

Ark Vol 14 C 1

Chapter 1

ACT 1 Pet Dog

Shortly after Karakul met his end.

According to the rules of a vampire's duel, Racard inherited all of Karakul's possessions. It meant the Karakul's territory, castle and the Bloody subordinates all belonged to Racard. The Bloody swiftly changed their attitude after the duel finished.

"Oh, the shining charisma, it is wonderful!"

"As expected, the people who make their own fortunes are different."

"It will be a great honour to serve such a fine Lord."

"I thought it would be like from the beginning."

"I'll offer my whole body to our Lord."

The Bloody prostrated themselves on the ground and shook their tail. They didn't seem like subordinates who had served Karakul for 100 years. Well, the Bloody and Karakul's relationship wasn't one of loyalty but was more like a forced blood contract.

"Earl..... Earl Racard...."

Racard looked like it still hadn't sunk in. But after a moment, his face brightened as the Bloody continued praising him.

"Earl, yes I am now an Earl. Hahaha, this castle is also mine! Everything is mine! Hahaha. Eh? What's that nasty stuff? Why is it in my room?"

Racard looked around the room and frowned as he saw a black lump. Then one of the Bloody twisted its hand and replied.

“Yes, that is Karakul who was the previous Lord.”

Karakul had been a powerful vampire who controlled portions of the Dark Earth. However, the triple combo of the cross, garlic smell and illumination had turned him into unrecognizable ashes. Racard farted at the Bloody’s answer and muttered.

“Bah, what are you guys doing? This is my room. Quickly remove the mess. Clean up the room.”

“Yes, I understand. I’ll remove this messy thing.”

The competent Bloody was also a professional maid so the room was quickly cleaned up. The broken household goods were removed while the various blood spots were neatly polished. Then the strong vampire Karakul was separated into non-flammable trash and dragged out. It was a world where losing was truly disastrous.

“Huhuhu, I’m an Earl.....should I talk like an Earl?”

Racard sat down in the chair used by Karakul and laughed. Then he spoke to Ark and the Wolrang.

“Ah, did you see? Did you see? I’m now an Earl. But there’s no need for you to be tense. I’m not an authoritarian vampire. In addition, I’m thankful to the Wolrang who helped me. So you can live comfortably. Hahaha!”

However Ark didn’t feel like laughing.

‘Damn, this is bad.’

Ark sighed with a mixed expression. Of course, Racard's evolution was an inspiring event for Ark. 170 total stats were added when Racard evolved. It was like he gained 17 levels at once. However, the important thing for summons wasn't the level but the ranking. Recently he learned that the ranking that appeared in a summons's information window wasn't simply a classification.

The combat ability of monsters wasn't just determined by their level or stats. A user's skill was affected by the ranking of the skill. This was also applied to the monster rating system. A monster's skills, agility and ability to cope with different situations would depend on the ranking. That's why a level 80 user could fight against a level 100 monster without difficulty. However, it wouldn't be that easy for the user if they were dealing with a level 100 intermediate monster. If the monster was in the advanced ranking then its power would increase by approximately 20 levels and a party might be required to hunt it. It was one of the reasons why Ark used Racard's satellite surveillance mode in battles. Most of the monsters Ark was currently dealing with were intermediate ranked. Because Razak also involved, he now had two intermediate ranked summons.

But he wasn't entirely happy about Racard evolving to an intermediate rank. If Ark attacked an intermediate ranked monster, the damage wouldn't be applied or not all of it will be applied. On the other hand, there was a possibility of receiving additional damage if he was in a critical condition. The rankings of the monsters would also increase in the higher level regions. It would be impossible to exert his full power no matter how much he raised his stats through food. In the end, the evolution of his pets was necessary if he wanted to use them in higher level regions. It was the reason Ark chose evolution even though he could raise their stats through food.

'Anyway, Racard has an intermediate ranking now. There will be no penalties applied if we face an intermediate monster.'

It meant that he could use Racard more aggressively in fights.

'There is also an additional skill slot in Blood-sucking.'

Until now, there had only been one skill slot for Blood-sucking so it was very inconvenient. If he wanted to preserve the skill saved in the slot then he couldn't use Blood-sucking. Now that there were two slots, he could divide it into one slot to use and one to save. It also had a 10% probability of blocking a random skill. Ark had experienced the effect of blocking skills through Karakul so he was aware of its power. Although it blocked a random skill so luck was needed, it could be used to properly neutralize the enemy.

'Blood Lane is also a wide area curse magic!'

The evolution was undoubtedly successful.

'Okay. Karakul is defeated and my pet evolved into Racard.....everything is good. But.....'

Ark released a sigh and looked at Racard absent-mindedly. No, he looked at Racard who was now wearing a red tuxedo. The reason Ark was dissatisfied was because of the tuxedo.

Blood Red Tuxedo (Rare)

Armour type: Special Costume

Durability: 23/60

Defense: 30

Weight: 15

User restriction: Vampires only

A vampire's tuxedo dyed in his favourite colour, blood red. It appears to be clothes that Karakul who possessed great power preferred and is a luxury clothing using the finest fabrics. There aren't many vampires who wears such luxury tuxedos in Dark Earth. The dignity of the vampire will increase just by wearing this.

'The rare item I got was exclusively for vampires.....'

The vampire wasn't a race that users can select. In addition, Ark was the only user who can summon vampires. In other words, the vampire-only items were created exclusively for Racard. Of course, Ark was also intending to gather equipment for his summons.

'But why did a boss monster drop a rare item for my pets?'

He would be able to receive hundreds of gold from rare items if it wasn't a vampire exclusive item. Now he had to equip all of them on Racard! Ark felt anger well up as he saw Racard wearing the tuxedo.

'First I had to spend 700 gold on a summoning port and now I have to give a rare item to my pet? Am I a chaebol? What the hell? Why was there suddenly so many maintenance costs on my pets? On the other hand, Racard has become a Lord.'

In this situation, it was impossible for Ark not to consider profit. Ark bit his lips before a brilliant idea popped into his head.

'Wait, this castle? Aha, I see.'

Ark's eyes shone brightly as he looked around the room. Karakul was quite a well off vampire in Dark Earth. Like most vampires, he had a lot of items that appealed to his vanity. There were quite a few unnecessary paintings and statues. And the current owner of those decorations was Racard! Ark thought of an idea and smiled wickedly at Racard. In the meantime, Racard had lost his sassiness and became more arrogant.

"Haha, that's right. I'm already an Earl! Detric used to only live in a small hideout and now I am an Earl! Ohhhh, look at me now!"

Detric who had abruptly risen in the hierarchy seemed to think he had become the founder of a new religion. It was so absurd that he couldn't help but laugh.

"Ohhhh, hooray Earl Racard!"

“We swear allegiance to the new Lord!”

“We’ve never mentioned it but we never liked Earl Karakul.”

Dedric became even more arrogant after hearing the Bloody’s reactions.

“Huhuhu, lower your heads even more!”

“Hey Racard.”

Then Ark approached.

“What? What bastard dared call my name so informally.....Hik, M-Master!”

“Oh, aren’t you arrogant? Have you become so big that I can’t say your name anymore?”

“No, that’s not it.....”

Despite being an Earl, Racard was still Ark’s summon. The suffering that Racard received after evolving into Dedric and becoming cocky had been carved into his bones. Racard thought that Ark was going to beat him up again and stuttered while shrinking back.

“I didn’t know it was Master. Really.”

‘Yes, the mental training I gave before is still working.’

Ark liked Racard’s expression.

‘I was looking for signs that he had become cocky again after evolving but now’s not the time for that.’

“Well, okay. You went through some trouble this time so I won’t find faults in such a trivial thing.”

Racard gave a relieved sigh at Ark’s words. Then Ark muttered something.

“Anyway, I feel good that you’ve been promoted. By the way, who was it thanks to?”

“Eh? T-that.... Thank you very much.”

“Is that so? You’re grateful?”

Ark smiled and put his arms over Racard’s shoulders.

“Then I’ll just say something comfortably.”

“Huh? What are you saying? What?”

“I’ll sum up the situation. You’re thankful to me.... You have hundreds of subordinates and this nice castle because of me. But what about all the trouble I went through? I got nothing. Don’t you think it is too terrible? It is troublesome getting nothing after going through all of that.”

“Eek? B-but.....”

“It’s okay, it’s okay. You don’t have to give me any money.”

Ark looked around the area and spoke in a coy voice.

“Just a few souvenirs from your castle will do.....”

“S-souvenirs?”

“A few of the paintings hanging here and some sculptures. Anyway, you have no interest in such things. You’ll just leave it to rot so I’ll take it as a commemoration. How about it? Is that okay? Your castle will be clean and I’ll receive some nice souvenirs. Anyway, you should do something for me or else you’ll start to feel troubled. Isn’t that right?”

In other words, it was a subtle threat. That’s right. This was Ark’s ulterior motive. The pictures and sculptures inside the castle were just decorations. However, decorations like these could be traded as goods to merchants. In other words, decorations could also be sold as goods despite having no additional effects. Ark’s ulterior motive was to pack the decorations away and sell them. Racard finally noticed Ark’s motive and jumped with surprise.

“B-but Master....”

“What? Don’t tell me it’s really valuable?”

“No, rather than it being valuable.... It’s still....”

“Bah, okay. If you behave like this then I have no choice but to act dirty too.”

The smile had disappeared from Ark’s face.

“Okay. Let’s do some calculations. Do you know the expenses?”

“The expenses?”

“Let me explain it to you. Do you know how much money I spent on you? How much food have you eaten from me? But there’s even more? Do you know how much money went into the summoning port? How much money was needed for the support tools to defeat Karakul? Whose pocket do you think it came out of?”

“T-that.....”

“Until now I’ve never even said a word about it. But you’re behaving so dirty just for a few decorations? Then clearly I have to receive the necessary expenses from you. Should I calculate how long you should be beaten up? Do you want me to become a person who collects your debt? I’ll use whatever it takes to receive it.”

The blood drained from Racard’s face as Ark continued speaking. Racard was well aware of how petty and vicious Ark could be in regards to money. Ark would think of it as being robbed of the decorations. It would be impossible to withstand him. Racard was a vampire so he also wanted the decorations, but his many experiences eventually made him lift the white flag.

“Okay, I understand. Take it, just take it.”

“Huhuhu, I thought you would follow me advice.”

Thus the ownership of the castle’s decor was transferred to Ark. First NPCs and users, now Ark was at the level of robbing his summons.

‘Considering everything I spent on this battle, I won’t earn that much even after selling all the decorations. A few hundred gold at most? But it still won’t compensate for everything that I spent. If I lack money in the future then I’ll have to control Racard even more.’

Ark finally finished threatening his summon. The Wolrang elder watched him blankly before speaking in an impatient voice.

“Ark, is now the time to be doing this?”

“Ah, that’s right.”

Ark finally remembered his purpose. The real reason he defeated Karakul wasn’t Racard’s evolution. His purpose was to reclaim the Wolrang’s fragment of the Three Marvels, the Moon Piece.

“Obviously the Moon Piece is hidden somewhere in this castle.”

“I already know where the Moon Piece is.”

The Moon rock had managed to absorb the moon's power despite no moonlight being able to penetrate the Dark Earth. So the Moon Piece must be hidden in the underground workplace. At that time, the magic of the Moon rock ran out and the Wolrang changed back to people. Despite the Wolrang changing back to humans, Racard was now the Lord so there were no problems with the Bloody. Ark, Racard and the Wolrang walked through the castle and arrived at the underground slave pens.

‘Now, where is the Moon Piece hidden?’

Ark surveyed the labour area with expectant eyes. The underground area was very wide. Karakul was also never hide the treasure in a place it could easily be found. It wasn't easy to find the Moon rocks when his skills had been sealed by Chain of Blood but now he could use Magic Detection. The Three Marvels was an object filled with a lot of magic. It wouldn't be a problem to find it even if it was buried in the ground. The ground was also filled with Moon rocks so he could utilize the Wolrang to find the Three Marvels.

‘I can kill two birds with one stone and collect the Moon Piece and Moon rock at the same time.’

The Moon rocks weren't worth that much money but 1 copper was still money! Money was strewn all over the ground so Ark couldn't just leave it alone. Just as Ark was about to use Magic Detection.

“Huk, t-that guy is.....?”

Suddenly the elder's nose twitched before he turned around and saw something. The Bloody had a guard post where they monitored the slaves. Yet one guy was shovelling like crazy at the guard's post. The Wolrang confirmed his face and raised their voice.

“He is Albert!”

Ark turned around at the Wolrang's voice. It was the young man who was the traitor of the Wolrang family, Albert. Albert focused his attention on Ark and the Wolrang before muttering.

"Sheesh, they're already here.....!"

"The clan's traitor, you were hiding in a place like this?"

"Catch him. We can never forgive him!"

The Wolrang yelled with excited voices and started running. But Albert didn't run away. 10 Wolrang were heading towards him. Although he was about to be caught by them, why did he have no intention of escaping and just continued shovelling?

'What is it? That Albert..... Shouldn't he know that Karakul died? Then why didn't he run away immediately? And why is he shovelling.....?'

Ark belatedly realized the reason after looking at Albert.

'Wait, that guy is.....!'

"We got you!"

"Pay the price for disgracing the clan's honour!"

Meanwhile the Wolrang had ran several hundred metres and tackled Albert. It was at that time. A dim light appeared in the centre of the pile of Wolrang before the 10 Wolrang were thrown back in different directions. Then a shadow shot out like an arrow and instantly moved dozens of metres. The identity of the shadow that had hit the Wolrang was Albert. But he wasn't the previous Albert. Just like the Wolrang, his form was that of a huge wolf with his silvery mane fluttering behind him. The Wolrang clan looked at the stone Albert was holding in his hand before screaming.

"Moon rock? No, that's.... The Moon Piece!"

As expected, it was hidden in that place? In fact, Ark had already guessed the location of the Moon Piece before arriving there. It had to be buried in a safe place where the slaves wouldn't find it. There was only one such place. Wasn't it the place monitored by the Bloody? That was the reason why Albert hadn't ran away and instead started digging in the underground workplace. Anyway, he couldn't run far away while in the form of a human. If so, Albert would rather take a risk and find the Moon Piece which would make him more powerful.

"T-that guy!"

"The clan's treasure is in the hands of the traitor.....!"

"Kyakyakya, foolish bastards. You thought I would just take it lying down?"

Albert bared his sharp fangs. The Wolrang looked fearful but Ark just scratched his head.

"What? Is this guy stupid?"

Of course, Albert was a lot stronger when transformed into a silver wolf then when he was a human. And transforming with the Moon Piece was a lot different than transforming with the less powerful Moon rock. Thanks to the influence of the Moon Piece, the Wolrang were able to fight evenly with Karakul despite the effects of Dark Blood. But the Wolrang clan also transformed into wolves when the Moon Piece appeared. In addition, there was only one exit from the underground workplace. No matter how strong Albert was, how would he manage to defeat the other Wolrang who also transformed into wolves to escape?

It would be the same even if the Wolrang wasn't there. All the Bloody inside the castle was already Racard's subordinates. Ark was also blocking the exit. The likelihood of Albert escaping safely was only 0.0001%. In other words, Albert had caused his own loss.

"Well, you should be grateful for surviving this long. This wolf bastard has no manners. Having difficulty because of you..... I'll make you into finely minced pork."

Ark took one step forward with the intention of breaking Albert's bones. Then Albert opened his mouth and muttered.

"Stop! If anyone takes one more step then I'll swallow the Moon Piece."

"Ah, this is completely tiring. Is that what you call a threat? Do you have that much confidence in your digestion ability? Would you like to try it? I'll split you in half before you can digest the Moon Piece."

"W-wait a minute."

The elder suddenly interrupted Ark.

"Albert..... No, it will be a serious problem if any of the Wolrang swallows the Moon Piece."

"Eh? He really can digest the Moon Piece in seconds?"

"The Wolrang receives their power from the moon so if a Wolrang swallows the Moon Piece then he will overflow with magic and transform into a difficult monster. He will turn into the god Fenrir. We can't afford to have Albert transform into Fenrir....."

The elder broke into a cold sweat as he spoke and shook his head.

"But that is not the only problem."

"It's not?"

"If the Moon Piece runs out of power then it will turn into an ordinary stone. Of course, it is the clan's treasure so it will recover if it receives moonlight but it might take 10 or 20 years to recover. That Albert, I never thought he would use this method."

The elder muttered. Now Ark's face became serious. In fact, he didn't feel it was that serious if Albert transformed into Fenrir. He might be a god but he was still a monster. There were hundreds of Wolrang and Bloody present. No matter how great the monster, it couldn't deal with all those troops alone. However, it would be a huge problem if the Three Marvels lost its power.

'It'll take 10~20 years to regain its power? Then even if I obtain the Moon Piece, I can't receive my bonus abilities or find a clue to change to my second stage profession?'

"Kyakyakya, now do you understand the situation?"

"You bastard!"

Ark stepped towards Albert who moved the Moon Piece to his mouth.

"Didn't I tell you? I'll swallow it if you take even one step."

"If you swallow the Moon Piece then you'll become an irrational monster."

"Bah, I have no other choice now that Karakul has been defeated. This is my plan of desperation. If I turn into Fenrir then I'll pull you all to hell. Of course, the Moon Piece will also become an ordinary stone as a result."

"T-that bastard....!"

"Elder-nim, don't listen to him."

"We have to tear that kind of fellow to pieces."

The Wolrang shouted with agitated voices. At that moment, Ark sighed and took out a thin piece of paper.

“...What do you want?”

“Kyakyakya, I knew you would agree. As expected from humans. It is different from the foolish wolves who would risk their limbs for honour. I understand your intentions.”

Albert laughed and stated his requirements.

“I know that Seutandal has rose to middle earth. In that case, there is no reason to stay in a place like this. First of all, I'll request some security. I don't want anyone to follow me when I leave Dark Earth for middle earth. And money. I'll need money if I'm expected to live as a human on middle earth. 5000 gold. Prepare 5,000 Gold right now.”

Albert talked like a terrorist holding hostages captive. In fact, Albert actually had a hostage in the form of the Moon Piece.

“Wait, what about the Moon Piece?”

“Make one of the children of the Wolrang accompany me. Once I've safely migrated to middle earth with money, I'll give the Moon Piece to the child. Because there is no need for the Moon Piece once I leave Dark Earth.”

“How do I know you'll keep your promise?”

“Whether you believe me or not is fine. But do you have any other choice?”

Albert opened his mouth and threateningly moved the Moon Piece in and out Why did he have to be threatened by a wolf who sold himself as a slave to Karakul? It felt like his blood pressure was rising to 300 every time Albert threatened to swallow the Moon Piece. But he didn't know what would happen to his second class change.

‘However, I can't just accept that guy's request.’

5000 gold. He had to give 5000 gold to that bastard? Currently Ark didn't have that kind of money. Even if he did, he had no intention of giving it to the wolf. If he accepted the terms then what reason would Albert have to keep his promise? No, he was 100% certain that Albert wouldn't keep his promise.

'This brat, does he think I'm stupid?'

If Ark was thinking from Albert's point of view, there was absolutely no way he would give back the Moon Piece. Albert had said that the Moon Piece would be unnecessary when he crossed into middle earth. But they were unexpected words. Of course the Moon Piece wasn't necessary to transform. However, it was the only weapon he had to protect himself from Ark and the Wolrang chasing him. Who would give such a weapon away so easily?

'I can't just let him swallow it..... Okay. I'm also going to use a desperate plan.'

Ark sighed with a gloomy expression while communicating with Racard.

'Racard. I'll attract his attention so hide yourself and approach from behind. That guy will only pay attention to me and the Wolrang. You won't be noticed if you turn into a bat and sneak up from behind. Seize the Moon Piece when he is caught off guard.'

Racard had a worried expression after Ark finished talking. Although he managed to defeat Karakul and became an Earl, he had no confidence against Albert who had turned into a wolf.

'There's no need to worry. This is the Dark Earth. If the situation deteriorates, he won't dare kill you in case he enrages the Lord.'

Racard's expression became relieved. After a brief moment, he smiled and spoke.

'I understand. As long as you decide not to take all my decorations.'

'What?'

Ark frowned as he heard Racard's voice in his ear. However, Racard pretended to know nothing as he looked into the distance and whistled. He was trying to profit from his Master's crisis? A pet trying to rob its owner.....

Anyway, Ark wanted to use Dark Blade on Racard but couldn't in this situation. If Albert swallowed the Moon Piece then the decorations would be the least of his problems.

'Okay. But you definitely need to get it.'

'Okay.'

Racard enthusiastically answered, turned into a bat and approached Albert from behind. Meanwhile, Ark used various excuses to attract his attention and waste time.

"It can't be helped. I accept your requirements. But I don't have 5000 gold right now."

"If you don't have the money then there will be no negotiations."

"W-wait a minute! I can save up the money. But I need some time. Five days. 5000 gold isn't a small amount of money. I'll have to exit Dark Earth and gather that much money."

".....You want me to wait five days for you?"

"Is it impossible? Then how about 50 gold? I can give you that amount right now."

"W-what? This guy..... You're the Truthseeker yet you're trying to bargain for the Moon Piece? In addition, only 50 gold? That's 1/100 of what I asked!"

"Then what should I do? I have no money right now."

"This guy....."

Albert muttered before his nose suddenly twitched and he flinched. Then he suddenly turned around while a choked scream could be heard in the darkness.

“Hik!”

It was Racard who had been creeping closer. Albert frowned and stared at Ark.

“This fool, you really are stupid!”

‘Damn, I forgot that he is a wolf.’

He hadn’t taken into account a wolf’s sense of smell. Ark waved his hands and quickly gave excuses.

“No, I didn’t know what that guy was planning to do!”

“What nonsense, these negotiations are now failed!”

“Sheesh, stop him. Racard. Do whatever it takes to get the Moon Piece!”

“U-understood!”

Racard shot forward like an arrow at Ark’s words. Ark also used Sprint to dash towards Albert. However, Racard was still 50 metres away from Albert. Ark was several hundred metres away. There was no way that Ark or Racard could stop Albert from swallowing the stone in time.

‘Damn..... Is this really the end of the Moon Piece?’

Ark moaned desperately as he saw the Moon Piece about to enter Albert’s mouth. Daeng kang! It was at that time. There was a sudden sound and Albert stumbled. At the same time, the Moon Piece fell from

his hands. Ark couldn't fathom what had happened....but there was no time to worry about it. The shaky Albert was reaching towards the Moon Piece with his hands.

"Dark blade!"

Just before it landed in his hands, Ark used Dark Blade on the Moon Piece.

"Racard, now!"

"I know. I'll catch it!"

Racard snatched the Moon Piece from the sky. After Racard snatched the Moon Piece, the Wolrang just gaped as they couldn't understand the situation. Then dozens of the Wolrang ran up and caught Albert who was trying to escape.

"Ugh, this, unbelievable!"

In just a few seconds, the Moon Piece's kidnapping incident was solved.

-A mysterious stone fragment filled with ancient power.

It is a mysterious stone with a dark aura on its surface. 50 points in Knowledge of Ancient Relics is required to confirm this.

Before checking this item, a -50% penalty to all stats will be applied to the owner.

Ark finally obtained the Moon Piece after Racard passed it to him. And Albert was pinned to the floor by the Wolrang.

“Phew, fortunately it didn’t turn out badly. But who attacked Albert?”

“I..... It was me.....”

Then something popped up from Albert’s back.

“Eh? You are.....?”

Ark’s eyes widened as he muttered. The person holding the shovel and approached was the slave monster Flip. Ark had forgotten but there were dozens of slaves caught in the underground jail. The Shackles of Pain was released so they knew that Karakul was dead. But they couldn’t grasp how the situation had changed so they hid in the dungeon before overhearing Ark’s conversation with Albert.

“I explain the general situation. Although the shackles were unlocked..... We were still slaves.... That did not change. And the person who will decide our treatment..... Your summon, no..... It’ll be you. So I thought I should help you.”

“But how did you approach without Albert noticing you?”

“Huhuhu, I.... Towards guys with a lot of fur..... I will never be caught.....”

Ark immediately understood the meaning of Flip’s words. Once again, Flip was a flea type monster. Albert and the Wolrang were wolves. Of course he would be insensitive to the smell of fleas in his fur.

“Thank you very much.”

“No, thank you....”

Flip muttered before looking slightly fearful as Racard approached. It had lived for decades as a slave to Karakul but now Ark’s summon Racard was the new Lord. The slaves hesitantly exited the jails before there was a sudden shout of anger.

“You bastarrrrrrr!”

Ark, the Wolrang and Flip turned their heads at the same time. One monster was running at a face pace towards Ark. It had sunken eyes and a blackened and gloomy face, with the entire body wrapped in rags! It was a dreadful monster that looked like it had starved for hundreds of years.

‘What’s with this guy? Was there such a monster among the slaves?’

The Wolrang and Bloody thought the situation was finished and had become careless. The thing ran up to Ark and swung a pickaxe. No, it tried to swing it. Ark automatically withdrew his sword.

Duk, kwatang, degul degul.

The monster had stepped on one of its ragged hems and fell down. Ark forgot about counter attacking and stared at the monster blankly.

‘What the hell? Did this guy suddenly appear just to do a body gag?’

“Ugh, ugh....”

The monster who had fallen to the ground suddenly moved its shoulders and sobbed.

“Eh? Crying? Hey, Flip. Who is he?”

“That.....”

Flip scratched its head and was about to talk. However, the monster had winced at Ark’s words. Then it raised its head and tried to swing the pickaxe again.

“What? What did you say? What type of man are you?”

Pakak! Ark kicked the monster's jaw when it sprang at him, making it collapse again. But that only lasted for a brief moment. The monster raised its body like a zombie and shrieked before running up to him.

"Huk, you hit me? You dared hit me? Okay, then I'll kill you!"

"What is with this guy? Huh? Wait, this voice is.....?"

Ark felt something strange and looked at the monster with Eyes of the Cat. Ark screamed after seeing the information window floating on top of the monster's head.

"Eek? B-Buksil?"

To his surprise, the identity of the monster was Buksil. Buksil's face contorted at Ark's scream.

"Ugh, you really didn't recognize me?"

"No, what on earth is with that shabby form?"

"..... How dare you ask that question!"

Buksil ground his teeth together and yelled.

"Why am I like this! Digging all day and sleep deprivation! In addition, during the evenings I had to provide the blood of two people by himself. Because you deserted me and left!"

Karakul had been deeply offended when Ark escaped. But Ark had already left his sphere of influence so he turned all his fury towards Buksil. The crime of attempting to escape with Ark, of hitting him with the pig missile etc. made Buksil's prison life extremely different and more difficult than before. Although Ark had kind of expected it when he left Buksil behind.

'But I never thought he would change like this.....'

It had only been 3 days since Ark escaped. However, it looked like those 3 day were a lot more difficult than the 8 previous days. Once again, the decisive moment for such a hellish experience was when Ark used Buksil as a pig missile. But there was no reason to talk about it now. He felt a bit sorry when thinking about it, but it had already happened. And hadn't he managed to save Buksil and defeat Karakul because he was successful in escaping?

"Ah, um.... That is..... Anyway, I'm sorry."

"What, what, what? You think everything will be cleared up with an apology?"

"This brat, why are you questioning it so closely? Anyway, it's already been settled so why don't we forget it?"

Ark grinned awkwardly towards Buksil. Then something unimaginable happened. All of a sudden, one of Buksil's eyeballs popped out? Buksil hurriedly fumbled with along the ground and picked up the eyeball before putting it back in.

"Hik, my eyes..... My eyes....."

"Eh? What the? What happened to your eyes?"

"Do you need to ask? This is your fault!"

"What are you talking about? How can you blame me for your eyes popping out?"

"I don't know, I don't know. Everything is your fault!"

"Corrosion.....that's what it is called....."

Flip scratched its head and interrupted.

Here was a summary of the absurd situation. After Ark had escaped, Karakul drank portions for two people from Buksil. But even if Buksil had the nutrition of a pig, it was impossible for him to recover enough blood every day. Therefore all the blood in Buksil's body became depleted in a matter of days. However, Karakul was still angry and sucked the last drop of blood from Buksil. And at this point, something happened to Buksil that even Karakul didn't expect. Buksil's boy which had been completely depleted of blood acted like a vacuum and sucked in some of Karakul's blood. If Karakul had strong magic like the highest ranking nobles who lived in the Immortal castle, Buksil would be turned into a vampire. However, Karakul's blood only had enough magic to turn him into a monster.

"But a foreigner..... Cannot change into a Bloody. Karakul knew that sometimes the blood would flow backwards..... So he hadn't paid that much attention....."

Karakul never expected that the unexpected skill he used on Buksil would react with the blood transfusion. Karakul's skill was normally used on vampire babies. In the old days, the skill Karakul used to watch things using his eyeballs was normally used to watch the children. However, he had used this skill on Buksil so it turned him into a strange creature.

'Anyway, that guy is really unlucky. But he still received a plausible skill. Couldn't he use that remove eyeballs skill to get himself out of trouble?'

Ark laughed with an amazed expression. Then Buksil who had been rubbing his eyes angrily grabbed Ark.

"Laugh? Were you laughing just now?"

"So what?"

Ark raised his chin and spoke in an impudent voice.

"It couldn't be helped at that time. No? Even if it meant I would be captured again? If I hadn't done it then wouldn't you and I still be digging in the dungeon? But Karakul was defeated thanks to me escaping. You got to be freed as well. So why are you complaining? On the contrary, shouldn't you thank me?"

“T-talking like that.....”

Buksil licked his lips and stuttered. Well, Ark felt sorry when looking at that shabby form. But it was just like he said. Even though he was sorry, Buksil didn't seem to be accepting it. If that's the case..... Ark leaned down and grabbed Buksil's collar.

“Are you still mad? Shouldn't you be thankful that I came to help you? Are you still a person? Huh?”

Ah, the villain had resorted to threats. Buksil's face turned red. He opened his mouth and was going to speak. Then Ark smiled and spoke in a low voice.

“Well, I do understand your feelings. I'm not that heartless. But is it really smart to attack me?”

“What the? I won't be affected by your threats anymore. I've already gone to the depths of hell!”

“Then would you like to enter the bottom of hell again?”

“What?”

Buksil flinched and looked at Ark. Ark smiled and spoke in a quiet tone.

“Think about it. Weren't you caught by Karakul and trapped in the underground dungeon? However, Karakul has died and my pet is the new Lord. In other words, it is possible to lock someone up in the underground jail again. Do you understand?”

“.....!”

Buksil started sweating as his hands gripped the pickaxe tightly.

“Eh? Why are you shaking? Relax. That was just a scenario I mentioned.”

Ark wiped Buksil’s sweat and continued in a soft voice.

“Well, is the problem settled? The problem was that I left you while escaping but wouldn’t you prefer to thank me for rescuing you?”

There was the hidden threat of being locked in the jail again! Buksil’s face was dyed with fear. Buksil knew. Ark was a person who wouldn’t blink while doing such dreadful actions. Although Buksil accepted it, he still dragged his feet. Finally, he had no choice but to tearfully succumb to Ark’s threat. However, Buksil wasn’t able to leave it like that.

“.....I understand. Instead there is one condition.”

“Condition?”

“I need a subordinate.”

“Eh? What?”

“I actually wanted to tell you before. Do you know how much work is needed? Foraging ingredients, filming the video and even running Ark-nim’s errands. Even your summons are ignoring me these days. I used to have my brothers but now..... A subordinate is needed to improve my motivation and work load.”

‘Damn, is this my fault?’

Ark scratched his head with an astounded expression. In fact, previously he would’ve just ignored it. However, it was now necessary for Buksil to accompany Ark. And Buksil was a user not a NPC. There was a limit to how much he could be pulled along using intimidation. He also felt sorry about abandoning him before so Ark wanted to help. But a subordinate..... In other words, he wanted one of Ark’s summons as a subordinate? Of course, it wasn’t that difficult. But Racard had picked on Buksil so far and he would not listen obediently to anyone besides Ark. The same was also true for Radun and Razak.

'Racard had just become an Earl so it'll be troublesome if I tell him to serve Buksil. Besides, isn't the point of a subordinate to relieve Buksil's stress? No matter how much I tell them to treat Buksil like a hyung, neither Racard or Razak would listen obediently to Buksil. But it's not possible to completely reject it.....'

If Buksil refused to film the videos then Ark would have a serious problem. He was obedient now under the threat of being trapped in the dungeon again but he didn't know how Buksil would react after they left Dark Earth.

'The best way is to buy a pet.....'

In New World, pets other than summons existed. However, a pet like a squirrel cost several hundred gold. In addition, Buksil didn't want a simple pet but a subordinate he could control.

'Wait, a subordinate?'

Then Ark suddenly had a brilliant idea.

"Okay. You wanted a subordinate to relieve your work load?"

Ark smiled and went to where the Wolrang were gathered.

"Let's show him the price of betrayal and rip him apart!"

"Yes, we can never forgive his humiliation!"

The Wolrang were gathered around Albert and talking violently. Ark stealthily intruded between the Wolrang and spoke to the elder.

"Elder-nim. Could you possibly entrust this guy to me?"

“Entrust him to you? Surely you don’t intend to help him?”

“It’s because of Albert that I was caught as a slave for Karakul. My mind also wants to kill him immediately. However, Albert is still a descendant of the Wolrang who fought with Hero Maban against the dark forces. Killing Albert will now wash away the disgrace he dealt against your honour. In addition, killing him is too generous a punishment for a traitor.”

“Umm, I guess so.....”

The elder sighed and nodded.

“In that case, how about I take Albert with me? The Wolrang was a clan that followed Hero Maban. If I take Albert then there will be no stain to the Wolrang’s honour. While following me around as punishment, Albert might even think about the honour of the Wolrang clan again.”

That’s right. Although he was making up plausible reasons, the real reason Ark wanted Albert was as a subordinate for Buksil. But the elder had a dissatisfied expression.

“I understand your intention. If he accompanies the descendant of Hero Maban then he might be rehabilitated. But that child’s sin is so immense. Will serving you be a suitable punishment? Moreover, he might not listen to you.....”

“You don’t have to worry about that and I’ll prove it to you.”

Ark approached Albert who was gasping on the floor.

“Hey, Albert! Did you hear me words? What do you think about it?”

“Ugh! I will never serve you. Although I am like this, I am still a Wolrang. I would rather die.....”

“I knew you would say that. Radun, Shackles of Pain.”

Ark received the Shackles of Pain from Radun. It was the shackles used on Ark when he had previously been captured. After escaping Karakul's territory, it had fallen off but Ark had packed it just in case it was needed. Ark whistled and locked Albert into the shackles.

"You know how this works right?"

"T-this is.... You bastard.... Doing this kind of thing....."

"That's the wrong answer."

"W-wait. Kkaekkaeng!"

Then Ark started stepping on Albert. Karakul was dead but the Shackles of Pain was an item. The effect applied to the item would be unchanged. And the effects of Shackles of Pain amplified the pain by 10 times! Ark had trained in taekwondo for a long time and he knew how to inflict pain. Ark utilized that knowledge to only hit a vital spot. Under the Shackles of Pain, that suffering was amplified by 10 times. The Wolrang became startled at Albert's loud scream.

"You, you bastard! Kuaak! How are you a human....? You must be disguised as one....."

"I don't want to hear that from a wolf."

"S-stop! H-help me. Ah, no..... I would rather die....."

"You don't like it?"

"Aaaaah! Kkaekkaeng!"

Ark laughed and continued stepping on Albert. Such cruel violence! The slave monsters, Wolrang and even the Bloody turned pale with fear. How much time had passed? Every time Ark would use his hands or feet, Albert would roll on the ground until he eventually grabbed Ark's hem.

"I'll do it! Whatever it takes. No, please let me do it. Just please don't hit me!" Ark then smiled and went to the elder.

"Hmm, you heard his words. What does Elder-nim think?"

".....Maybe accompanying you will be a more serious punishment than dying."

The elder swallowed his saliva and nodded. The other Wolrang also agreed. It was to the extent that they looked at Albert with pity.

"Buksil? What do you think about this guy as a subordinate?"

"Huh? Huh? Yes!"

When Ark suddenly spoke to him, Buksil nodded his head with surprise. Then the elder who had been watching sighed.

"Albert, do you really believe that you will reflect on your bad deeds with him as your Master?"

"Yes...."

"Good. Although you are a traitor, you are still a part of the Wolrang clan. I don't need to explain that the Wolrang's purpose is to serve. You have to be really prepared and swear obedience according to the custom of the Wolrang."

Albert flinched at the elder's words but listened with his head raised. Then he stared at Ark before approaching Buksil. After hesitating for a moment, he fell down next to the group and exposed his stomach. That's right. Revealing the stomach was a sign of obedience in animals.

"Now, please stroke his stomach. An oath of obedience will be formed."

Buksil rubbed the stomach with trembling hands and Albert instantly panted with his tongue hanging out. The elder and the Wolrang wore serious expressions like they were conducting a sacred rite. Thus, Albert became Buksil's pet dog. Since the problem regarding Albert was settled, Ark went to Racard.

"Racard, our talk earlier..... You said that you wanted to keep the decorations if you snatched the Moon Piece from Albert....."

"Did I say that? Hahaha. I don't remember that? Even if I did say that, it's not like I got the Moon Piece back for you."

"As expected, you also thought like that? So I can take the decorations as promised?"

"Of course. Take it. I have no interest in such things in the first place."

Racard laughed awkwardly with a frozen face. The effects of violence wasn't only applied to Buksil. Racard had become cocky after evolving into an Earl but seeing Albert being beaten up reminded him of his own experiences. Thus he didn't have to use violence on Buksil or Racard.

"Then it is a happy ending."

Ark laughed and murmured brightly. No one else laughed along with him.