?"

Shambala turned to the flyer with an awestruck expression.

“You.....no way, you’re interested in that supplementary prize?”

Ark nodded. Then after looking around, Shambala pulled Ark somewhere else. Shambala stopped at an area a little bit away from the Evil Silrion and spoke in a low voice.

“What is the reason that you need that supplementary prize? What the?”

“I cannot say anything more. Just that it has to do with a quest that I received.”

“Quest? So, you’re also associated with the genius alchemist?”

“How do you know?”

Shambala scratched his head.

“Sheesh, this is getting complicated. Okay, let’s just lay it out there.”

“Okay.”

“In fact, I got a genius alchemist related quest.”

“Where? From the NPC of the Magic Institute?”

“Magic Institute? No, I got it from a quest item.”

Shambala pulled a book out of his bag.

At various points on the old book cover, someone had written ‘the Diary of Magaro.’



“After I had no contact with you the other day, I left Selebrid. The supplementary prize I desired was taken so I had no business anymore. I hunted the undead at an ancient burial site for several days and received this. At first, I thought it was a common history book but when I picked it up the status was confirmed. After using the identifying skill, this came out.”

“The information?”

“I don’t know, there were a bunch if ciphers written. I only understand this part.”

Shambala turned to the final chapter.

After a lifetime of dedicate work, the problem I’ve been studying has finally entered the last stage. I seek the infinite knowledge of the world’s secrets. Now I will open the last door of the secret. However, these days I feel anxious. There are many moments where it feels like someone is staring at me from the darkness with eerie eyes. It is probably just superstition.....anyway, I will never abandon my research. I will also convey the secret that I found to people. If I cannot return then this diary would be prepared. This diary contains everything that I have found. However, it is not complete. Now you will need to find another clue to figure out where the connection will be.

‘A connecting place!’

There is no doubt that it refers to Magaro's laboratory.

"When I read this part, the quest was started. Magaro was a genius alchemist who wrote this, so I was thinking that the hiding place would probably be in a rare location. Therefore, while searching for information about Magaro's hidden map in Selebrid, I took part in a few fights. Perhaps the magician's lair on the map will contain the cipher to decipher the text in the diary."

Shambala looked at Ark.

"I explained what I found. Now it is your turn. What is the information that you know?"

".....I got a Magaro related quest from the Magic Institute."

"What? The Magic Institute?"

“Yes, the information that I have fits your reasoning. I still don’t know everything yet. But I can say with certainty that the diary and map alone would not complete the quest. Snake, Magaro’s Dimensional Key!”

A long black snake spat out a key.

“This is Magaro’s dimensional key that I received from the Magic Institute. After examining the information, I can guess that all three items, the key, diary and map must be gathered to find the laboratory.

“Damn it, we must obtain the map don’t we?”

Shambala’s face contorted as he became upset. The situation had strangely twined together. But the Magaro related quest couldn’t be shared. Of course it was possible to share the items, but only one person could complete the quest and of the three items necessary, 2 were already split between Shambala and Ark. If one of the two people don’t give up, it would be impossible for both of them to complete the quest. Shambala thought for a while before peeking at him.

“I would be fine if you had it.....although it is not that close between, say us?”

“I’m sad.”

“If you make your snake eat it, then even if I kill you then I wouldn’t be able to receive it.”

“I also won’t die politely.”

Ark grinned and replied.

Then Shambala nodded his head and made a suggestion for compromise.

“Okay, so it is simple. Here’s the deal, it is urgent that we get our hands on Magaro’s secret map. Because even if we quarrel among ourselves, it would be no use if it enters someone else’s hands. Do you agree? But I cannot guarantee that you would win. But if you and I join hands then it is different from talking.”

“Join hands?”

“Yes, there is still time remaining until the tournament starts. And to ensure fairness, the mechanism means that you can change partners before a match.”

“But your partner?”

“Those guys don’t need to concern you. The application deadline was running out so I just dragged some junior that I knew. However, you would have a much higher winning percentage than him. I, since then I have recognized your skills. I assure you that you can also believe in my abilities. If I pair with you, then we’ll surely be able to win.”

“Thank you.”

Shambala’s proposal was quite convincing. Ark had experience with fighting many users at the same time. However, not many users showed the same skills as Shambala. Ark too. When it was the same level, then Ark had confidence that he wouldn’t be defeated by anyone.

With such a pair! Winning was a certainty.

“Okay, you and I will become a pair and win fairly.....What’s next?”

“The situation is simple. Once you obtain the secret map, you will have all you need to put the clues together. The remaining problem is that there is a clue that you and I would have to share. The simple solution is that you and I should fight.

“Then the person who wins takes everything?”

“That’s right.”

Shambala nodded with challenging eyes. Ark faced Shambala with his mouth closed. If he had received such a proposal in Jackson, it would have been difficult for him to accept. When he calmly compared it, the battle power that Shambala showed at that time was a level above Ark. However, Ark had grown a lot more confident. In addition, a few days ago he had met his master Lee Myung-ryong. Like the earth at the end of a drought, it would suck in water quickly. The same goes for Ark. After he met his teacher, his skills were only going upwards.

‘I will use the remaining time for training and only log in on the third day when the tournament starts.....there is also a chance against Shambala!’

Even if the circumstances weren’t in his favour, there was no way he could reject it.

As long as Shambala was holding Magaro's diary, there was no way to obtain it other than killing him. With Andel it was a revengeful situation, but Ark didn't want his relationship with Shambala to be like that. In addition, even if he attacked Shambala viciously then it would lead to the same thing. If so, he would rather accept the offer to team up and win fairly.

"Okay, let's do so."

"Great decision. Then follow me."

Shambala and Ark headed back to the Evil Silrion. And Shambala made his junior give up and replaced it with a new member application.

"Do you want to replace the member for the 186th Pairs Tournament?"

"Yes, my name is Shambala and the replacing member is Ark."

"Of course, Shambala has finished the qualification verification process.....now let's check Ark."

Character Name Ark Race Human Alignment Good+250 Fame 1875 Level 123 Profession Dark Walker  
Title Cat Knight, Caretaker of All, Jackson's Hero Health 2065 (+50) Mana 1930 Spiritual Power 100  
Strength 274 (+15) Agility 314 (+15) Stamina 404 (+10) Wisdom 43 (+10) Intelligence 367 Luck 44  
Flexibility 35 Art of Communication 33 Affection 55 (+ 10) Special stat: Knowledge of Ancient Relics 98  
Equipment item effects Guardian Armour of the Merpeople: Water Attribute Resistance +100%, Penalty  
based on water is nullified. Cat Paws: Attack Speed +10%, Agility +15, Critical Hit +10% Raccoon's Pith:  
Agility +10, Wisdom +10\* Set effect: Strength + 10, Agility + 10, Stamina +10, Defense +20 Improved  
Norad Boots: Movement speed + 15%, Evasion + 10%

Adelaine's Necklace: Def + 40, Affection + 10

Resurrecting Spirit: Strength + 5, Mana Recovery + 5%

\* All abilities will increase by 40% in the dark\* You have the ability to hide in the darkness (20 minutes duration. Cancelled when you get into combat)\* Resistance Fear, Darkness, Blind, and Seduction spells is increased by 50%.

\* You can bring out the true abilities from all types of tools.

When Ark had exited the Underground World he was level 116, after the Heartsoul Bead quest he was level 120 and when he travelled with the rehabilitation group, he obtained an additional 3 levels and became level 123.

The eligibility limit was level 100 which he passed easily.

"You're qualification is good enough. I will immediately put in the file that a contestant was replaced. Shambala and Ark are 14th. Therefore, you will fight in the seventh battle of the tournament. The tournament date is the day after tomorrow at 11: 00 a.m. so if you are 30 minutes late to the waiting room then you will be eliminated. Any other questions?"



“No.”

“Then I wish you luck.”

Shambala and Ark left the Evil Silrion. The day after tomorrow at 11 a.m. was tomorrow morning in reality. The time was sufficient. After he explained the situation to JusticeMan’s party, he stopped by the gym before sleeping and sighed in relief.

“I have to tell Captain Lee Myung-ryong to teach me as much skills as possible.

When he returned to the gate, the party had finished their business and gathered.

As soon as he saw Ark, JusticeMan shouted.

“Damn, it seems to be taking a lot longer to find the thieves than I thought.”

“Why?”

“I heard a rumour that the war near the border was finished so everyone would be returning. Thanks to that, the thieves have become too scared and are hiding. I have to look around for them for a while. While the arena is also important, our purpose is to rehabilitate these guys.”

The biggest problem for JusticeMan and the rehabilitation group was the realization of justice.

Sid had also found some work to do.

“I think I have to go to Nagaran.”

“Nagaran?”

“Yes, it is the name of the border region that an uncle told me just now. After completing the merchant quest, I received information about it. All the current player guilds are flocking to that area. There is an event that is taking place there? At any rate, the price of the potions during the guild fight should skyrocket tremendously.”

Although Sid could be trivial sometimes, he also thought with a merchant's brain. Sid's eyes flashed with determination as he said.

"Nagaran 50%.....no, I'll be back with a 60% profit! Ouhuhuhu, don't miss it. When I come back, we're all going to be rich!"

"Ooh! We'll be anticipating it Sid!"

JusticeMan and the rehabilitation members cheered. At that time, Shambala went forward and asked Sid.

"Are you a merchant?"

"Yes, but why?"

"How many days will the trade route take?"

“Nagaran is close but because of some business, it’ll take no more than 4 days.”

“Well that’s great. Can you take this instead and write a contract?”

The thing that Shambala proposed with the content of his appointment with Ark. Ark and Shambala did not have any time to check each other’s skills in the last month. Because they had to rely on the ability of the partner in the pairs tournament, even if they beat each other in a single match, they weren’t sure the item would be given. So, a contract would be drawn up which gave a third party the item beforehand, who would give it to the winner.

“The contract details that Ark’s item would be given to Sid. And whoever wins the single match will be given the item by Sid. If one of you refuses to fight, the remaining person would automatically be the winner, Ark, do you really have to do this?”

Of course. If Shambala hadn’t said anything then Ark would have. Therefore Ark and Shambala gave Sid the quest related items. Therefore, the future of the party was decided. Sid headed down the trade route towards Nagaran, while the JusticeMan group headed south to search for the thieves.

But, there were also eyes watching them from an alley.

“They are the gang who killed our members.”

“Go contact headquarters.”

A person whose face was hidden by a black hood took out a document and vanished. On his chest was a red handprint, the Dark Brother organization. Their bad relationship hadn't ended yet. But it wasn't only NPCs spying on the party. Several users were secretly talking about Ark and Shambala in the alley opposite to the Dark Brother's.

“Are you certain about those guys?”

“Yes, a little while ago I definitely heard the word related to Magaro's legacy.”

“Then they already have the rest of the clues?”

“Sheesh, are you sure these guys are connected to the clues?”

“What if?”

“Because they are also participating in the tournament, I’ll watch the situation a little bit more.”

The users said then secretly slipped away. So.....As soon as he arrived in the capital, the events surrounding Ark had begun. Of course, Ark didn’t know any of that.

“Then I’ll meet you before the tournament.”

“Manage your condition well. If you doze off while fighting.”

“Don’t worry. I am used to controlling my condition.”

Ark exited the connection after arranging the appointed time with Shambala.

Then Hyun-woo who had returned from being Ark immediately left for the police gymnasium.

“Ha! I want to ask for strong training for several days?”

Lee Myung-ryong was so happy he couldn't express it in his face so he just nodded.

“Yes, since I am off duty today than it is no bother. First, do 200 push ups, now!

The spartan style training lasted for 4 hours. Hyun-woo's body went through such harassment that Lee Myung-ryong said.

“Kukuku, it should be like this every day. I'm creating a Superman.”

“Can't I be satisfied with Batman?”

“If you’re a man, then it’s Superman.”

Hyun-woo felt the need to cry. However, Hyun-woo clenched his teeth and stomached it. Now it was the beginning. It was forwarded by three days then there was no time to rest. Shambala was strong. When the pairs tournament ended, there was an even stronger opponent that he had to test his skills against. Hyun-woo was starving and fainted straight away after leaving the shower. When he woke up, 8 hours had suddenly passed.

‘Huck, isn’t the tournament starting in 30 minutes?’

In a hurry, Hyun-woo went to the unit and connected to New World. In reality, the game.....as Hyun-woo became Ark, he heard Shambala shouting in his ear.

“Damn, why are you only coming in now? The time limit to register is tight!”

“I’m sorry. I guess I was too tired to hear the alarm.”

“Please be careful next time. Because there is not time, let’s go immediately.”



Shambala pulled Ark as they ran towards the Evil Silrion arena. At this time, neither of them could imagine the events that would occur. And from the Evil Silrion in Selebrid to Sid who had left for Nagaran.....the event with a lot of entangled interests began to surround Ark.

Ark's eventful adventures would begin now.