

Ark Vol 7 C 3

Chapter 3

Act 3: Sacred Soil

“Okay, with this training is over.”

Clack.....Clack.....Clack.....

Deimos' jaw trembled with his overwhelming joy. Why did it end so quickly? While a vampire was born into debauchery, Deimos was different and relied on willpower. In addition, his loyalty to Ark was higher than Dedric's and he obeyed his commands. Therefore the violence and food torture ended earlier than expected. When monsters revealed a bone, he gasped but listened to Ark.

‘Now it's back to the old system.’

Although the day started badly, he was quite satisfied with the results. Once he decided to invest the day in training, the discipline of his pets was like it was in the beginning. There was also a rise in stats thanks to the food torture! Dedric and Deimos had both reached level 100 stats.

‘The death penalty also disappeared while hunting the minor monsters.....’

It was now time to continue his original purpose of searching for the ‘Sacred Soil.’

Before Ark left Lancel Village, Hanson gave him a few ideas to search. The point where the power concentrates. In other words, a valley. After he had visited around half of them, he still hadn't found the ‘Sacred Soil.’ Instead, the valleys had twice as many magic ingredients compared to other regions. Unless.....?

‘Ingredients growing faster compared to other regions are the main point. Hanson said that valleys were a gathering place for large amounts of power. The power concentrated in the ground turns the soil fertile until it eventually becomes a Sacred Soil.’

Ark looked at the map and moved to the next valley. The forest gradually became wetter and darker. At that time there was a strange sight. The sun rises in the east and sets in the west. Even in New World that didn't change. Then why was there light gathered on the east side of the valley when the sun sets in the west?

'Something is there!'

Ark hurriedly ran to the valley and descended.

"Huk, what, what the? Is that?"

"What's the matter Master?"

"What's the matter? Can't you see it without me telling you?"

"Isn't it just a valley? Should I be seeing something?"

Dedric looked at Ark in bewilderment.

'He doesn't seem to be joking. Then only I can see it?'

Ark looked at the valley with bemusement. An incredible sight was developing. Nestled deep in the valley, an extravagant brilliance was slowly rising. Dedric and Deimos couldn't see what Ark was looking at. If so, the answer was simple. He was able to see the light because of Magic Detection! Whenever he found a magic ingredient, he only saw a small light bulb flickering at most. However, the light he saw rising from the valley was completely different. The whole valley became hot from the light rising.

'That light isn't coming from plants or ores. The ground itself inside the valley has a magical aura! Then this place.....!'

The Sacred Soil! There was no doubt.

“I’ve found it. Dedric, Deimos! Follow me!”

Ark immediately followed the gentle slope and entered the valley. However, rare magic ingredients weren’t the only things present when power was gathered. Rare Monsters were also gathered there.

Roaaaaar!

As soon as Ark entered the valley, a huge shadow emerged. It was a large, green muscular monster over 5 metres tall. It was an ogre. The ogre’s level was 150. It was the strongest monster in the Argus Mountains. They preferred acting alone so it hadn’t been a huge problem so far, but 5 ogres had appeared while dragging large stone axes! Ark’s current level was 151. It would be difficult to deal with five level 150 ogres. But when he checked the information window, he saw that his dark attribute bonus had been applied. His revised level was 211! At that level he could attempt it.

‘But I can’t be careless. An ogre is much stronger than other monsters with the same level.’

Just like a NPC or user, a monster couldn’t be judged by its level. The physical damage and defense of a level 150 monster depended on the species. Among them, he had to be particularly careful of the ogre. The ogre had strength. While it has low agility and intelligence, it could do a lot of damage with just one blow.

“Dedric, Plan C. Lure two of them. Because its movement is slow, it shouldn’t be difficult for you to keep your distance. Deimos, you assist from the side. You don’t have to forcefully attack. If you see a situation where it is needed, prepare your defensive stance.”

“Okay!”

Clack clack clack! Clack clack!

Both summons moved quickly according to the strategy.

“Over here. You stupid green monsters! Woo-hoo!”

Grrr!

Dedric had smacked the ogre's cheek before flying in the opposite direction. The ogre's mouth curled back to reveal its fangs before raising its axe, but the attack couldn't hit Dedric. He quickly flew out of the ogre's range as it started wildly chasing him. Two ogres left while three remained.

"Now shall I get started?"

Ark plunged through the ogres. Stone axes attacked him from three directions. Ark ran before sliding through an ogre's legs. When the three axes struck, the ground shook like an earthquake was occurring. At the moment Ark got up and used a skill.

"Cancel Magic Detection, Eyes of the Cat!"

'Magic Detection' and 'Eyes of the Cat' couldn't be used at the same time as the magic was applied to the same eye. Ark's eyes changed from blue to gold and red spots immediately appeared on the troll's back. Eyes of the Cat had detected the weak point!

"I have to reduce the number as quickly as possible. Dark blade!"

The ogre's skin was similar to a high defense armour. However, Dark Blade ignored the defense and dealt a critical hit! There was a flash as his sword struck the weak point and enormous damage was dealt. If it was a normal monster, it would stagger and become off balance. However, the ogre just swung its axe without even flinching. It was an immediate counterattack before Ark could even lift his sword.

'If I get hit by the counterattack then it would be a critical hit.....!'

This monster was the most difficult opponent. The most effect part of Ark's combat skills was his critical hits. A normal warrior would invest more in strength than in agility. It was in order to use their basic attacks and wear heavy armour. However, Ark's agility was currently higher than his strength. When compared to a warrior, his strength was probably two times lower. Therefore his general attack was quite low but his chances of striking a critical hit were many times higher. Since Eyes of the Cat identified the weak points and he used taekwondo principles as well, the chance of a critical hit was

50%! When he struck two times, a critical hit would occur. That was one of the reasons why his hunting speed was a lot quicker even though his general attack was lower.

However, there was one weakness to that fighting style. He lacked defense since his stats were invested in critical hits. He also didn't have a defense related skill which would give him additional points in defense. Therefore, Ark's lack of health was stressful during a fight. Since Ark would become stiff for a short time after dealing a critical hit, he raised evasion to compensate for that. But if it didn't even flinch at the critical hit, the counterattack would be dangerous since the power of the ogre was unimaginable.

There was the sound of blowing wind as the axe was raised!

Teteng!

However, the stone axe was blocked by a shield. Deimos had taken a defensive stance behind him.

"Okay, that's it."

Ark nodded in satisfaction. The effect of the training was showing. Before the battle, he had ordered Deimos to keep an eye on the ogres from the side. He was probably interested in the ogres' bones. The old him would have blindly ran to it, but after the mental training he focused on the battle. Dedric was the same. Blood flowed from the sides of the ogres that were fighting Ark. Dedric reflexively turned his head at the fragrant smell of the ogre's blood. But when he saw Ark's face he turned around and swallowed his drool.

'Huhuhu, the one day of training was clearly effective.'

He no longer needed to worry about 'bone collecting' and 'vampirism' having an impact on the battle.

"Then should I turn up the heat? Snake, unequip your bags and make the paralysis poison."

Dedric and Deimos were not the only ones who grew. Snake had also steadily developed new abilities. Wandering alone to pick up items or memorizing the necessary ingredients for a recipe were some of the abilities it learnt. Unlike Dedric and Deimos, he didn't demand it of Snake. But Snake wanted to be

helpful to Ark and developed it due to its voluntary efforts. And not long ago it had developed another ability. When Ark ordered it, Snake crept up and entered the bag. After it climbed into the bag, it could manually switch from 'item storage' to 'poison manufacture' and create the poison itself. He didn't have to make it do so.

"Saek saek saek!"

After Snake finished manufacturing the poison, it looked up with blue eyes. It really seemed beautiful! That was why Ark couldn't be weak to Snake.

Surururung, chaking!

The sword turned a deadly blue colour after the poison was applied. If there wasn't enough paralysis poison then the critical hit would apply! Ark unleashed a barrage of attacks on the ogres with the poison coated sword. He quickly continued with a series of kicks and defeated two of them down. Meanwhile, Deimos health fell by 80%. The attacks from the ogres were too much even with his high defense. If it was the same as before then it would have been unbearable.....

"Dedric, target Deimos with you vampire skill!"

"Ooh, I got it!"

Dedric activated his vampire skill with glee. The present skill saved was the troll's 'Revival.' Ark also retreated from the ogres until Deimos recovered his health using the buff. Then Ark called in the two ogres lured by Dedric.

"Deimos, during the battle you can search the dead ogres for their bones. Dedric, when the skill slot is empty then I don't care about your vampire habits."

Clack clack clack! Clack clack!

"Hahaha, I waited for this. Blood! Give me your blood you green monsters!"

Deimos and Dedric cheered and enjoyed their hobby.

-Deimos has reassembled the ribs using his 'Bone collector' skill. He has replaced it with the bone of an ogre and gained a more durable body.

-Dedric has used Vampirism on the troll. A new skill has been saved in the empty slot.

* Currently absorbed skill: Increases the target's strength by 20 for 30 minutes.

He sucked all the blood. Ark once again coated his sword in poison and attacked the ogres. When Dedric and Deimos were satisfied with their hobbies, they joined the battle which ended immediately. Once he had solved the problem the situation ended smoothly. 'Bone collector' accelerated the growth of Deimos' stats. And Dedric's 'Vampirism' provided the opportunity for Ark to use skills from different professions. Even if he didn't have a priest who could use 'Revival' and 'Recovery,' he would be able to obtain various buffs and attacks to use in different situations. The unfortunate thing with 'Bone Collector' and 'Vampirism' was that they had to obtain it from monsters. In some cases it was obtained at once, but in other cases it took dozens of tries to succeed.

'If I can control it then it would be a skill with high utilization.'

If the results were good then it was a good thing. Then Ark started to actively invade the valley. The goal was to reach where the light was rising inside the valley. However, at the entrance of the Valley there were a significant number of Ogre villages. Although he wanted to urgently find the Sacred Soil, he wouldn't make a mistake like when he fought the steel maned gnolls.

"Dedric, lure a few of them."

Ark carefully gathered the enemy by luring them. Once there was a strategy, even the toughest monster wasn't that difficult. Ark proceeded in an orderly manner for 4 hours inside the valley. There were barely more than a hundred ogres in the Argus Mountains. At the beginning he was on 90% at level 151 and now he had risen two levels to 153. Unfortunately, the ogre was a monster that didn't drop a lot of japtem. Instead it had a low probability of dropping 'Ogre's Blood.' While it could be used as food, as a magic ingredient it could be sold for 3 gold in the stores.

'I picked up 5 so that is 15 gold.'

He was quite satisfied with the experience and income from 4 hours of hunting. However, the ogre had the worst regeneration rate among the large monsters. Once the ogres inside the valley had been exterminated, it would take a few days for them to respawn.

"Unfortunately I can't help it. Now should I go inside? Dedric lead the way."

Ark used Magic Detection again and entered the valley. How far did he enter? Finally the narrow valley widened and an absurd amount of light filled his vision. A huge square was surrounded by cliffs with the light coming from the centre.

"The light is coming from this whole area. The power is being absorbed by the earth. Obviously this is the Sacred Soil. Let's start digging shall we?"

But there was a problem he hadn't thought of. The ground where the light was coming from was definitely made of soil. However, it was as firm as a rock and he couldn't dig out the soil even with his sword.

"Damn, what kind of soil is harder than rock? Let's see how long it can hold up. Dark blade!"

Ark was annoyed and struck the ground.

Double bang, Rumble!

Suddenly the earth started shaking. The earth burst upwards like a stream of water and kept on rising.

1 metre, 2 metres, 3 metres.....10 metres, 20 metres.....!

It rose up until it seemed to pierce the sky. Ark stared at the piles of earth with a foolish face.

“What, what is this? Don’t tell me.....a giant golem?”

-Boss monster ‘Sacred Soil Guardian Colossus’ has appeared!

“Oh my god! That’s a boss monster?”

The Colossus was dozens of metres tall with vines and rocks attached to it! The head part wasn’t even visible from the foot. It wasn’t an exaggeration to say that it was almost a small mountain. Ark confronting it with his sword seemed like an ant attacking with a toothpick. However, he had no choice.

Roaaaaar!

Colossus suddenly swung a fist at Ark. It was like a mountain attacking! Ark rolled his body in surprise. However when the fist made contact, the ground shook and he bounced 1 metre up. The strike literally shook the earth! The shock waves that spread out at the same time also decreased his health. Just the shock wave caused 100 damage! With his defense, one well aimed hit would squish him like a pancake. Ark lost his fighting spirit quickly.

“I made a mistake. How can I deal with this guy? I should forget the quest and retreat!”

And then Colossus threw a nearby rock. There was a roaring sound and the rock ended up blocking the entrance. Of course, he could climb over it. Colossus wasn’t going to let him escape. It took a step forward and swung a fist again from 20 metres away.

“Damn, shall we do this to the end? Dedric, Deimos. Plan A-1!”

“You want to fight against this guy?”

Clack clack clack! Clack clack?

“Shut up, if you want to ask questions then ask that guy!”

When Ark raised his voice, Deimos sighed before going to attack with Deimos. Fortunately, its movement was very slow as it had an extraordinary large frame. Dedric and even the relatively stupid Deimos could easily evade the attacks. Nevertheless, the battle situation was looking pretty gloomy.

“Vampire skill activate. Target Ark. Take this, Dark Blade!”

Ark’s strength rose thanks to the ‘Power’ skill and he used Dark Blade. However, Dark Blade which had defeated numerous monsters only scratched the shell of the Colossus. Only sand and soil fell from where Dark Blade hit and the Colossus didn’t even lost 0.1% of its health. It was also the same for his unbeatable skill Blade Storm.

Bang bang double bang!

Even the sword fragments only created numerous scratches on the Colossus’ skin.

“Unbelievable, even Blade Storm doesn’t work.....”

Roaaaaar!

It did have an effect. The Colossus became really angry. The Colossus wildly beat up the cliff with his fists, making a shower of rocks fall down.

“Huk!”

Dedric freaked out and flew into the sky. Ark used Dark Dance to quickly avoid the rocks. Deimos didn't have the ability to fly and he also couldn't use Dark Dance so he instantly lost 70% of his health. If he wasn't in the defense stance then he would have been instantly recalled.

"What the hell! Deimos, cancel summon! Dedric, disturb that guy's eyes!"

Ark quickly sent Deimos back to the Netherworld. Anyway, he wouldn't have been useful in this situation. If he was forcefully recalled then Ark would've suffered fatal damage.

'I'm also in the same state. I will either be crushed by Colossus' fists or crushed by a falling rock. I have to attack but there's no sign of his health decreasing.....'

There was also a limit to running away. He couldn't attack while he was avoiding the shower of rocks or the shock waves. In the end, his health decreased as his clothes became muddy. Then, a question suddenly appeared in Ark's head.

'Wait, why hasn't his health decreased? Blade Storm should have done a minimum of 1,000 damage. But it didn't even decrease by 0.1%? How does that make sense?'

Ark looked at the Colossus with Eyes of the Cat. The Colossus was level 250. It was lower than the 'Awakened Heartsoul Bead' he fought in the Underground World. It didn't matter if it was a boss monster. Even if it was an extraordinarily large monster with adjusted stats, 1000 damage should have at least decreased the health.

'That's right, I misunderstood it for a while because it was so big. The health is extremely high but not that impossible. He also has some secrets just like the other bosses!'

Ark was convinced. He had encountered boss monsters in New World. They were so strong that it was difficult to find them in a regular game. He wasn't just talking about their stats. Each boss will have a unique weak point. If he couldn't find it then it would be difficult to win against the boss monster no matter how high the level. The core strategy to dealing with bosses with to identify the weakness and attack it!

'Eyes of the Cat didn't show this guy's weakness. Then.....'

“Magic Detection!”

When Ark used the skill he saw a brilliant light from the body of the Colossus. The Colossus was made from the Sacred Soil so power was gathered in his entire body.

“Was I wrong? I have to find a way to discover the weakness.....”

At that time, an idea flashed through Ark’s head.

“Overhead!”

Yes, it was the one place that Ark couldn’t see from the foot! If the weakness was at the top of the head then he wouldn’t have been able to see it with ‘Eyes of the Cat’ or ‘Magic Detection.’

“Dedric, look for something different on the top of that guy’s head.”

“Wait a minute, huh? I found it. There is a weird lump on top of the head!”

“That’s it! Is it possible to attack that place?”

“It’s not that difficult.”

Dedric answered confidently and flew in. Dark Dash! But soon there was a ringing sound and something bouncing off stone.

“Huck, ah, I can’t attack it. It is surrounded by tough skin that my teeth can’t break.”

Of course there would be a defense around the only weakness. And the only thing that could penetrate it was Dark Blade which ignored all defense. He could also use the power of Blade Storm to destroy the defense as well.

‘In other words, I have no choice but to attack directly!’

Ark looked at the huge Colossus and made a firm resolution.

‘There is no way to escape anyway. I just have to see it through to the end!’

“Dedric, distract that bastard!”

Ark rushed towards the Colossus.

Roaaaaar!

“Where are you looking? Your opponent is me!”

Colossus instantly reached out his fist as Dedric disturbed him. But the fist of the Colossus eventually struck the ground. After the ground shook, Ark used the force of the shock wave to jump onto his leg.

‘This is the correct answer. I can see the way!’

Ark grabbed a vine attached to the Colossus. He then began climbing, the leisure sport that was popular nationwide. It was a sport where people climbed artificial rock walls using gears and fake handles. When his father was still alive, Ark had received lessons for a few months. The Colossus’ body was a lot like artificial rock climbing. Although he couldn’t see the entire body, there were rocks and roots placed at regular intervals. Thanks to that he was able to grab the roots and climb to the top.

‘I might have forgotten most of what I learned but this is a game. My strength and agility can’t even be compared to reality. It is also possible with my increased stamina!’

Strength was necessary in order to climb up artificial rock. But it wasn't only strength that made the movement possible. When grasping a handle to move himself, he would have to calculate the route so that he wasn't stranded in a place with no handles. Ark used his experience to carefully check each time he climbed up the body.

Roaaaaar!

"This way! Come on, reach up here!"

Dedric flew around and taunted the Colossus.

When he struck with his fists, the shockwaves didn't even hit Dedric. While he tried ripping out rocks and throwing them at Dedric, the accuracy wasn't high enough to hit. Meanwhile, Ark had already achieved a great accomplishment on his climb.

'Huk huk, 10 metres. This climb isn't a joke'

Although it was a game, his whole body seemed to be making a creaking noise.

'Fortunately it seems like the Colossus has forgotten my presence. Anyway, I'll take a break for a moment since I'm halfway there.'

Ark took a break with the vines wrapped around his arm. It was at that time. At Dedric's provocation, the Colossus strongly stomped his foot. The aftermath of the Colossus' retaliation was enormous. Rocks started rolling off the cliff while a huge vibration occurred in the ground. At that moment, the rock that Ark was holding on to popped out from the shock.

"Ugh!"

Ark fell down the Colossus' body. After he fell down 2 metres, his body stopped.

...

Thanks to the vine wrapped around his arm, he didn't fall to his death. However, he had no time to breathe a sigh of relief.

"This, this is.....!"

Ark lifted his head. Round and wooden black eyes were looking at Ark. Because the skin was scratched, the Colossus had noticed Ark's presence. The rocky face of the Colossus warped. Then a fist with a diameter of 10 metres swung towards his waist. It was a situation where Ark couldn't avoid it! Dedric covered his eyes while screaming.

"M-Master!"

Bang bang double bang!

There was a sudden explosion on the Colossus' side. Rock and dirt fell like mist. It slowly cleared up. However, Ark couldn't be seen after the dirt was gone.

"M-master! Are you really dead? Then.....'"

Dedric murmured puzzled before suddenly laughing.

"Kekeke, in your face! That greedy rice cake is dead! This is divine punishment!"

"Hah, so those are your true feelings?"

"Huk, what, what the? This is Master's voice?"

Dedric freaked out and looked down. Ark was staring at Dedric fiercely from the fist of the Colossus. The thing that connected him to the Colossus' fist.....Saw Blade!

Yes just before Ark had been flattened by Colossus, he reflexively summoned Deimos. Then he used transformation to change him into the saw blade. The saw blade was also available as a whip sword! Ark had managed to wind around Colossus' fist using the whip and avoided his punches. He swung that whip just like Indiana Jones! It was a bit of improvisation during his moment of desperation.

"Really Master! Don't you know that I was joking just then? I really believed that you were alive, really!"

"Shut up before you make me angrier!"

Roaaaaar!

Then the Colossus shrieked and raised his arms. He beat at the cliffs trying to flatten Ark.

'Now!'

Ark was after that moment. The moment the Colossus raised his arms over his head, Ark shook his wrist before releasing the whip. His body rose with the momentum and flew up into the sky. But after a moment, Ark fell down thanks to the force of gravity. He had been thrown 10 metres and was now falling from that high. It was like a bungee situation without the rope. Even a person without a fear of heights would turn pale in fear. But there was no room for Ark to feel fear.

'Just once! I'm hanging everything on this one chance!'

"Snake, one decent sword!"

Ark grabbed the sword Snake spat out and focused. Once he flew up into the sky, he saw the weakness attached to the top of the Colossus' head. It was the place where light gathered even more intensely! Ark held his stance in the sky and used his special attack.

"Blade Storm.....eh?"

It happened when the cracks spread like spider webs on the sword. The Colossus sensed a crisis and flinched before retreating.

‘At this rate, Blade Storm will hit the bare ground instead!’

However, there was a black explosion which increased his momentum.

“Dedric, hang onto my back and use Dark Dash!”

“What the? Really? Is that Master’s order? Are you making an irrelevant remark?”

“Shut up and hurry up!”

“Hehehe, okay!”

Dedric let out his resentment while carrying him. Ark pushed towards the body of the Colossus just as Blade Storm occurred. The fragments of the broken sword! The black sword fragments spun like a whirlwind on top of the Colossus’ head. The shield was torn to pieces. The Colossus instantly lost 70% of his health. The barrier that had been difficult to attack was now broken.

“Mind’s Eye!”

Ark immediately activated the special effect of the ring to see in the darkness. His range of vision increased and he saw that he was rapidly approaching the bright spot. Ark swung his sword vertically and used Dark Blade. The sword landed a critical hit on top of the head. Ark’s health decreased to 50% at the same time. It was because he couldn’t disperse the fall damage properly.

Roaaaaar!

Colossus shrieked and swung his fist. However it only had 10% health left. Ark swung his sword and used Dark Blade again as the approaching fist suddenly stopped just before his nose. A strange silence floated inside the valley. Then the rocks that had formed Colossus broke off until it had all disappeared.

And.....the fist of the Colossus in front of Ark's nose broke apart like sand. The head, shoulders and legs also turned into sand.

-Your level has risen.

-Your level has risen.....

Ark received the continuous message windows that popped up as he was buried in the earth and sand that had collapsed.

"Huk huk huk, damn, I thought I would choke and die."

After a while, Ark pushed the earth and sand apart and crept out. The Colossus seemed really huge but once turned into sand and earth, he appeared quite small. He had managed to defeat such a monster. But he was rewarded for his troubles. He checked the information window and saw that he had gained 6 levels. It was the boss that had given the most experience since the Awakened Heartsoul Bead.

"Ssak ssak ssak!"

Then, Snake's blue eyes emerged as it headed towards an area. When he dug at the earth, a shield appeared.

Sacred Earth Shield (Unique)

Armour type: Steel Shield

Durability: 23/70

Defense power: 200 (+80)

Weight: 50

User restriction: Level 120 or higher with Warrior profession

A shield of superior quality made from high class steel. When looking at its name, it is probably a shield that had been used a long time ago. However it has been buried for a long time in the ground where power gathered, changing its nature. This shield would be difficult to produce with the power of a human. Although all warriors can use it, only warriors with holy powers would be able to draw out 100% of its power.

“Wha, What is this?” A unique shield!”

Ark checked the item that Snake had picked up in its mouth. It was a level 120 unique shield! When he checked the information window, the additional stats were terrific. The defense was 280. It also increases strength and stamina by 20 points. But was that all? There was an additional 50 points to Holy Power while ‘Protection of the Earth’ could be used to raise defense by 100%! There hadn’t been a lot of unique items with this option.

‘Although I cannot use this item.....’

For a while, Ark hadn’t been able to make money while he gathered a full set. If so, a unique item would earn a hundred times more than a rare item. He felt warm at the thought of his bank balance having some money after a while.

‘Yes! It’s been a while since I’ve been able to buy some nice fruits for my mother!’

How much would he earn with this? When he thought of his mother, tears obscured his face.

“Hehehe, Master. You’re a genius at playing cheap tricks in a moment of desperation.....No, strategy! It was really wonderful.”

Dedric approached while twisting his hands. Whenever he committed a crime, he tried to appease Ark by flattering him. He was a cunning fellow. Ark stared at him before turning around.

"Hmm, I'll let it go this time. But be careful. I'm watching you."

Ark had become a little generous since he found what he was after.

-Sacred Soil

A mysterious soil that has absorbed the powers of the earth over a long period of time. Since it has absorbed the power, it has the ability to purify the surroundings and promote plant growth.

"Got it, now the quest can be completed and the problems of Lancel Village solved!"

Ark clenched his fist after he checked the information window. Then the message window suddenly turned red as a warning message flashed.

-The Sacred Soil is almost a living organism.

The form of the Colossus was created to maintain the 'Nucleus of the Sacred Soil,' a crystal that had been created after many years of gathering intense power. Once it lost the power of the crystal, the Sacred Soil will rapidly lose its power.

Time remaining: 30 minutes

"What, what is this?"

What is it saying? He had defeated the Colossus using all his strength. He had barely found the Sacred Soil and now it was becoming useless. Ark grabbed his head and screamed.

“Dammit, why did I crack the nucleus?”

Perhaps there was a different way to obtain the Sacred Soil. But the accident had been caused already. No, even if he was in the same situation again then he wouldn't of thought of another method.

“Then I have to plant Popo here before the Sacred Soil loses its power?”

Ark was about to pull out Popo but stopped and flinched. Ark's purpose wasn't just to plant Popo. He wanted Lancel Village that was suffering from a food crisis to receive Yggdrasil's protection. But was that all? Even if Popo was planted here, there was no guarantee that he would grow in the 30 minutes before the soil lost its power. The worst possible situation was that might end in failure.

‘Crazy. But I can't just stand here watching.....’

Ark fidgeted as he recalled the contents of the information window.

‘Wait, the Sacred Soil is almost a living organism. Then? Okay, it won't hurt to try!’

Ark laid both hands against the soil and shouted.

“I call on the Mother of every existence on earth! Please grace us with your presence, Nursing!”

The Sacred Soil was almost a living organism. That was certainly a hint. After Ark used his nursing skill, the light coming from the soil became brighter.

-The health of the Sacred Soil has temporarily become stronger.

Time remaining: 20 min

Originally the soil possessed the power of healing. When Ark added the blessing effect from Nursing, the health of the Sacred Soil immediately became strong again. Once Ark saw the effects, he continuously used Nursing until all his mana ran out. But since it was spread over a large area, Ark could only extend the time limit to 4 hours.

‘The fire is put out for the moment thanks to Nursing. But I can’t just stand here nursing and extending the time limit forever. When there is time, I have to move the soil to Lancel Village.’

There must be a way to move the soil to Lancel Village.

‘But I can’t move this much soil by myself. If I can’t mobilize the residents of the village then it will become difficult.’

However, the villagers were currently in conflict and might not listen to Ark. The method to persuade the villagers.....

‘I have to make them think that the soil is completely necessary.’

Once he organized his thoughts, he quickly swept a small amount of Sacred Soil into his pocket. Then he immediately ran to find Galen in Lancel Village.

“What is going on? You said there was something to show?”

It was early morning in New World, and Galen was still waking up when he asked tiredly. However, he soon forgot about sleep as his expression lightened.

‘Huk, this, this is.....?’

‘As expected!’

Ark gripped his fist tightly. When he was confirming the Sacred Soil information, the part about promoting growth attracted Ark's attention. Lancel Village was suffering because of the food situation. The bad conditions of the crops for this harvest made the situation worse. It was because the fields had been devastated. But if they used the condensed power of the Sacred Soil.....

'Yggdrasil's protection would help with Lancel Village's food situation. But the effect might not solve the food crisis straight away.'

But if the soil promoted the growth of the crops then it would help solve the problem. That was when he thought of the plan to convince the residents to move the soil. As a trial Ark sprinkled a bit of the Sacred Soil in the field. The result was more than expected! The plants that were withered became shinier while the seeds became thicker. Galen's reaction was natural since he had been worrying about the food problem.

"D-did you perform some magic on the earth?"

"Let's move somewhere else and discuss it there."

There was no reason to rush now that he had confirmed the effect on the plants. Ark gathered the residents in the Town Hall and explained the situation to them.

"Sacred Soil! You really found it?"

Hanson shouted in surprise after his explanation. Since Galen still looked confused, Hanson explained it to him.

"The Sacred Soil is the soil that has absorbed the earth's power. It has absorbed that power over hundreds of years. But I don't know if there would be an effect on the growth of the crops....."

"I've already tested it."

Ark grinned and replied. Galen flinched and looked at Ark.

“Then that was the dirt that you threw on the field before?”

“Yes, I sprinkled the ground with Sacred Soil.”

“So it was like that?”

Hanson nodded.

“But according to Ark’s explanation, the power of the Sacred Soil won’t last for much longer. But all the crops are ahead of the harvest. If we are able to maintain the harvest while moving the Sacred Soil and sowing it in, the profit would certainly increase this year.”

“Oh, doesn’t that sound exactly like what Lancel Village needs? How much is there?”

At that moment, all the attention was focused on Ark. If the amount of soil was small then it wouldn’t be any good. Ark paused for a moment before he spoke with a smile.

“There is more than enough to help Lancel Village.”

“Wah ah ah!”

After the tension was broken, the residents cheered with joy. Galen even embraced Ark with tears in his eyes.

“Thank you, Ark! You really are the embodiment of Lancel Village!”

Frankly, Ark never imagined that there would be that much Sacred Soil. Ark had thought there would only be a small handful of the Sacred Soil. Since there was a lot more than expected, he had to think about how to use it.

“But we can’t give you that much in return.”

It was Ark that settled the problem every time something happened in Lancel Village! Galen wanted to do something for Ark and looked at him with an anxious expression. Ark felt refreshed at that moment.

‘What am I doing?’

He had searched for the Sacred Soil to solve the food situation because it would increase Lancel Village’s value. However, he was about to give such a large amount of soil for free? Was he crazy? Although it was also for a quest, if there was no quest compensation then what was the point?

‘I found a unique shield and forgot about my hungry spirit.....you’re pathetic Ark!’

He was disappointed in himself. He even felt anger.

‘After reflecting I have to fix it!’

Ark regretted it deeply.

‘It is possible to receive a price for the dirt. But I can’t ask for something too excessive. First I have to check how useful the soil is in raising my intimacy with the village before asking compensation. In addition, I have to request something that all the residents can pay.....’

“I am willing to receive any compensation with gratitude. But how about we transfer the soil first? It is best to move it as soon as possible so that the harvest will increase and the residents will be warm for winter. We can discuss the small matter of my compensation afterwards.”

“You are different from the other foreigners. If it was other foreigners, they would be trying to get the profit first.....”

“Hahaha, as expected from the Truthseeker!”

The Meow elder Hassan struck his stomach as he laughed. Hanson, the raccoon clan and even the villagers looked at Ark with great respect.

‘Oppa is my hero.’

Sarah wrote that sentence on the palm of his hand. Galen nodded and looked at Ark with proud eyes.

“I take my hat off to you. Alright. After the work is done, I promise I will give you a worthy reward for your efforts. I hope all the villagers will as well.”

‘Huhuhu, that’s right. By acting to this degree then I can receive the best reward!’

Galen’s words lit a fire in Ark’s heart.

“Then work will start immediately. Even if we start now, it will still take a few days.”

“Okay, gather the villagers who want to help move the soil!”

Then JusticeMan nodded and stood up.

“All the people training at the camp will also help.

“If we want to eat together then we should help too. We’ll patrol and prevent monsters from attacking when moving the soil.”

“I’ll make a cart.”

Hassan and the raccoon clan also volunteered and left. The village that had been suffering insecurity and strife thanks to the food crisis suddenly regained hope and vigour. Everyone raised their hands and the ambitious land reformation project began. When the residents were joined by JusticeMan’s rehabilitation group, there were 700 people available. The raccoon clan made carts while the Meow

warriors shouldered the responsibility of guarding the residents as they headed towards the valley. And the rest of the people gathered the soil and moved it.

However Ark was the busiest person. There was a huge amount of Sacred Soil. No matter how thirsty he was, he had to use nursing on the soil evenly. If one part of the soil was affected too deeply or not deeply enough then the effects of nursing would disappear when the soil was moved. Therefore Ark had to continuously go around and use Nursing. Apart from that.....a great amount of soil was gathered onto the carts and carried to the village. And scattering it in the fields appeared to be very effective. The withered crops quickly became shiny again while the seeds grew thicker. Thanks to that, the residents were even more inspired to spread the soil. Sarah scattered the soil eagerly with her hands.

“Sarah, you don’t have to do that.”

Sarah smiled as Ark approached. She spread both arms with a wide grin. She enjoyed working together with everyone. Cute! She was different from Jana. Jana just sat on a nearby roof shaking her tail. The other Meow was patrolling the area while she was alone with her favourite things.

“Jana! You should follow Sarah’s example!”

“I’m a shaman. Have you ever seen a shaman do any labour?”

Jana muttered as she stretched and yawned.

Just then.....

Roco returned riding the unicorn and scoffed.

“Bah, there are no shamans who laze around like you.”

“Sheesh, another noisy woman has showed up.”

Jana replied and turned around to lie on her side. While Jana slept, Roco approached Ark on the unicorn.

“Oppa, the Meow has dealt with the monsters on the hill.”

“Really? Then I guess we have to go up the hill. Go tell Galen in the valley that the route has changed. This operation is going to be a few hours ahead of schedule.”

“Okay. Sarah, don’t you want to see the valley? Come with me.”

Roco laughed as she approached on the unicorn. In the meantime, Roco had become quite close to Sarah. Even though she was a child, Roco initially watched her quite closely. Roco was more jealous of Jana who kept on trying to seduce Ark. Sarah who had only travelled with Hanson quickly became friends with Roco.

“Pururuk!”

Sarah hesitated until the unicorn kneeled down beside her. Ark’s face crinkled in displeasure. Once again, Ark wanted to kill it.....if it hadn’t hidden behind a woman or a child then that bastard would’ve died by now!

“Oppa, I’m going now. Come on Unicorn.”

“Hihihihing!”

The two women got on its back before the unicorn got up and started running.

‘If only I can breed it and get the horns from the offspring, then I would eat it straight away.....’

Ark stared at the unicorn until JusticeMan came up to him and muttered.

“Ark. I wanted to say something.”

“Yes?” What is it?”

“Honestly, the food situation in Lancel Village became worse because of us. Galen said it was fine but we couldn’t help noticing.....so I’m really glad about the good news. Now we can also hold our heads high.”

Sincerity was in JusticeMan’s voice. He didn’t show it but JusticeMan had been struggling with the situation inside his head. Ark felt a little strange after listening to him. Unlike Ark, JusticeMan had experienced every event in the game with NPCs. Was it because of that? While Ark thought of it as a game, sometimes JusticeMan felt like New World was reality. Of course, New World was more meaningful than just a game to Ark. But it wasn’t to the extent that he would feel sorrow and joy in quick succession for the circumstances of the NPC.

‘Well, it might be fun to play the game that way.’

However for Ark, New World was money! The reason he was nice to NPCs was because they were free money!

‘I can’t afford to play the game like ajusshi. I can’t lose my original intention. If I don’t get money then there is no reason to play New World. No, it isn’t possible.’

Because it was so busy, the operation was almost finished. Then a problem that he hadn’t thought of occurred. They had spent 20 hours carrying and spreading soil. It was more than 2 days for the NPC residents. When the residents who were spreading the soil became tired, the working speed decreased immediately. But fatigue wasn’t the only problem.

“Hey, that soil belongs to my field first.

“What are you talking about? You’ve spread soil on your field many times already.”

“The soil that is scattered on my field doesn’t have a lot of power. The crops didn’t turn out that good!”

“Noisy, do you know how long I had to move that soil?”

The field that was sprinkled with the Sacred Soil first would of course grow faster. Over time, the difference showed itself in the residents frantically trying to sow their fields first. That was one reason that the pace slowed down.

“Please wait.”

As soon as the two farmers tried to grab each other’s throat, Ark had to jump in between them. He approached the field and laid both hands against the ground before using Nursing.

“Great Earth, please provide power to this site and allow your children to grow strong!”

He could see a bright light as power poured into the soil. Ark produced a huge sigh.

“Now it’s done. This field will be fine for a while.”

“Y-you……!”

The farmers who were watching jumped in dumb surprise and lifted a finger. There was a nosebleed dripping on Ark’s face. Although the concept of time was different for the NPCs, the 20 hours that Ark spent working on this wasn’t easy. Since he ran around and used Nursing continuously, it wasn’t a surprise that he got a nosebleed. So Ark just smiled and wiped off the nosebleed like it wasn’t a big deal.

“I’m fine. If all the residents make an effort then I will be satisfied. Please continue carrying the soil without fighting. I’ll make sure there is enough power for a good harvest, even if my body becomes broken.”

The farmers looked at him before grasping his hand.

“Sorry. We must have seemed crazy for a while.”

"I don't know what you think of us.....we were also harsh to you the other day. Then you saw us fighting when you have been working hard for two days without resting..... Shameful. I'm really ashamed."

"I was blinded by greed. This soil should be scattered on your field."

"No no. Don't you have a family? You should have a better harvest."

"I will not. I'll just move the soil a little bit faster and more eagerly."

"That's right, that the only way to return Ark's favour!"

The farmers who were impressed with Ark's actions didn't complain any more. Then work continued again until one day had passed. But unlike the first expectations, the situation was gradually getting worse.

'Huk huk huk, it is really never-ending.'

Ark couldn't rest and had to run around using Nursing. When he first made this plan, he had remained optimistic about the time. He thought it would take approximately one day to transfer the soil and 2~3 days for the crops to improve before they could be harvested. It would be difficult but he could use Nursing until then. But when he actually did it, things weren't that easy. When he restored the Sacred Soil in one area, he would immediately have to run somewhere else to restore that soil. When he paused for even a little bit, it would return to ordinary dirt. Ark couldn't become complacent since he was doing it alone.

"Take this!"

Ark looked at the Sacred Soil that had become ordinary with resentment. But he couldn't show his resentment. The Sacred Soil had just lost its power right in front of him. Ark renewed it and turned around.

'If I give up here then the quest will fail.....I really want to clear this now!'

In these circumstances it was difficult to have high expectations for the crops. Even if it returned to ordinary soil it still had an influence on the crops, so it should improve by 20% at least? In addition, he still hadn't prepared the necessary soil for Popo.

'Hang in there! There's only a little bit more time until I can plant you Popo!'

However, his legs felt weak and he started to feel dizzy. While before he had spent 24 hours alternating between resting and hunting, now he was spending the same amount of time running around like crazy while using one skill repeatedly. Then someone caught Ark's shoulders. He saw that it was Galen and the farmers.

"Ark, you're being too unreasonable. You should rest for a moment."

"B-but....."

"I know. While you're resting the soil will return to normal. But you have already done a lot for us. It's not just the crops. We have really cherished what you taught us."

"Yes, even if the soil returns to normal the crops will still be better than before."

"You don't have to do so much anymore."

"Even if the crops don't turn out well, nobody will blame you."

Galen and the farmers spoke as they looked at him with affection. However, he didn't feel that thankful.

'They dare to say that now?'

They had been complaining from the very beginning. Ark almost died running around because of the quest as well as the real estate market price! And now he told to just give up and waste all that suffering? It wasn't enough.

“If I give up here then I wouldn’t be able to forgive myself!”

Ark squeezed out every bit of power and used Nursing.

“The Sacred Soil! Please exert more power!”

Instantaneously, an amazing sight occurred. Under Ark’s care, the spread of Nursing expanded and the light spread over all the fields. At the same time, a message window appeared in front of Ark with spectacular sound effects.

The Miracle Nursing was successful.

The earth isn’t just simply soil. It is the source that gives power to all life and the world will suffer hunger and disease if that power is lost. You have treasured the soil and begun the healing process. Without caring about your life, you have continued to nurse the injured earth. That dedication and effort has touched the earth. The land that was losing its power will listen to the voices of the existences it bears and return the favour. And the power of the amazing miracle will enrich the entire soil.

* Due to the success of miracle nursing, all stats increase by 1.

* The Affection stat increased by 10.

* Fame increases by 50.

* Increased the alignment to good by 50.]

* The effect of ‘Sacred Soil’ will rise by 1.5 times and last for 6 months.

The Miracle Nursing was a success and you have acquired the title 'Caretaker of the Land'

Your fame as a Caretaker has increased, so you will receive praises from many people.

* As a title bonus all stats will increase by 1.

* Fame increased by 50.

'The Miracle Nursing!'

With a flash, Ark realized what was happening. Miracle Nursing only occurred when he felt true affection for his patient. However, Ark had only cared about the real estate prices while nursing. Real estate.....In other words, the earth. He was committed to maintaining the real estate price of the land. In other words, it was caused by Ark's obsession for money. The result was truly spectacular.

'Wow, this, unbelievable.....!'

Galen stared at the field with shocked eyes. When the light spread like a wave over the crops, they regained a shine that couldn't be compared to before. The fruit instantly became firmer while the number of seeds increased. It was truly a miracle!

"Ark.....You really.....!"

Galen had stumbled to the shining soil and touched it with quivering hands. The farmers were also crying as they kept on staring at Ark. Ark had laid down so they could only stare at his back. After the tension had been released then all the fatigue came rushing in and he became dizzy. But even the sense of fatigue felt sweet. It was an unspeakable sense of accomplishment!

"I did it.....!"

Ark was stunned and then he fell asleep. He faintly heard the voices of the villagers calling his name.

While he had slept for 2~3 hours, all the work had been completed. The amount of Sacred Soil was enough to make an entirely new field every time they sprinkled it. Thanks to that, the food situation in Lancel Village grew by 60% while the growth of the surrounding forest also rose by 40%. The rehabilitated thieves also kept on improving. But the real change in Lancel Village was just starting. While the work was entering the final stage, Ark headed towards the centre of the village. A dirt bed of suitable width had already been created in the town centre.

The raccoons had dug a large pit and poured out the Sacred Soil until 1/4th of the bed was filled again. He judged that the seeds of Yggdrasil would require that much to grow. As the residents watched, Ark pulled the seed out of his bag. Once he sprinkled water on the soil bed, an amazing spectacle occurred. It looked like a video as light formed a bud, which rose until it formed a tree trunk and branches grew from the trunk. Once the tree was covered with blue leaves, an information window appeared.

Yggdrasil's seed has been rooted in Lancel Village.

Yggdrasil is a sacred tree that maintains the balance. While the tree is growing, Popo cannot communicate. But once Lancel Village receives Yggdrasil's protection, the village will grow quickly. When Yggdrasil grows, the effect given will rise.

* The likelihood of the village being attacked by monsters will reduce by 50%.

* The development speed of the village will increase by 50%.

* The value of the village rises by 50%.

* All NPCs who are resting in the village will have their recovery rate increased by 200%.

*The fame of the village increases by 1000.

‘Indeed.....!’

Ark’s forecast was correct. Planting Yggdrasil who was the patron of the Underground World had a considerable effect on Lancel Village. Once again, the whole day was a worthwhile investment. The value of Lancel Village rose when Popo’s roots were planted. In addition, the effects would grow as Popo grew. This was a stepping stone for the development of Lancel Village. But when Popo grew a branch, the ones who appreciated it the most was the raccoon clans. They surrounded Popo and cheered wildly.

“Yggdrasil!”

“Oh, to think that I would see the birth of the patron with my own eyes!”

Yggdrasil was like a god to the raccoons. When they escaped from the Underground World, the one thing they missed more than home was Yggdrasil. But now Yggdrasil had been planted in Lancel Village. Now the rest of the raccoons would work harder to become a part of Lancel Village.

‘It would be more profitable for me as well.’

Ark made a satisfied looking smile.

-Thank you, Ark!

One of Popo's branches abruptly shook and a solemn voice was heard.

'Yggdrasil?'

-Thanks to Popo, I can now observe the world's history. In addition, you have provided the raccoons from the Underground World a chance at a new life. All this is because of you.

"I am also glad."

Ark replied with a smile. Of course, Ark wasn't happy because of Yggdrasil's words. It was because of money. However, he had no intention of telling Yggdrasil that and accepted the thanks gracefully.

-Although this might be insufficient compared to your efforts, but will you accept it?

It was at that time. The light focused on one branch and it broke off.

Sacred Branch (Special)

This Sacred Branch grew from the Sacred Soil. If you always carry this Sacred Branch around with you then you will also receive the effects of Yggdrasil's protection. Even if you were in a desert, you will be able to have a comfortable rest under the shade of a tree and there are opportunities for unforeseen good fortune to occur. In addition, you will be able to communicate with Yggdrasil from anywhere in the world.

* Luck + 30

* The probability of succeeding all skills +10%

* Probability of finding a magic item + 20%

* When resting inside a house, Health and Mana Regeneration +30%

* Able to communicate remotely with Yggdrasil.

-The quest 'Sacred Soil' has been completed.