Ark Vol 9 C 5

Chapter 5

ACT 5 Different World? Netherworld?

"Now there's a little bit more money to spare."

Raiden leaned back in his chair and let out a long sigh. He had been the Lord for 3 weeks. It had been a terrible time. There was 0 gold in the castle's public funds. In addition, Ark had given all the public funds to the residents of the castle inside of fixing the infrastructure. Therefore the estate was already on the verge of bankruptcy when Raiden became the Lord.

'That Ark bastard......!'

Raiden snarled as he recalled how Ark had fooled them. However, he couldn't go tear Ark apart. Although he wanted to chase after Ark, he was still the Lord of Silvana. If he left it as it was, the infrastructure would be inoperable and half the territory seized by the government. In the end, Raiden had to raise the taxes to prevent this from happening. Then the residents started complaining.

"The previous Lord gave us a bonus for completing the trading post. But this one raised the taxes as soon as he became the Lord! Isn't it terrible?"

"Why are they so different when it comes to money management?"

"We're not going to be the slaves of the Lord!"

"If he continues treating us like this then I won't endure it anymore!"

'God dammit, I have to raise the taxes because of the former Lord!'

Raiden inwardly screamed. How on earth was he supposed to rectify what Ark did? Because of that, Raiden needed to raise the taxes. Yet he received unfair abuse and complaints from the residents until

he was almost in tears. But he didn't dare tell the residents that. No, he knew that the NPCs didn't consider him that highly based on Berami's attitude.

"It's difficult. If this continues then there really might be an uprising."

In New World, the 'rebellion' system also existed. If he raised taxes too quickly or mishandled the infrastructure, his intimacy with the residents would fall. And once the intimacy fell below a certain amount, the residents would start to rebel. If he experienced a rebellion then it would be a serious issue. He couldn't collect taxes while quelling the rebellion. But if he didn't quell the rebellion then his estate would be in anarchy. If that happened then other guilds would be able to attack the castle without going through a formal siege. If other guilds flocked like bees towards Hermes, there was no guarantee that they could defend the castle. Eventually Raiden had no choice but to lower the taxes after a few days. But the immediate problem wasn't the necessary funds. Raiden received information that the Grey Wings guild had bought the challenge rights and would siege the castle next.

'Hang in there. It will be the end if I lose the castle!'

He had barely obtained the castle after paying Ark 4,000 gold and rare shoes. But was that all? In order to maintain the estate, he had to clean out all his savings and sold his car. If he lost the castle then he would vomit in a vase. In addition, it was obvious that Hermes was having some problems. Raiden had to shake up the guild members for money to repair the castle walls and defense towers. Fortunately, he was able to repel the Grey Wings' attack. And after 10 days had passed, Raiden could finally take a break. The tax was lowered, the urgent funding issues solved and the Grey Wings' power had weakened thanks to the failed siege. Of course there were numerous guilds in Silvana, but none of them were a threat except for the Grey Wings.

So after 20 days, the area finally managed to become moderately stable. But he had only barely managed to enter the safety zone.

"3 weeks! I poured a considerable amount of money into this estate during those 3 weeks!"

His anger rose again once he managed to rest. He didn't receive any profits in those 3 weeks, only debt.

"That Ark bastard, I can't forgive him for what he did!"





"I'll regain my shoes."
Raiden thought of something and unfolded his arms.
"The remaining question is who will go. It won't be safe if Jewel tracks him aloneDuke?"
"Of course. I'm going no matter what."
Duke growled and replied. Raiden judged that he couldn't be stopped and nodded.
"Okay. But I still can't be relieved with just two people. He also has his colleagues in Dark Eden. The war has ended so the NPC mercenaries won't be with him anymore. So he'll probably have 10 users with him."
Raiden thought for a moment before nodding again.
"But I can't just gather an excessive crowd to hunt Ark. Although the crisis has been handled, I can't just assume that the situation is stable yet. Therefore I'll ask for some pioneers outside Hermes to help Jewel and Duke."
"Will the other pioneers listen to Raiden's command?"

Yes, the Hermes guild had 30 pioneers. Naturally they didn't have all the pioneers. There were hundreds of users called pioneers. And a number of the pioneers had superior skills and levels compared to Duke, Jewel and Raiden. Although Jewel and Duke were pioneers, they were only in the intermediate rank of pioneers. But most of the other pioneers went around high level hunting grounds by themselves and didn't attract any attention. However, there were several pioneers that Raiden was acquaintance with and regularly kept in contact. And if they joined Duke and Jewel than 10 opponents would be nothing. No, even 20~30 enemies wouldn't matter. Then Jewel snorted and said.

"They're not necessary to beat Ark. I'm not going to just sit down and wait for them. That Ark bastard won't be a match for me and Duke. And those other guys that he gathered are only low level. Bringing a

bunch of low level members from our guild will be enough to take care of them. The lower ranking members in our guild are not that weak."
"Gathering the lower level membersis that okay?"
"What do you mean? They're more than enough against Ark."
Jewel replied with a trivial laugh. Indeed, most of the Hermes guild had recently passed level 200. Excluding the pioneers, even the lower ranked guild members had an average level of 180~190. It wasn't a standard to be worried about.
"Okay, although it is not necessary, that Ark had made an enemy of the Hermes guild. If possible, I would like to use our strength to get revenge. Duke, Jewel. I'll give you 8 guild members so go and destroy him."
"I understand."
Therefore Jewel and Duke along with their guild members started to track Ark. After a few days, they arrived at the cabin in the red wilderness.
"The mana trail leads inside this picture."
Jewel said, pointing to a picture on one side of the cabin. Then a guild member investigated the picture and said.
"This is a gate. The gate leads to a place pretty far away. And judging by the mana pattern, it is a one-way movement. I'm slightly uncomfortablewhat should we do?"
"Is it even necessary to answer?"
Duke plunged into the picture without any hesitation.

"We're going to stab Ark to death. So we have to follow no matter what."
"Our journey for revenge won't end until he dies."
"Okay, let's go!"
Jewel and the rest of the guild entered the picture. So once again a group of foreigners headed towards the other dimension.
"What the hell, this is?"
At that moment, Ark was looking around with a stupid face. In fact, he hadn't felt like he was in a different dimension while wandering the snowy mountains. No, he had been too busy trying not to freeze to death to question it. After he left the snowy mountains, he finally realized that the world was completely different.
"Just before it was snowing but now it is a heat wave?"
The weather was the most amazing thing in this world. After leaving the snowy mountains, he encountered a wilderness with sweltering heat. But after a moment, the sky became dark and it started pouring with rain. Then a cold wind stating blowing and hail began falling from the sky.
"What crazy weather"

The weather was not the only thing hard to adapt to. The surrounding terrain was also strange. The trees in the forest were all made of stone, the desert consisted of iron powder, the river seemed by dyed in multi-coloured paints and the sky kept on going round and round. He became even more confused when a flower garden started laughing. He felt like he had travelled into the mind of a person with a mental disorder. The monsters were also weird. There were monsters that would ambush from the sand and there were also ghosts wandering in broad daylight that could not be harmed by normal swords.....it was all monsters he never heard of before.

Kaaaaaaa-

Now, there was a group of monsters resembling a stingray flying above his head. It was enough to make him dizzy. In addition, the monsters in this dimension were much stronger. Their abilities were quite high and they would often use unique skills that made the fight difficult. If it was in the past then he would've struggled. But Ark had greatly raised his abilities in the snowy mountains and passed through the wilderness without any difficulties.

"I'm finally accustomed to this landscape."

Ark was thinking that when something interrupted.

Ssak ssak, ssak ssak ssak!

Radun's legs that had been busy moving suddenly slowed down.

"It is already this time? Stop Radun."

Radun slowed its pace and stopped. Then it contracted like a balloon after Ark got off its back.

"You cutie, you must have suffered."

Ark stroked its head and murmured as Radun's eyes lit up. His travel speed increased dramatically thanks to Radun transforming to Radunma. But it couldn't be used without restriction like a normal

mount. Radunma consumed 5 mana every 10 seconds until it ran out. Ark had 3000 mana so they had to take a break approximately every hour. In addition, Radunma consumed a tremendous amount of energy and needed 4~5 servings of food to recover. However, these downsides were no problem. While Ark's bag had no empty spaces, he had gathered a lot of ingredients in the snowy mountains and had a surplus of ingredients.

"Well let's rest here for the moment." Ark started building a campsite. He instantly made 5 servings of food using a variety of ingredients and spices. "Eat, and tell me if you need more." Ssak ssak ssak? Ssak ssak....... Radun swallowed its saliva and looked up at Ark. The look in its eyes indicated that Radun felt sorry for increasing the food expenses. "It's okay. You've done enough to eat as much as you like." Finally Radun began to wave its tail and consumed the food. Even after growing, Radun was completely loyal to Ark. It was different from Dedric who started behaving badly as soon as he evolved. Therefore he talked to Radun like Roco talked to a puppy. Ark gave it a warm look and took out more ingredients. "Now, are you guys eating?" The Dedric began grumbling complaints.

"Sheesh, is this also an experimental food? Damn, you give Radun all the delicious food......this is favouritism!"

"What's wrong with new food? It makes you stronger. What more do you want? Are you going to keep complaining about the dishes?"

After Ark shouted, Dedric became frightened and retreated. And then he swelled up like a ball before saying.

"I'll be delighted to eat that dish!"

"So now you're happy about eating new dishes?"

"Ey, stop talking."

Dedric turned his head with a sulky look. In fact, there was a good reason from Dedric's complaints. While crossing the wilderness in a different dimension, he had seen many ingredients for the first time. Ark cheered because of that but Dedric and Deimos screamed instead. Besides, now the situation was different from before. In the old days, he had to look for a chance before making them eat new dishes. But now there was no free space in his bag. If he wanted to gather new ingredients, Ark had to make space by cooking a dish and forcing them to eat it. Dedric had been hit with bad penalties a few times. But he didn't dare resist violently now.

There were 3 reasons. The discipline he engrained in them at Lancel Village still hadn't fallen. And Dedric finally knew how precious food was after starving on the snowy mountains. Even eating spoiled food that could cause diarrhoea was better than starving to death. Ark made two different types of dishes and held them out to his summons.

"These are new dishes. Eat them with gratitude.

"Okay, I get it. I'll eat."

Dedric licked the dish and looked relieved before pouring it down his mouth. The last reason Dedric didn't complain severely was because of this. When using ingredients from this dimension, there was a high probability that dishes with good effects would be cooked. Thanks to that, his summons were able

to raise their stats to level 130. However, there wasn't a guarantee that there would be a good result. As always, survival cooking was a system that relied on luck!
Clack-! Clack clack clack clack clack clack.
Deimos swallowed the food without thinking and trembled.
-Deimos has been struck by a headache!
You have made a 'Rancid Soup' using Survival Cooking. The terrible headache will last for 10 minutes and no action will be able to be performed.
It also gave these types of dishes.
"Hahaha, stupid, you just blindly ate that dish!"
Dedric rolled around laughing. He was acting spiteful.
"Soon it will be his turn and he won't be able to act so spiteful."
Ark shook his head and laughed.
'But how long will it be until I find a town? No, does this place even have a town?'
Radun had been crossing the huge wilderness for 6 hours. With the 500% movement speed taken into consideration, it was more like 30 hours. But he still hadn't seen a person or a village. Normally it wouldn't be a problem if there were no towns in this dimension. He wanted to dispose of his items, but his main goal was to obtain a clue about Magaro. He didn't want to just blindly walk around the whole dimension.
'The gate on the snowy mountain has closed so I have no choice but to continue.'

"Now the break is finished. Let's prepare to leave." Ark got up and shook off the dust. Suddenly the ground started vibrating before something burst out of the earth and sand in front of him. And a huge monster that looked like a slug emerged. It was nearly 20 meters in size! "Predator!" Ark drew his sword and shouted. He had met this monster several times in the wilderness. They were monsters that would hide underground and then emerge to swallow their prey. Level 300. Furthermore, their body emitting acid poison with hundreds of maggots sticking to it. Without the darkness attribute bonus, there was a 70 level difference! But Ark's face was confident. "It is good to exercise after a meal." Ark had been frightened when he first met a Predator. But after the fight started, it didn't feel that difficult. The Predator looked like it was moving in slow motion. But he had raised his abilities in the ice cave so much that even a 70 level difference wasn't that hard. "Wasn't this guy weak to fire? Elemental sword, Fire attribute!" Ark used the skill and flames wrapped around his sword. The black sword spewing flames looked truly spectacular! The penalty occurred at the same his and his fire resistance fell to -75%, but he didn't have to worry because the monster had an acid attribute. "Okay, let's see how fast it can be caught. Go, Dedric, Deimos!" "Yes, leave it to me!"

Clack clack clack!

Dedric and Deimos split up and besieged the Predator from both sides. While the Predator faltered for a moment, Ark quickly approached and swung his sword.
Peng, peng, peng!
After the flames exploded outwards, the Predator flinched and was pushed backwards.
-You have dealt a critical hit with Elemental Sword (Fire)The Predator is 'Burned.'
Since the Predator was vulnerable to fire, it received 20% more damage. And since he dealt a critical hit with Elemental Sword, it received an abnormal state. The Predator screamed as its body was surrounded by flames.
Roaaaaar!
Then the fight truly started. The hundreds of maggots stuck to the Predator was not a decoration. The maggots turned to his direction and spat. It was the acidic poison. The maggots' poison only did 10 damage to him. But the problem was the number. If one hundred maggots spat at him then he would receive 500 damage. Of course, feeling dirty was also a powerful combat motivation. Anyway, these maggots stuck to the Predator frantically continued spitting. Even a warrior with high defense wouldn't be able to endure for long. But the maggots weren't a problem for Ark.
"Spirit of the Cat!"
Nyahhhh-!
The form of a giant cat with golden eyes appeared and roared. Then the hundreds of maggots stiffened and fell to the ground.
"Dedric, Deimos! Kill all of it!"

"Hehehe, ppok ppok. Ppok ppok ppok.......Ha, this feeling while killing. It is really addictive."

Dedric smirked and happily killed the maggots.

When the maggots were crushed, the Predator shrieked with fury and spat. The maggot's spit couldn't even be compared to the amount that the Predator spat out. If hit, his health and the durability of his armour would decrease. But Ark wouldn't be hit by such a simple attack. He used 'Slide' to move sideways and swung his flaming sword. The predator's slow movements couldn't catch up to Ark and it failed to block the attack. After stabbing it a few times, the Predator quickly reached a critical condition.

"Good, go Sprint!"

Ark shot forward like an arrow and swung his sword. He used Drastic Measures and split the Predator in half. All sorts of odd items as well as a yellow liquid splashed onto the ground. It was the prey the Predator swallowed in the wilderness.

"Ugh......it ate a lot. Eh? The deceased are also here."

Ark murmured while wiping off all the filth stuck to his body. Something that liked like a person emerged from the Predator. It looked like the zombies that wandered the wilderness. NPC? Monster? They were ambiguous and all they did was wander around. When he first discovered them, Ark thought they were inhabitants of the dimension. The name was also displayed in blue. Although he tried to speak to them, the dead just wandered around with stupid looking eyes. The souls that hadn't been digested by the Predator just scattered again with stupid looks.

'Well, they're just like the background.'

"It didn't seem to have collected any items."

Ark surveyed the corpse of the Predator and clicked his tongue. Normally he would receive quite a lot of items from the Predator whenever he used Drastic Measures. But most of the japtem were half rotting flesh. They weren't items that he would put in his bag.

"Phew! Where is this? Is this hell? Or Heaven? Ah, is it heaven because I'm so nice? Eh? Isn't this outside? Oh, am I alive? Hahaha, I survived! Out of all the people eaten by a Predator, I must be the first one!"

Ark had been moving away when he suddenly heard laughter from the Predator's body. It was the first time he heard a human voice since coming here! Are reflexively turned his head. Then he stared with a foolish expression. Something that looked like it belonged to the cockroach species was emerging from the Predator. When he crept out and looked around, he saw Ark and quickly shook his hand.

"It's you. Isn't it? You're the one who defeated the Predator and saved me?"

"Who are you?"

"Me? Ah, my introduction is late. I am called Reid. I am a proud member of the Galgin clan. Do you know the Galgin? We are peddlers who travel around the country. I came to this land because of my curiosity. I wanted to see it just once. But how did I know that I would be swallowed by a Predator? Hahaha, but I've managed to live."

'Galgin clan? Does that mean that several more races live in this dimension?'

But to have a race that looks like a cockroach.......Anyway, it was clear that the talkative cockroach was one of the races that lived in this dimension. He had finally met an NPC after being in the dimension for half a month. Furthermore, didn't his profession mean that he could buy Ark's japtem?

"You said you were a peddler?"

"Yes yes, if you need anything than ask, ah, why didn't I see it? Usually the Galgin family will not trade when there is a possibility of a fraud but I'll strike a good deal for my lifesaver."

Reid untied his bags and pulled out his items. When the dead showed an interest and approached, Reid picked up a stone and threw it.

"Shh, Shh, go to the other side! Damn, stupid things"
"What are the Dead called?"
"I don't pay attention to such things. They're just idiots. So how about it? Do you like anything?"
"No, I want to sell some items not buy anything."
Reid shook its antennae in confusion.
"Sell? What are you talking about?"
"I want to exchange my items for money."
"Money? What is that?"
Reid seemed to be hearing it for the very first time. Ark took out 1 copper and showed him. But Reid just looked at the copper coin with uninterested eyes.
"Well, that's just a piece of metal. Even if you saved my life, I wouldn't exchange any of these items for that."
"Yes? So you're not selling these things for money?"
"I don't know what money is, but why would I need useless stuff like that?"
Reid naturally retorted. Exchanging items for items. In other words, Reid was talking about a barter system.

Reid was a peddler who went around the dimension trading. Since he didn't understand the concept of money, didn't that mean bartering is the normal system in this dimension? So no matter how much japtem he gathered, there was no method to change it into gold! Ark had expected to be able to exchange japtem for gold and his mood instantly became dark.

"I'm screwed. How will bartering help reduce my bag capacity? Do I have to keep on carrying around japtem? No, there might be something I don't know.'

Ark thought for a moment before something else popped in his head. What if he managed to exchange a few garbage items for expensive ones? If he kept on doing that then it might be possible to reserve some bag space. Ark asked Reid.

"Then can I briefly look at some things?"

"Look as much as you want. All of them are useable. It the deal is right then I'll trade."

Reid proudly pointed towards his items. But Ark was disappointed at the items. Unknown leather, chunks of meat, mushrooms and nuts......they were ingredients that Ark left behind when crossing the wilderness. Some equipment items caught his eye, but they were made of cloth and the defense was low.

'Damn, you're like a cockroach carrying a pile of trash.'

Then Ark suddenly found strange items.

Hollow Steel Dentures (Magic)

Weapon type: Dentures

Durability: 13/50

Attack: 10~15 Weight: 30 User restrictions: Exclusively for vampire summons. A hollow pair of dentures. These steel dentures were made to replace vampire fangs when the vampire became old and lost their teeth. Only a vampire can use it and it allows them to suck blood more easily. Shigashi's Leather Cloak Armour type: Mantle Durability: 13/50 Defense power: 10 Weight: 20 Use restriction: Available for all summons. A leather cloak made from the leather of the Shigashi goat common in the Netherworld. The Shigashi is an animal known for living in harsh environments so its leather is high quality. Although the workmanship is rough, it is still useful in protecting the body. The stats weren't that different from the japtem Ark found. In middle earth, he would receive approximately 1~2 gold for them. But the problem was the user restrictions attached to the item. There were items available for summons? He have never seen that kind of user restriction before.

"You mean that summons can wear this?"

"Summons? Ah, is that what middle earth calls our races? Huhuhu, were you surprised? The Galgin family knows everything. That's right, they were made for our species. Although it looks like this, it is a very valuable thing. Normal clothes won't be able to pass through when something is summoned to middle earth, but these are different. The materials were designed to cross over. Not a lot of species cross over to the other dimension from the Netherworld anymore. So they won't exchange anything for these items."

Reid grumbled.

'Netherworld? This is the Netherworld?'

There was a sudden flash in Ark's face. So far, Ark only knew that it was a different dimension. But this as the Netherworld? Wasn't the Netherworld where Dedric, Deimos and Radun lived?

'I see. That's why there was an Alamone in the ice caves. I should've noticed when talking to the Alamone......'

Now Ark realized why he couldn't summon or recall his pets since getting here. Although he opened up a door to summon Dedric and Deimos using Spiritual Power, this was the original world where they lived. It would be impossible to summon them. That's also why the penalty for dying wasn't forced recall but losing stats.

'Radun had been with me since it hatched so it is understandable, but why didn't Dedric and Deimos know where we were?'

"Eh? You don't understand. This is the first place we saw. But it's not where I live. In fact, there is a restriction to the distance we can move when Master summons us from the Netherworld and when we return."

Clack clack clack clack clack clack.

Deimos nodded and agreed with Dedric's explanation. It was simple. In the Netherworld, his pets were limited to a particular area and couldn't leave it. In Dedric's case, he was limited to the vampire area. Because of that he never visited the outside world. As a skeleton, Deimos was restricted to a cemetery. But now they were wandering around the Netherworld......because they were travelling with Ark, they were probably able to overcome the restrictions. It sounded complicated but it was actually pretty simple.

'Anyway my pets can use some of these items?"

Equipping items on his summons. He had never thought of it. Then wouldn't it be another way to make his pets grow?

"Will you sell it to me?"

"Well, I'd like to see your items. I said it a while ago, but I'll only trade if the items are worth it since it is difficult to find these items in other places. But I promise to trade if I see something worthy."

Ark quickly gathered the japtem in his bag and showed Reid. Reid looked around and identified a few items.

"This is good. The leather is high quality. I'll trade you Shigashi's Cloak for 100 of them. And it's not easy finding these bones and herbs. Okay, I'll give you the dentures for 50 of each."

Reid had pointed to the Mongoose leather and bones and the Seolmocho. He had gathered 1,000 of each item.

"I accept. Let's exchange."

Ark nodded and exchanged the items. Then he gave the steel dentures to Dedric and Shigashi's cloak to Deimos. Dedric wore the dentures and cheered.

"Oh, this is great? All of a sudden I feel like sucking blood!"

Clack clack clack! Clack clack clack!

Deimos also seemed satisfied with his cloak and started jumping. Ark also felt like skipping. He never imagined that he would be able to exchange japtem for items. If he managed to find more items in this dimension then Deimos' and Dedric's stats would go up tremendously.

'Okay, let's try to find my pets a full set of equipment before leaving here.'

"Well well, that was a good deal. Now what are you going to do?"

Reid asked after packing his bags with a satisfied face.

"Reid, you said that you've travelled all around the Netherworld? Have you ever heard of the name Magaro? He should look similar to me......."

Ark got to the point. Reid thought for a moment then shook his head and replied.

"Magaro......I've never heard of that name. But I know people who look similar to you that live in a town."

"There are clans that look similar to me here?"

"Well, it's the Myutal race. Although originally they were quite ferocious, the Myutal that live here are relatively tame. Ah, that reminds me that, I know a very old man who lives in the mountains there. You might find out a lot of information if you go there. Just tell him that the peddler Reid sent you and you'll be welcomed."

"Where is the town?"

"If you travel for half a day then there will be a valley. The Myutal village is there. Anyway, I can't go to the village so we'll go our separate ways. I have business elsewhere."

Reid carried his backpack with a moan and began walking.
"Okay, the town is over there? Radun, transform!"
Ssak ssak ssak!
Radun's body turned large again and its legs appeared. Ark got on its back and began to run through the wilderness again. The different dimensionno, the sky in the Netherworld spread out around him.