

Solo Leveling: Ragnarok [FAN TL] Chapter 5 - Chapter 04

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"...!"

Suho was greatly shocked. The black monster that suddenly appeared had a jet-black exoskeleton serving as armor, and black steam was rising from its entire body. It was shaped like a giant ant with wings. The black smoke that flickered incessantly from its body was like shadows swaying in the light. The moment he saw it, memories flashed through Suho's mind.

'Don't tell me it's the one I saw in my dream...?' He definitely recognized this monster. The countless ants that appeared in his dreams long ago. The leader of those terrifying monsters looked exactly like that...! But then, why was it doing this...? That ant monster suddenly approached Suho and knelt on one knee.

[My liege! It is I, Beru! You may now rest assured!]

"...What?" Suho's eyes widened.

What was this situation? The ant was so large that even when it knelt, Suho had to look up at it. But then, before he could say anything, the black monster's demeanor suddenly changed. He saw Suho's condition, his body covered in wounds from the giant wolf's attack. At that moment, the black monster unleashed a storm-like killing intent from its entire body and raised its head.

[Th-this damn mutt dared to bite this precious body?! I'll tear your snout apart!] And a terrifying roar, strong enough to shake the entire building, erupted from its mouth.

[KIEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEK—!]

The world turned into hell.

Rumble—!

[Krrrr...!]

A terrifying killing intent engulfed everything. The giant wolf, pinned under the black monster, desperately raised its head. And it bit into the black monster's leg.

[What...?] The black monster's head creaked as it looked down.

[How dare you!? A lowly insect dares to attack me...?!]

Black steam surged and the black monster kicked the giant wolf at blinding speed, then not satisfied with only that it rammed its body into the beast.

Thud—!

[Keheok!]

The giant wolf was helplessly thrown back with a scream. But the black monster was even faster and slammed the giant beast to the ground once again.

Bang—!

Then it grabbed the wolf's legs with both hands.

Rip—!

The wolf's body was torn in half.

[Kraaaaak...!]

Black blood splattered in all directions accompanied by a terrible scream. This was no longer a battle, just a one-sided massacre. The tyranny of a predator.

[KIEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEK!] The overwhelming predator roared madly again, trampling on the wolf's corpse.

That cruel killing intent made all the Hunters who had just entered the first floor of the art museum freeze.

"Wh-what! This killing intent!"

"A D-rank dungeon, and this is...!" Shock and fear overwhelmed them.

The building shook as if it were about to collapse. But... Suho wasn't afraid of that cruel monster at all. Rather, it was so nostalgic... It stimulated something hidden deeply within his old memories.

'What? I feel like I'm about to remember something...'

– Gae-mi...

– Gu-mi mi...!

What was this memory? He could hear the voice of a baby, happily drawing ants in a sketchbook.

'Who...'

Crackle—!

"Ugh!" A sudden, intense headache struck. Although he was confused, one thing was certain.

'Anyway, I... seem to be alive...'

[HP: 1/140]

Thud!

Suho finally collapsed as all the tension left his body.

[Kieek! M-my liege? My liege! Wake up...!]

At that moment, Suho thought that the monster's embrace, rushing to him and holding him, was so, so warm... A smile spread across his lips as he lost consciousness.

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Ding!

[Completed Quest: 'Rescue the Survivors']

[Number of survivors rescued: 33]

[Level Up!]

* * *

Suho had a dream. It was about a baby being carried on the back of an ant. The baby in the dream was giggling happily. And when the baby laughed, the ant laughed with him. There were always ants wherever the baby went.

An ant wearing an apron and feeding him from a bottle.

An ant studying numbers with him.

An ant covering him with a small blanket and taking a nap with him...

If he couldn't see the ant, the baby would cry. And the ants would appear in an instant, shaking toys and soothing the child. The baby would stop crying and smile again. The ant wearing an apron approached the baby with teary eyes.

[My liege, you have grown so splendidly. I, Beru, am simply overwhelmed with emotion.]

"...!"

And then the baby suddenly turned into the 22-year-old Suho, standing before the ant.

'Beru.' Suho repeated the name inwardly.

The ant looked at him with pride and wiped his teary eyes.

[Originally, my purpose was to unseal your power, my liege. But to think you unsealed it on your own... As expected of our Little Monarch.]

[Sob. Sob.] Tears poured from Beru's eyes like from a faucet, overwhelmed with emotion.

[Sob. But the seal isn't completely broken. The most important things are stored in this place.] Beru rummaged through his pockets and took out something.

Ding!

[Obtained Item: 'Shadow Dungeon Key'.]

'Shadow Dungeon? What's this?' Suho felt confused at the sudden message. But, he was still dreaming so... Suho's voice didn't reach Beru. The ant placed the key in his hand and said,

[Use this key whenever you are ready, my liege. Everything that should have been yours is stored within.] Beru knelt on one knee and held Suho's shoulders with both hands.

[But please remember one thing.] A solemn tone and a gentle touch. Those contrasting emotions could be felt from his eyes as he looked at Suho.

[Great power always requires a great vessel. If an incompetent person is given power they can't handle, the vessel could break, unable to withstand the weight of that power.]

'Great power.'

'Great vessel.'

Suho repeated those words inwardly.

[In short, you need to increase the level of your vessel.] Beru's eyes narrowed with a mischievous smile. And after finishing speaking he got up again and bowed politely.

[Then, my liege. My mission ends here. I wish I could stay by your side longer, but even now, my comrades are eagerly waiting for me.] And then he winked.

[I'm a pretty good Healer too, you know.]

'Healer? This beast, a Healer?' It was the most absurd thing Suho had heard recently.

[Then I'll be on my way now. Until the day we meet again, please...]

[Please be well...] Beru's faint voice echoed.

'Wait! I still have questions...!' He hurriedly called out to him, but his voice wouldn't come out. At that moment, Suho woke up.

"Gasp! Ant?!"

Suho, who jumped up, quickly looked around. White walls and the smell of disinfectant. Calm air surrounded him.

"Oh my. You're awake?" The nurse, who was changing his IV drip, looked at Suho.

"This place is..."

"It's a hospital. Don't you remember? A dungeon appeared at the school."

'...Was it all a dream?' Although he woke up, Suho had a blank expression.

'Just what part was a dream? The ant? The dungeon? Or maybe the level-up?' Everything was confusing. Just then, he saw the news playing on the TV in the hospital room.

– The Gate that occurred at Hankuk University two days ago has been mostly cleared...

– Experts are analyzing why the number of casualties was miraculously low despite a dungeon break occurring in the middle of the city...

'Two days have already passed?' It seemed like the incident at the art museum wasn't a dream after all.

'Then was my childhood dream also real?'

Suho finally remembered. The memories of his childhood playing with giant ants. How could he have forgotten those happy moments? He felt a pang of sadness as he recalled the ant 'Beru' from his dream.

'He left like that without even having a proper conversation.' Suho looked up. The messages were floating before his eyes as if waiting for him.

[Completed Quest: 'Rescue the Survivors.']

[Quest completion reward has arrived.]

[Would you like to check the reward?] (Y/N)

'Check.' Suho chose check without hesitation. It was only right to claim the reward first after almost dying several times.

[The following rewards are prepared.]

[Reward 1: Stat points +5]

[Reward 2: Strength stat points +3]

'8 stat points?' Suho's eyes widened at the unexpectedly large reward. It seemed like every time he leveled up, all stats increased by 1 point each. So 8 additional stat points were a much greater amount than leveling up once.

'It was worth risking my life to do a good deed.'

Suho immediately checked his status window.

[Status Window]

[Name: Sung Suho]

[Level: 3]

[Job: None]

[Title: None]

[HP: 140/140]

[MP: 14/14]

[Stats]

[Strength: 15]

[Stamina: 12]

[Agility: 12]

[Intelligence: 12]

[Sense: 12]

[Available stat points: 5]

[Skills]

[Passive Skills: None]

[Active Skills: Ruler's Authority Lv.1]

There were definitely many features added compared to the dreams he had in high school. Back then, only the level was displayed, and there was no detailed status window like this.

'Hmm. Which stat should I increase?' The 3 Strength stat points were automatically applied, and he wondered where to invest the remaining ones. Suho carefully examined the other stats without investing the remaining points recklessly. And an information window appeared.

[Information]

[Strength:]

[A stat that increases strength and speed. Increases attack power.]

[Agility:]

[A stat that increases dynamic vision and physical reaction speed.]

[Increases reflexes and evasion rate.]

[Stamina:]

[A stat that increases maximum HP and recovery speed.]

[Intelligence:]

[A stat that increases maximum MP and MP recovery speed.]

[Sense:]

[A stat that increases the five senses.]

[Increases danger perception ability.]

'I'll decide later after thinking about it more.' All the stats seemed important. Suho closed the status window and suddenly realized he was thirsty. Come to think of it, he had been unconscious for two days without drinking a single sip of water. He opened the small refrigerator next to the bed to find water.

Click.

And inside...

"...Huh?"

Suho's eyes widened. Surprisingly, the shrunken Beru was peeling an apple inside the refrigerator.

"Y-you...!"

[Keeek.]

[Beru Lv.1]

[Normal Grade]

Beru, whose majestic body had become small and cute for some reason, held out the apple with an embarrassed expression. It was shaped like a rabbit.

[I couldn't go back because I ran out of mana.]

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"..."