

Ark Vol 7 C 4

Chapter 4

ACT 4 Slime's Immortality Pill

'Hehehe, what kind of luck it this?'

The residents were all watching Ark like he was a hero. This whole show was to obtain items. But an embarrassing giggle kept on escaping from his mouth. Planting Yggdrasil's seed! He honestly didn't have high expectations for that quest. He thought he would only receive experience, fame and an increase in intimacy. There was a reason Ark thought like that. In the Underground World, he had gone through all that suffering to defeated the awakened Heartsoul Bead and save Yggdrasil. At the time he had been satisfied receiving the Dark Piece but after thinking about it later, he realised that he didn't receive adequate compensation. The Dark Piece would've been passed to Ark anyway thanks to the ancient vow with Hero Maban.

'Didn't that old tree guy manage to stealthily avoid giving me a reward?'

It was a breach of trust! Therefore he hadn't been that concerned about the quest when he received it. Furthermore, Yggdrasil who gave the quest was in the Underground World. Popo was just a seed so he couldn't give compensation. But he was rewarded in this way! Yggdrasil had been saved and he planted the seed.....

Although there was a lot of time in between, this was a connected quest. And the reward he received was because of how long the quest took. It was a sacred branch with a faint light glowing along its length! The success rate of his skills would increase by 10%. Needless to say this was the best option. Compared to other games, the failure rate of skills in New World was a lot higher. This applied to passive skills and active skills like Dark Blade as well as skills like Survival Cooking. The higher the skill level the higher the failure rate would increase. Of course, if he carefully used the skill then the success rate would rise but he could still fail thanks to the system. In the case of a warrior or wizard, it might be the final blow before dying! When producing advanced materials, it might fail at the last moment! When a skill failed then the damage was incredible. Therefore the items that increased skill success when items that all users drooled over. But there was a separate option that made Ark happy.

'The probability of finding magic items increases by 20%!'

The item drop rate in New World wasn't that high. The reality was the one had to fight countless amounts of monsters before finding a general item. Rather than selling it in shops, they would have to use it until the performance fails. It also wasn't easy to change equipment when you have levelled up. Ark had used the equipment purchased in the beginner village until level 60~70. That was the reason why New World's item prices grew over time. In particular, the magic items would sell for a lot of money. Although rare and unique items would sell for a lot of money, the chances of them being sold were atrocious. It was similar to trying to win the lottery. On the other hand, magic items appeared pretty steadily.

'Magic items are a stable income. If there is an extra 20% chance of finding magic items then that is a 20% increase in profit!'

In addition, he could just simply put the Sacred Branch in his bag. There was no need to change his equipment and it could be used forever.

'Other people might not understand but this is the best item for me.'

"Thank you very much. Ark-nim has brought back our faith and beliefs. Now we can live here peacefully in the future."

The raccoon clan had approached after he received the Sacred Branch. They had previously talked to him roughly but now they were using honorifics. Once he had planted Yggdrasil, his intimacy with the raccoons immediately shot up. No, aside from intimacy they also had a lot of respect for him. He possessed a branch of Yggdrasil who they served so all their doubts were gone.

"You have kept your promise of friendship with Yggdrasil."

"Ooh"

The raccoons murmured. Ark became even more awesome in their eyes and they considered him as a friend.

"Please tell us if you ever need us for anything."

“We will do our best to help.”

“Thank you. Those words.....I will never forget them.”

Ark smiled as he replied. Having skilled craftsmen owe him a favour would definitely be useful.

‘Now shall we cut to the chase?’

Ark turned around and walked towards the general store. It was time to put things in order. Even if he moved the Sacred Soil, the ones that benefited the most was Lancel Village. He made that decision to peacefully complete the quest.....if Ark did the NPCs a favour then shouldn't he receive a compensation? Ark believed in words with good will and put it into practice. If he gave something then he should receive something in return. That was the first step to a bright and cheery community.

‘I don't know when this opportunity will come again. It's better to do it when the atmosphere is nice.’

“Welcome Ark!”

When he entered the shop, Galen greeted him cheerfully.

“You really found an enormous amount of Sacred Soil. The amount of crops planted has been doubled and we will soon be able to harvest it. It should take 2~3 days. Can you believe that? Thanks to you this coming winter.....No, we won't have to worry about food for the next few years!”

“I'm glad I was in the village to help.”

Really glad. Because he'll be able to extract even more!

“But the compensation we were talking about the other day.....”

At Ark's words Galen steadily became more tense. However his intimacy with Galen was the best so he quickly smiled generously.

"Of course. I already told you that I would give as much as possible."

'Hmm, will it be as expected?'

He'll accept anything within a certain range. In the past, such Galen had said that he would give anything in his power. In fact.....the compensation for this system was the most difficult. When doing a favour for a NPC, if someone asks for an excessively extravagant item or money then of course it wouldn't be accepted. But Ark had also experienced this failure.

When he headed to Cairo from Giran, he had save an injured hunter in the forest. The hunter initially said the same thing.

"You are a life saver. I'll give you whatever is possible for me to give."

Ark had asked for his bow without thinking. Even since the blind auction, Ark's keen eyes were already at a considerable standard. He could estimate the value just by looking at it. The hunter didn't appear to have money. However the bow was made of considerably good materials.

'It is at least a magic item!'

He secretly coveted it! But at his suggestion, the hunter's attitude had a 180 degree change.

"I didn't realize that you were a person with no shame and decency. Are you asking me to give you an heirloom that has been passed down through generations of my family?"

"But didn't you say you would give anything possible?"

"I clearly said that I would offer compensation. I meant things like recovery potions or food, not this valuable heirloom that is worth more than my life. However you used to opportunity for absurd demands, so you're even worse than a jackal!"

"No, it's not....."

"That's enough. I feel ashamed that I owe a favour to a man like you!"

Therefore the hunter gave him some recovery potions and walked away ranting. Ark had forgotten that unpleasant memory for a while but he remembered it again. New World was a huge game. And the people who lived here were NPCs..... They might speak and behave like an artificial intelligence, but in the end they were just a part of the system. Just like people can't escape the physical laws, the NPCs can't escape the rules of the system. There was an upper limit of what they could give to a user. Even if it was a quest received from an aristocrat, a level 1 user couldn't receive the reward that a level 100 user could. This was one of the laws of New World, just like the physical laws in reality.

But it was fortunate that the rules weren't as tight in New World as they were in reality. If the level 1 user judged the situation well, while he couldn't receive a level 100 reward he could at least be rewarded something 10 levels higher. The technology might that he could receive the maximum benefit as long as it was within the upper limit. Sometimes the reward depended on the choice of the user. That was the freedom of New World!

When Galen had offered a reward, Ark had postponed it for the moment. Once all the Sacred Soil was transferred and Galen saw how much it benefited the town, hopefully he would be willing to offer a compensation at the upper limit. However, the situation was the same as before. But the width of the upper limit would rise a little bit more than before.

'I can probably request an item or money immediately.'

The problem was that Lancel Village wasn't an abundant village. Also the finances had gone down in recent years thanks to all the construction! It was the worst time to ask for a reward. The compensation that he could receive in such a situation was clear. It was probably a common item with an upper limit of 100 gold. Of course, the quest occurred by chance but to only receive 100 gold.....

'I rescued 700 people from a food crisis just for 100 gold? As expected, something is lacking.'

For Ark, receiving money right now wasn't urgent. He only had a bag of money, but once Sid returned he would receive thousands of gold. There was no reason to hang himself for 100 gold. At that time, an idea popped into Ark's head.

'Since I don't need money now, I'll make a long term investment!'

In New World, a user could invest in a village or city. Once a certain amount was invested, the user would obtain a share of the village just like the village chief or Lord. However, there was a prerequisite first. The only way to invest was to have a real estate, guild office or rental warehouse in the village or city. While they were eligible, there was no guarantee that they would be able to invest unconditionally. The grade of the house, the market share, the user's fame or intimacy with the place were all factors that could affect the investment. Therefore, Ark hadn't been too interested in investing. But now he possessed a house in Lancel Village!

He had met the minimum eligibility requirements. Thanks to the additional effects of Yggdrasil, Ark was convinced that Lancel Village's development would rapidly increase in the future.

'Lancel Village is an unknown mountain town. The land value is at its lowest right now. But if it develops accordingly thanks to Yggdrasil, it will soon be registered as a formal village. Then the land price would also rise. Yes, this was the time for an investment!'

It was worthy of a long term real estate investment. Finally, Ark's methods of gaining money would expand to the lucrative real estate market. Whether it was hunting, fraud or real estate speculations.....if he earned money then who cared what method he used? After Ark organized his thoughts, he spoke in a deliberately anxious voice.

"I've been trying to think of an appropriate reward without affecting the village too much. Hasn't the village's finances decreased in recent years due to the construction projects?"

"As expected, you have consideration for such things. Yes, our finances are a little tight at the moment."

Galen let out a deep sigh. Then Ark quickly said.

“But declining your sincerity would be rude. Therefore I came to a conclusion about my worries. I want to help restore the village.”

“Restore?”

“Yes, instead of receiving a reward how about I receive a stake in the village?”

“A stake in the village?”

“I have a house in Lancel Village so don't I qualify for a stake?”

“Certainly but.....”

Even if it was a low value pioneering village, they couldn't just give a share of the village so easily. However, words have different meanings just like 'Ah' was different from 'Eh.' If he just asked for a stake in the village then Galen may have felt discomfort. But Ark used the word 'Restore.' The difference was surprisingly large. He gave the impression that it wasn't for a profit but was instead for the village. Galen thought for a while and nodded.

“I see. While Lancel Village normally wouldn't transfer a share to a foreigner, we owe a great debt to you. If you don't want a reward then we'll give you a share. 2% should be a suitable compensation for your efforts. How about it?”

700 people lived in the village yet he received a compensation of 2%. If Lancel Village grew as expected, then it wouldn't be easy to obtain even 0.1% percent of a share.

‘It is a case where having high intimacy with a NPC increased the upper limit. If I become greedier then I might not receive any compensation. But.....’

An opportunity to receive shares wasn't that common. It would take a lot of money just to meet the minimum requirements. So if there was an opportunity to increase it by even 0.1% more than shouldn't he take it?

‘Okay, it’s all or nothing! I’ll try it.’

“Can you wait a minute? My stomach is a little sore.....”

Ark made an excuse and left the store. Then he pulled something out of his bag and drank it. It was the ‘Drink of Bewitchment’ that Roco used to seduce the unicorn! It was a drink that increased his charm by 300%. Aside from users, even the unicorn was affected by the drink that Ark made. If the effect was so powerful then he might be able to use it to increase his reward. Ark entered the general store again.

“Can’t you make it 3%?”

“3, 3%? Aren’t you being a little greedy? Don’t you know how amazing the shares of the village are? Even though it is a pioneering village, 2% isn’t a small amount.”

That was Galen’s immediate reaction. However he had already expected that reaction.

“.....Of course I know. Ajusshi has presented the shares with sincerity, but.....to be called greedy.”

A tear dropped from Ark’s eyes while he made a sad expression.

“As you know, I’m a foreigner. Ever since we were born our destiny was to wander around, never settling in one place. And I had accepted that fate until a little while ago. But my heart has ended up shaken. Galen is a great leader of the village and is like an uncle to me. Yes, I thought that I wouldn’t mind spending the rest of my life in this place.”

“Um.....”

“But I had to leave Lancel Village. That’s because it is the fate of the foreigners. While I wandered around and met lots of people, I sent some of them back here and my heart was shaken again. Then I returned to Lancel and realized clearly. Yes, although I was born with a wandering fate, my home was here. It is my shelter and my hometown!”

Ark seemed to express all his emotions.

"I'm not interested in things like the land. I never thought about being greedy. But my greed has emerged due to my affection for Lancel Village. I love this village and would like to have a bit more of the land. I suppose I'm cheeky for wanting more. So that even if my body is away from Lancel Village, I will always feel like I'm a part of the residents. That was how I became greedy. But.....I suppose my greed became too excessive."

Ark sighed heavily. Galen silently watched until his eyes became red and teary.

".....I'm sorry. I misunderstood you. I had no idea you felt that way. I am ashamed of myself. I should've known that you weren't a person who would request something without a reason.....I forgot about all the work you've done so far....."

'It has a large effect!'

Ark inwardly cheered. If the NPC showed these reactions then he was already halfway successful. But he had to stay vigilant until the end. Ark said with a lighter expression.

"No. My greed was too excessive. I'm flattered that you would give a wanderer like me 2%."

"Please don't say that. I apologize."

Galen eventually gave in.

"I understand your sentiment. But 3% is impossible. I can't even increase it to 2.5%. Instead I will give you the right to extend your house, and once the enlargement ends then you can invest 5%. How about that?"

"Thank you."

Ark grabbed Galen's hands. Dududung, with the sound effect a new information window popped up.

You have obtained a share of Lancel Village.

A player who owns a house can earn the right to obtain a share of the village. The value of the share will rise as the village grows. When the village earns a big profit, it is possible to apply for a special dividend. Conversely, you can be charged money for anything that threatens the village such as famine, being attacked by monsters and so on.

The upper limit of the share that 1 player can obtain from the village is 2%. However, if you manage to upgrade your house then that upper limit will increase.

Currently owned shares in Lancel Village (Owned/Upper Limit): 2.5/2.5%

'I did it!'

Ark stared at the information window with delight. Lancel Village wasn't simply a high affinity village anymore and had transformed into an investment product. Of course, he didn't know how much profit the shares would bring. However, the Sacred Soil has promised a great harvest for the next few years. In addition to Yggdrasil's protection, there were 300 ex-thieves who could occupy any position. There was no reason for the commercial value to fall.

'When Lancel Village grows then I will get more profit from the shares!'

There was no reason to hesitate to obtain an investment. When Ark left the store, he immediately went to find the raccoon clan.

"Ark-nim wants to extend his cabin to general housing?"

“Galen ajusshi has already given permission.”

“Then of course you’ll have it. That fact that Ark lives in such a squalid place actually was weighing on our minds. We will start tomorrow after calculating the labour and material cost.”

The raccoons also had to earn a living. Ark sold all the magic ingredients and earned 50 gold. He agree to give a little settlement for the construction materials, depending on the value.

“For Ark we’ll use the best workmanship.”

They extended the 8th grade cabin to a 7th grade general housing. But it didn’t look like the same house. Even though it had the same acreage, the value would change depending on how well it was built. The raccoons were the best craftsmen, so the best housing was built.

‘Once Sid brings the money, I need to invest as much as possible when the upper limit is raised.’

Ark’s special affection for Lancel Village wasn’t a lie. When his assets in the village grows, his affection for it would also grow.

‘Isn’t Lancel Village located at the intermediate point between Jackson and Giran?’

It was only a matter of time before he was sitting on a cushion of money! He felt like a rosy future was unfolding before his eyes.

“Oh, I’m tired”

He wanted to go sleep on time but there's always something else to do in an online game.....when that happens then a few hours always passes without him noticing. Didn't that show how addictive New World was? Since he had to go gym and remember to eat, he only ended up sleeping for 3~4 hours most nights.

"Since the exercise benefits the game, I can't complain."

That was Hyun-woo's strong point. He had made a firm resolve to never give up. He believed that when a person was determined, they would be able to do most of the work. 5 years ago, he never imagined that he would be able to pay his mother's hospital bills as well as the costs of living. But didn't he somehow manage to do it with his firm resolve? He managed to survive the hardship and lived. Napoleon's saying that nothing was impossible was nonsense. Why would nothing be impossible? There were impossible things. It could be found anywhere.

"Hu hu hu hu."

There was a sudden warm smile on Hyun-woo's mouth. The sacred steel shield he obtained from Colossus had to be registered.. It was a level 120 unique shield! How much would he get from it? Hyun-woo couldn't resist and turned on the computer before accessing the auction site.

"The unique blunt weapon I obtained from Valderas sold for 12,000,000 won. The price for a defensive item would usually be less than a weapon but it has a level restriction of 120. Once they see the options then it is possible to receive as much as the unique blunt weapon."

In New World, the largest profession are the warriors. It was an important factor in determining the demand price. Unique items for warriors would sell at a more expensive price.

"Okay, let's use this opportunity."

Hyun-woo boldly set the starting price for the auction at 10,000,000 won. The auction period was two weeks since it might take hours to receive the first offer.

"Now I just have to wait. Then.....isn't today the last day to submit the report?"

It was once again the submission date for the reports. As always, Hyun-woo quickly wrote the report before the deadline. This time he had a lot of things to include in the report. But since there was only 1 hour remaining, Hyun-woo wrote sparsely and focused on the important bits. He immediately relaxed his body after the email was sent.

“Phew, I barely made it in time. Should I go to sleep now?”

Hyun-Woo yawned and stretched.

“Alan-nim. It’s been a long time.”

‘Alan?’

He heard a name that had been forgotten for a while on the TV. The familiar face of the reporter smiled and said.

“Alan has always given the impression that he is the centre of New World. Everybody already knows about how you took 1st place in the Event Quest. And didn’t you manage to occupy a castle in Nagaran not too long ago? In addition, you have already successfully defeated two sieges. Everyone is probably wondering this.....what is Alan’s trick?”

“Although I’ve said this before but I’m not playing the game by myself. Luckily I’m in charge of the ‘Dawn Blade’ guild and the results are because of their hard work.”

“Ah, you’re really humble.”

The reporter said and continued to praise him.

“Occupying a castle must give you a significant income. Will Alan-nim soon become rich?”

"I've never thought of making money off New World. New World is good as it is and the users and NPCs are also very nice. I wanted to occupy a castle in order to make New World more interesting for them."

"Brilliant. So what are your future plans?"

"I'm currently expanding the estates. Once the estates in Nagaran are developed then a lot of content will be available."

"That means you have confidence that you can defend the castle in the future."

"Of course."

"Then can we broadcast the siege?"

"That is a little difficult. Since it will show our strategies for the battle. If you broadcast our strategy then all the hostiles guild will know it. It would be a significant penalty. Therefore the siege will have to be private for the moment. Please understand."

"It is a pity. But I understand."

At the end of his words the scene changed.

'That Alan.....he had already occupied a castle?'

His feelings were complicated. In fact, the candidates had started one month later than the other users and therefore had a penalty. When he compared it to the pioneers he fought last time, it was actually two months. Nevertheless, Alan was growing steadily. He didn't know whether he should feel glad or sad. Since Alan was a candidate, he was a rival. Furthermore, there was a hostile relationship between Alan and Hyun-woo. They would definitely cross paths again and he was a formidable opponent.

'I don't know what will happen.....but there's no time to be playing around.'

Even if he died trying, he had to catch up with Alan. If he was even a little negligent then the difference would become even bigger. There was no time to relax. He had to earn even just 1% more experience or 1 more copper. Hyun-woo felt like he was being pursued as he returned to the unit. Hyun-woo entered the game again.

Although he was being chased, his actions were still reasonable. The reason that he reduced his sleeping time and arrived at Lancel Village again was because of Sid. When Sid came back then he could proceed with the quest. But he had to first meet up with Shambala in Selebrid.....There was a lot of things to be done. Before Sid arrived, he had to finish everything in Lancel Village. Because he was being pursued. However, there had been no contact from Sid. Furthermore, it felt like it took a long time for things to progress. It had been 23 days since Ark arrived in Lancel Village. If he included the time in the Evil Silrion, it had been one month. Disposing of items worth 5,500 gold would be somewhat time consuming, but wasn't he taking too long?

'I wonder if something happened?'

When he was busy he didn't think about it, but now his misgivings had started to appear. 58% of the items left to Sid was Ark's share. It was 3,190 gold! If he invested more money than he would've received more profit in return. The reason he wasted 200 gold on the Corrupted Fairy wings and investing in shares of Lancel Village was because he thought he would be receiving a large amount of money soon. He thought that he could afford a long term investment. But what if something went wrong? In New World his entire fortune was gathered there.....just the thought made him sweat.

'Damn, this is why people don't invest. A secure investment like that with a guaranteed profit actually makes me this anxious.....is it only people with a heart of steel that doesn't feel anxious about investments?'

Ark quickly shook his head.

‘Yes, it isn’t necessary to think negatively. Sid might be a little naive but he is still a merchant. He knows a lot more than me. Since I bought it at a 40% discount then it is impossible to lose money. Sid might be taking his time to try and earn even more money.’

He hadn’t left his entire fortune in Sid’s hands without thinking about it. Although he failed once and had a bad credit, the hobbit was a fairly resourceful merchant. He was even more cautious because he experienced the failure.

‘Anyway, a month has passed so he should arrive in a few more days. Until then let’s try something new.’

Of course, the first thing he thought of was hunting. But his level had already rose significantly in Lancel Village. The monsters in the vicinity won’t give him much experience anymore. When hunting high level monsters, the addition experience was 10% per 5 levels. However with low level monsters it was the opposite, with every 5 levels lower having a penalty of 10%. But if he couldn’t fight high level monsters then it was better to chase a group of them such as the hook bats. However, Ark needed to kill a lot of them thanks to the experience conversion. Therefore, it would take quite a long time for the group to respawn again.

‘When I first came, I still received 30~40% of the experience even with the penalty. Now I only receive 2~3% so it would take at least 3 days just to gain one level. Then I’d rather learn a new skill!’

Sometimes skills are more important than level in New World. Ark realized this simple fact once again. ‘Magic Detection’ managed to turn an ordinary forest into magic ingredients and normal dirt to Sacred Soil. When learning a new skill, unknown areas of New World would appear. He wouldn’t have been able to learn ‘Magic Detection’ without a high degree of intimacy with the residents of Lancel Village. However now there was an opportunity to learn general skills.

‘In Lancel Village there are many NPCs with various skills that are high levelled. There were many skills I’m not familiar with that I might be able to learn. Once I gather information on the skill then I should give it a try.’

Ark earnestly went around Lancel Village gathering information. After Jackson, Lancel Village had become Ark's hometown.

"Oh Ark. Did you want to ask me something?"

Whenever he asked the NPC something, they would answer it with detailed information. As expected, the raccoon clan had the most diversity of skills. However they were craftsmen NPCs, so he couldn't learn the useful skills thanks to his profession. Ark could only learn skills such as 'Wood Harvesting' or 'Mineral Extraction.'

'If I have a break in between then I can gather small change.....'

But Ark already had the Ingredient Foraging skill. Since he was always lacking in bag space, it wasn't possible for him to gather wood or minerals. It took a lot of time to learn skills so most people stopped at the primary production skills.

'I would prefer a skill that could also be applied to battles.'

However it was the same with the Meow. The Meow had numerous combat skills but they were all racial special skills.

'Haha, once I go looking for it there are no skills that I can learn.'

Then something popped into Ark's head.

'No. There are still the skills that Roco and the rehabilitation hyungs learnt. Because they don't have an occupation, the rehabilitation members learnt the skills directly. Then I can learn the skill as well. Furthermore, since I have direct guidance then it shouldn't take that long.'

So Ark went and visited the training centre. Roco was busy trying to finish the lyrics which would raise her skill.

“Eh? What is Oppa doing here?”

She blushed as soon as she saw Ark. Ark also blushed as well. Ever since the strange atmosphere that occurred at his house, the relationship between the two had cooled off a little bit. Of course it wasn't a bad relationship. It was more like they were conscious of each other? However personal business was private. Ark was a nice guy who knew how to keep things separate.

“I came to ask you something. What was the skill you used the other day?”

“Skill?”

“The skill that gave defense to my armour.”

“Oh, you mean the laundry skill?”

“How did you learn it?”

“I don't understand either. I just did laundry a lot and then I received it.”

‘This is it!’

Ark immediately peeled off all the clothes of the people at the training centre. Washing the clothes of 300 people wasn't a joke. Ark carried the mountain of clothes and frantically did laundry in the stream. However, laundry wasn't as easy as it sounded. Ark thought that he just had to wash it. But if he didn't do it properly then the durability and defense would decrease.

“Ark hyung-nim, do you even know how to do laundry?”

“Eh? This is a high grade leather armour.....”

“Oh, we're screwed. The defense fell.”

There were calls from all over the place complaining about the laundry. Roco shook her head and sighed.

“Oh Oppa. How did you manage to wash it like that? Have you never done the laundry?”

He hadn't. Although it was old, Ark washed all his clothes in a washing machine! All he had to do was press the button on the washing machine, nothing more and nothing less. Roco couldn't stand it anymore and reached out her arms.

“If you do it like that then the dirty water won't fall. Now look. I'm grasping it with both hands and rubbing it with force like this. Ah, that's different. If it is a leather armour then you gently wash it with a cloth.”

The world of laundry was more profound than expected. For every colour or material, there was a different way to wash it and it required the appropriate strength adjustments. But with Roco's kind (?) help, he eventually conquered the world of laundry. Just as his waist was aching, a new skill information window was created.

You have learnt a new skill.

Laundry (Beginner, Passive): If you are a true Warrior then you should pay attention cleaning your armour as well as its performance. Even if nice clothes and armour are worn, what is the point if there is an offensive odour?. If you keep the armour clean then the performance would also improve.

‘Huk huk huk, I finally learned it!’

A 5% rise in defense for 4 hours! He washed thousands of clothes and was rewarded for his effort. Before Roco, he hadn't known that skills like Laundry existed. No, it was probably likely that most users wouldn't know about the skill. It was natural. Who would do laundry in a game? And even if did wash their clothes, doing it thousands of times would be a difficult thing. It was a skill that people would rather buy hundreds of pairs of clothes then learn. The only reason that Roco managed to learn it in the

game was because she washed the clothing of 300 thieves. Ark became motivated and met with the rehabilitation members to learn their skills. All the rehabilitation members had 1~2 unique skills.

Among them Ark was interested in Hae Gyeol-sa's 'Intimidation' skill. It was a skill with a lot of uses such as causing merchant NPCs to decrease their prices or making monsters freeze in fear. However, it had a low probability of success and wouldn't failure make the NPCs and monsters even more angry?

"Hrmm, you would like to learn this skill?"

Hae Gyeol-sa asked in a triumphant voice. He suddenly puffed up as his appearance changed and Ark stiffened automatically.

"Don't you know that 'Intimidation' is a very old tradition that I can't just pass on to anyone?"

Even with his history, he still took a few months to learn it. The rehabilitation members were starting to look similar to JusticeMan. Well he was their founder and leader after all.

"I know. But I would still like to learn."

"Hmm although you've realised the greatness of 'Intimidation, other praiseworthy guys have approached me....."

Ark quickly stepped forward and handed him a bottle of liquor.

"Please."

"Oh, then I'll teach it to you!"

The traditional technique was sold for a bottle of alcohol. Anyway, Hae Gyeol-sa grabbed the bottle and dragged Ark to the mountainside.

“Now, I’ll teach you the skill. First, the basics of intimidation is the eyes. Stare aggressively straight into the opponent’s eyes and use the momentum. If you’re pushed back then you will fail. Then concentrate all your strength into your abdomen……and say ‘Salrabi Eurachacha!’”

“Eh eh? What did you say?”

Ark’s eyes popped out. Then Hae Gyeol-sa frowned and asked.

“What the? You don’t understand? First, stare into the eyes of the opponent……”

“Oh, no. I heard all of that. But what was the last one?”

“The last one? Ah, ah, you mean Salrabi Eurachacha?”

Hae Gyeol-sa laughed as he repeated the alien words that seemed to come from Andromeda. Ark’s face immediately turned pale.

Shouting out Salrabi Eurachacha……Even though he said it before, but he couldn’t believe Hae Gyeol-sa’s words. Ark couldn’t understand it and he didn’t want to say those words.

“Do I have to do that to learn Intimidation?”

“Huhuhu, of course. That is the core of Intimidation. You have to be strong and effective to scare your opponent. Do you understand? That’s why you have to say Salrabi Eurachacha……”

“Please stop.”

Ark was appalled and blocked Hae Gyeol-sa’s mouth. He really dreaded having to hear anymore. He had heard all sorts of obscenities but he had never heard anyone swear like they were rapping. Although didn’t originally gangsters started rapping to solve disputes? It was no surprise that the opponents would shrink back at the bad words.

'I have to speak those bad words if I want to learn Intimidation.....'

He sighed. However, he had already decided to learn. In addition, his pride wouldn't allow him to retreat since he bribed Hae Gyeol-sa with alcohol. Once Hae Gyeol-sa wrote the words on a piece of paper, Ark shouted it in the mountains.

"That's not it! More viciously! Be more lethal! Say it like you really mean it! You really hate the enemy! Your mindset is that you want to kill him!"

"Ah.....Salrabi Eurachacha!"

"Okay, it is getting better."

He shouted it until his voice was cracked and sore.

You have learnt a new skill.

Intimidation (Beginner, Active): You have become adept at intimidating enemies. Sometimes the threat of a single word is more persuasive than one hundred words. When threatened, people with no resistance to fear will have their morale decreased. However, intimidation and provocation are different things. If you fail then there is a chance that you will provoke them.

Mana consumption: 30

< Chances of persuading a NPC has increased by 50%. A monster's morale and will to run will decrease by 50% and they will become stiff for 2 seconds. However, if you fail then hostility will increase by 50%>

"I've learnt it!"

Ark shouted in a hoarse voice. Then Hae Gyeol-sa stroked his head like he was a dog.

“Hehehe, you’ve learnt this technique in 8 hours. Surprisingly you have an aptitude in this. But now is the road to true intimidation. I want you to have more spirit.”

Then he suddenly disappeared as he headed back to the training centre. Ark collapsed with a thud.

“Phew, that was difficult. My body start aching every time I learn a new skill.”

His waist and lower back become sore from washing clothes while his throat was hoarse from swearing. But it was worth it. Laundry and Intimidation were beginner skills, but once their levels rose then they would become quite useful. However, there was another reason Ark wanted to learn new skills.

‘New World has skill sets!’

Once multiple skills were combined then a new skill would be created! Sword Mastery and Hand-to-Hand combat combined to form Sword-Hand Combat, while Nursing with Magic Restoration would create Purification Restoration. The side effects of skills sets were much better than general skills. However, nobody knew what kind of skills could combine. So it was necessary to learn new skills. Well, it was also interesting to look at the new skills developing. Then Ark travelled around learning hunting skills from the rehabilitation members and the reformed thieves. And he learnt some unique skills in addition to laundry and intimidation.

‘Weapon Destruction’ which destroyed the durability of an equipped weapon. There was also ‘Sprint’ which increased his travel speed by 200%.

‘Blade Maintenance’ temporarily increased the performance of his sword.

‘Courage’ boosted the resistance to fear for a period of time.

It was unlikely to be useful immediately, but they were all skills that would help in the future.

“Huhuhu, skills that raised the intimacy with NPCs could also be considered a defensive skill. Now, let’s see what other skills I can learn…….”

Ark was heading back to the training centre after he learnt 'Courage' when he suddenly stopped.

"Wait, come to think of it today.....is the third day since I've started the Immortality Pill!"

Ark hurriedly returned to his house and opened the personal safe. The pot that had entered the final stages was tinged with a red light. As there passed there was 4 minutes left, 3 minutes, 2 minutes.....an intense light emerged from the pot as it was finally completed. He watched as all the ingredients disappeared and a small pill appeared.

The maturation process has ended and 'Slime's Immortality Pill' has been completed.

You have completed the 'Monster's Pill' that has been passed down from ancient techniques.

The Monster's Pill is one of the hidden secrets in New World. It allows you to maximise the power contained in the Monster's Essence and apply it to you. Making the Immortality Pill is one of the biggest honours for Survival Cooking chefs.

* Fame has increased by 500.

* Intelligence has increased by 20.

* Proficiency in Survival Cooking has risen by 30.

* The 'Monster's Pill' information has been updated.

"I finally finished it!"

Ark lifted the pill with trembling hands. The required time to make it was 23 days. He had used hundreds of gold to make the pill. However, Ark had regretful thoughts as he looked at the pill.

'This item can't be sold.....'

So obviously the immortality pill would have an enormous effect. The Unicorn Horn was approximately worth 700 gold. The Corrupted Fairy Wings was 300 gold. In addition, it required a significant number of items. Just by calculating, the ingredients were worth approximately 1,500 gold. Given the rarity of the ingredients, it might even be worth 2,000 gold!

However with Survival Cooking, there was no way of knowing the effects of the dish until it was eaten. It was a tremendous amount of money and time that other users wouldn't dare waste. Since the pills have unknown effects, most users wouldn't even spend ten gold on it let alone thousands.

'Drat. I have to just eat it.....!'

2,000 gold! With that amount of money he could buy lots of small wild ginseng roots. Ark hated wasting even 1 gold and trembled as he brought the pill to his mouth. But he just closed his eyes tightly and swallowed the Slime's Immortality Pill. At the same time an information window appeared.

Slime's Immortality Pill (Immortality Pill Rating: B, Degree of Completion: A)

The power of the Slime in the immortality pill only emerges in unusual circumstances.

It takes the power of an ancient Slime and grants it to someone.

*There is an added bonus according to the degree of completion.

<+5 to all stats, Flexibility +30, Shock Absorption +20%, Poison Resistance +50%>

The resilience stat has been created.

*Resilience (+20): Resilience uses the momentum to increase the defense. Resilience is a stat point that raises the resistance to blunt force attacks by 0.1%. In addition, resistance to stun and petrification also increases by a small amount.

Stat distribution is impossible and it only rises by resisting blunt force attacks.

You have learned the racial skill 'Slime's Time.

'Slime's Time: Once a day, you can choose between two skills. No matter what skill you choose, both skills can only be used again after 24 hours.

It is possible to cover your body with a slime coating. Once covered with the slime, all physical attacks will become invalid for 10 minutes. In addition, you will not receive any falling damage no matter how high you fell from. However, you will be vulnerable to magic and receive an additional 100% damage while the damage of your sword will also decrease by 100%. You can summon any type of slime that is within a 500 metre radius. The gathered slime will assist the player for 10 minutes. However, the relationship will become hostile again once the 'Slime's Time' ends.

'J-jackpot!'

Ark's eyes popped out. He thought that he would've received some options as reward for all the trouble. However, the result was beyond his expectation! He expected his stats to rise but he never guessed that a new stat would be created. Ark had the most difficulty dealing with blunt weapons. Since Ark wore leather armour, he was vulnerable to additional damage from blunt weapons. However, Resilience was a stat that boosted his resistance to damage from blunt weapons. But was that all? The description was a bit vague but he gained some slime racial skills. Skills that were locked to specific species couldn't be learnt by other races.

'The reward was worth all that trouble!'

As an added bonus, the degree of completion was more than expected. All his stats increased by +5 while his flexibility stat that was difficult to increase rose by 30! Shock absorption also increased by 20% and poison resistance by 50%. He gained the characteristics of a slime thanks to the immortality pill.

"Let's confirm the stats.....Information Window!"

Character Name Ark Race Human Alignment Good +300 Fame 3075 (+ 500) Level 159 Profession Dark Walker Title Cat Knight, Caretaker of All, Jackson's Hero, Caretaker of the Land Health 2625 (+ 150) Mana 2,590 Spiritual Power 100 Strength 356 (+28) Agility 416 (+ 35) Stamina 486 (+20) Wisdom 55 (+10) Intelligence 499 Luck 56 Flexibility 4 (Raws say 4 but it must be an error) Art of Communication 46 Affection 89 (+10) Resilience 20 Special stat: Knowledge of Ancient Relics 113 * Equipment item effects Guardian Armour of the Merpeople: Water Attribute Resistance +100%, Penalty based on water is nullified.

Cat Paws (Gloves): Attack Speed +10%, Agility +15, Critical Hit +10%

Raccoons Pith (Helmet): Agility + 10, Wisdom + 10

* Set effect: Strength + 10, Agility + 10, Stamina +10, Defense +20

Warrior's Transcripts (Shoulder Blades): Strength + 3

Improved Norad Boots (Shoes): Movement Speed + 15%, Evasion + 10%

Veil of Fire (Mantle): Flame resistance + 50%

Adelaine's Necklace (Necklace): Defense + 40, Affection +10, 'Blessing of the Sea' available

Resurrecting Spirit (Ring): Strength + 5, Mana recovery + 5%

Mind's Eye (Ring): 'Mind's Eye' enabled

Amulet of Vitality (Bracelet): Health + 50, Health recovers by 5 every 20 seconds

Gladiator's Honour (Bracelet): Strength, Agility, Stamina +10, Fame +500, Sword-based Skill Growth +5%

* 40% increase all skills 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.

* Shock absorption is increased by 20%.

* Poison resistance has increased by 50%.

It was always enjoyable to check the information window after getting something. But he never imagined that he would have cold water poured on his mood. Ark put everything in order and left the cabin. Then a member of the vigilante crew that was recently hired came rushing up.

“Ark hyung-nim, you were at home. I was looking for you outside for a while.”

“Me? Why?”

“A foreigner is looking for you at the village entrance.”

“Foreigner? Does he seem like a merchant?”

“Yes, he was a merchant. He definitely told me that.”

‘Sid! Has he finally come?’

I wonder how much money he made to only return after one month? Ark became expectant and quickly ran to the village entrance. However, when he arrived it was a different merchant. A dapper looking merchant approached Ark.

“Are you Ark?”

“Yes I am, why? Who are you?”

“I am Nein. I was asked to deliver a letter from someone called Sid some time ago. But I had something to do so I was a little bit late.”

“From Sid-nim?”

Ark read the letter than Nein gave him.

Ark-nim, I'm in prison so I can't write all the details. Anyway there was an unfair situation and now I'm stuck in the dungeons of the Cathedral. The situation is more serious than I thought so please quickly get me out of here!

Seeing Ark's bewildered expression, Nein added.

"I don't understand it either but it looks like a pretty serious matter. Normally when imprisoned in the cathedral dungeon a reasonable bail is set but with Sid, they won't even accept a bail."

'What is this unbelievable thing I hearing?'

Was there a problem with all the money invested?

"When you meet Sid, tell him not to forget about the payment."

Nein left the village after he finished. But Nein's words didn't enter Ark's ears. He wanted to immediately fly to Selebrid. Ark quickly rushed to the training camp and found Roco.

"Rocco, I need to urgently get to Selebrid. I need your unicorn!"

"Yes?" What has happened all of a sudden?"

"Well I think something really bad has happened to Sid."

"What? Sid?"

JusticeMan and the rehabilitation members were also surprised and raised their bodies. They had also left their entire fortune with Sid. Of course, their viewpoint was different from Ark's.

They had money unlike Ark who was poor in reality. From the beginning they were equipped with rich funds. However, JusticeMan had prohibited them from spending by saying 'If you have money then you won't be properly educated' so they entrusted their fortunes to Sid.

"What the hell is going on?"

"I'm not sure yet. Once I get there then I'll find out more. After I learn then I'll contact you."

"But the unicorn will not give a ride to Oppa....."

"I have to at least try once."

Roco anxiously called out the unicorn. After Roco requested it, the unicorn just snorted and shook its head. Although it didn't mind women or children, it would not tolerate him it seemed to say.

"I'll try."

Ark pushed past Roco and came forward. Ark stared at the unicorn as he took out a dish and ate it. It was a dish that made his voice louder, and Hae Gyeol-sa had already used it to influence his Intimidation skill. Ark stared at the unicorn and continued threatening it silently while eating.

"You stupid horse. I might have let it go before but not his time. If you continue then I'll peel off all your leather and cook your meat. No, did you want me to beep-beep? Or how about beep-beep? Do you think I'm not able to?"

Apart from the unicorn, even Roco and the rehabilitation members paled at his uncouth curses. It was something he normally wouldn't do. Once Ark began then he couldn't seem to stop. After learning the Intimidation skill, his curses and threatening power exceeded Hae Gyeol-sa's. No, that was not a threat. He was concerned about losing 5,500 gold. Ark would do anything for money, even risk his life. He really would cut off the horn and peel the leather. Ark's intimidation exerted its maximum power thanks to his obsession with money.

"U-unicorn, O-oppa has made a request.....do you give permission.....?"

“Hi, Hihihing.”

The unicorn trembled and nodded. The Unicorn was a monster. But it swore allegiance to Roco and became an NPC. Thanks to that, the intimidation skill worked by 50%. As expected, it was a useful skill to learn. Although he succeeded with the intimidation, he couldn't ride it without the owner. In the end, Roco and Ark rode the unicorn to Selebrid.

Hae Gyeol-sa looked proudly at the figures in the distance.

“Heh, I don't have anything to teach anymore.

“It was you?”

Thwack! A thick hand hit the back of Hae Gyeol-sa's head. When he turned around he saw that JusticeMan was glaring at him.

“You were the one that taught Ark all that abusive language?

“Huk, that.....Ark begged me to teach him.....”

“So you would teach every beggar that asked?”

JusticeMan's eyes flashed. The intimidation skill couldn't even compare to that look in his eyes.