

Leveling with the Gods

Chapter 10

‘That should do it.’

The flow of mana stabilized. The orb made of mana was no longer shaking violently. Its registration as a skill meant that YuWon successfully created a full fledged [Mana Blast].

Woom, woocom—

The fist-sized [Mana Blast] howled violently, asking for its power to be unleashed. As he expected, he wasn’t able to fully control it yet.

‘Still...’

Yuwon aimed the palm of his hand towards the monsters that were getting closer.

“This should be enough.”

Woocomoom—

The [Mana Blast] shone brightly.

Flash—!

A powerful beam of light shot out from YuWon’s hand.

Crumble—

The stairway leading to the deeper parts of the station collapsed.

The heads of monsters that were running towards YuWon were blown to pieces, and their scorched bodies littered the floor.

The blast didn’t cover that large of an area, but its firepower was nothing to sneeze at.

‘I can’t fully control it yet.’

Yuwon felt the mana leaking out of him like a deflating balloon. The mana consumption for this skill was just too high. It took all of his mana to create a single [Mana Blast].

‘I need more Arcane Power and higher proficiency before it’ll be usable...’

When climbing the tower, [Mana Blast] was one of the most basic of essential techniques. All it required was gathering mana into a single point and releasing it. It was simple but highly destructive.

Due to its simple nature, it was a technique that allowed one to measure the user's Arcane Power and ability to control mana.

"This technique really isn't my type."

There were plenty of people that specialized in using [Mana Blast,] but despite being able to create one, YuWon seldom used [Mana Blast] in battle.

Plop, plop—

Roll, roll, roll—

Two essence fell and rolled onto the floor.

Not every monster dropped an essence. They dropped from perhaps every one in ten monsters. It didn't have a very high drop rate.

Taking that into account, YuWon had been pretty lucky up to this point, having already collected this much essence.

Yuwon picked up the essence from the ground and put it into his inventory pouch. Then, observing that the monsters were cautious of him after seeing the power of the [Mana Blast,] he pulled out his knife.

"What's wrong?"

Tmp, tmp—

YuWon started walking down a flight of stairs.

"Why are you so afraid of me?"

The 3rd Tutorial was all about hunting. 72 hours remained, and YuWon had no intention of wasting a single minute of it.

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Two days had passed since the start of the 3rd Tutorial.

The 1st Tutorial might have killed the largest number of people, but proportionally, the 3rd Tutorial ended up being far more lethal than the last two.

Out of approximately 1,400 people, only a little more than 400 people remained after two days' time. The rate of survival wasn't even 30%.

"Aren't we too far in?"

"Yeah. I have a bad feeling about this place."

"There's nothing we can do about it. Hopefully, we can find a hiding place here. But was Hongdae Station always this large? Am I imagining it?"

"Who knows. The entire world changed. Why would this place be an exception?"

Three people entered Hongdae Station. It was one woman and two men.

The woman was named JooYeon. She was guarding the group's rear when she opened her mouth.

"Hey, hey! Over there."

"What? What is it?"

"A convenience store?"

The group's faces lit up. They'd been concerned about their depleting rations, so the convenience store was like discovering an oasis in a desert.

"There's probably ramen, right?"

"There's no hot water. Why would you want ramen?"

"I can just eat it raw."

"Let's go in already. I'm starving."

While thinking about filling up their inventory pouch with rations, something fell on the head of the guy running ahead of the group.

Thud—

“Ssss—”

“Aaaaagh!”

“JoonHo!”

It was a large green spider.

The man assaulted by the spider let out a painful cry before dropping dead.

His head melted off, creating a puddle of poison and liquified flesh. In reaction to the gory sight, JooYeon raised her knife and the other guy, SeongChan, prepared to swing his large hammer.

“Grrrrr—”

“Chweeeek, chak—!”

A horrifying cry.

One by one, the monsters around the convenience store started revealing themselves: one zombie, two Moss Spiders, and three Man-Eating Rats.

“There’s...”

“Why are there so many?”

They’d already lost one of their companions.

‘Can we kill them all?’

JooYeon’s heart was pounding. During the last two days, the three of them had been through thick and thin. They had flirted with death multiple times, hunting the monsters outside. They even leveled up quite a bit. All three of them were above Level 10, meaning they possessed far greater stats than before.

However, it was uncertain if the two of them could face off against all these monsters.

There wasn’t a lot of time to think. The three Man-Eating Rats jumped towards them.

“Scream, hiss—!”

“Squeak—!”

Man-Eating Rats were the size of German shepherds, and they were the most nimble among the monsters that inhabited the subway station.

JooYeon swung her knife at the Man-Eating Rat charging towards her. It was a knife she had bought from the Lackey for 200 points.

“Eek!”

Slash, slash—

The knife was unable to cut the rat. Unlike sluggish zombies, the Man-Eating Rats were easily dodging her attacks.

It was the same story with the Moss Spiders that melted their companion’s head with poison. They crawled at her at a breakneck pace, getting up in her face.

“Ge-Get away!”

“SeongChan!”

JooYeon tried to push the Man-Eating Rats away from her.

Gnaw—!

Slice—

Though she got bit by one of them, she successfully managed to get one of the Man-Eating Rats. Meanwhile, SeongChan, who was busy facing off against two Moss Spiders, let out a scream after getting bit by a zombie from behind.

“Ahhh!”

“No—!”

Maybe it would have gone differently with three people, but it was impossible to defeat six monsters with only two.

‘To die like this here...’

She did everything she could to survive till the 3rd Tutorial. She just wanted to struggle a bit more and live...

In the short moment she was distracted by SeongChan...

“Squeee—!”

JooYeon gasped. One of the Man-Eating Rats jumped, aiming for her face.

In that moment...

Woosh—!

Burst—!

Something flew through the air, popping the Man-Eating Rat's body like a balloon.

“... Huh?”

JooYeon was confused by the sudden turn of events.

She was covered in the blood and flesh of the rat that exploded in front of her, but she had no time to find that unpleasant. She quickly turned her head towards the convenience store.

Creeaak—

The broken door opened.

“Don't be loud when someone's sleeping...”

From inside the store, a person stepped out.

“Now, I'm up.”

* * *

Yuwon was taking a short nap. No matter how high your stats were, not sleeping for days built up fatigue, slowing your body down.

Taking the 1st and 2nd Tutorial into account, it was the first time in four days he had slept.

He chose the storage room inside the subway station convenience store as his resting place. There was only one reason he was able to safely get some rest in a station full of monsters.

It was thanks to the 「Scentless Powder」

Yuwon had bought it from the new Lackey for 100 points. 「Scentless Powder」 could completely erase the smell of whatever it was applied to, protecting it from monsters that had sharp olfactory senses.

When YuWon woke up, the first thing he did was check the time.

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There were about 23 hours remaining. A few hours had passed.

‘So I slept for about six hours, huh.’

YuWon let out a big yawn as he got up.

Six hours was just enough time to relieve his fatigue. But, unrelated to his fatigue, he felt the desire to sleep a little more.

‘I guess I did overdo it.’

Four days.

Perhaps he was a bit too overzealous about hunting. He had pushed himself a bit too far because he thought he had to level up as much as he could in the early Tutorial stages, especially before the 3rd Tutorial ended.

‘I want to sleep more.’

The thought would not leave his mind.

That’s when...

“Ahhhhh!”

“JoonHo!”

Loud noises.

YuWon slapped himself awake right away. The screams completely quashed his desire to get more sleep.

It was whatever. Any more sleep than this would only make him sluggish.

YuWon stood up from his spot.

As soon as he exited the storage, he noticed the two people fighting against monsters in front of the convenience store.

He heard three voices earlier, but seeing how one person was laying on the ground, he assumed that the guy must have died already.

“... If I leave them alone, they’ll probably die too.”

What were they thinking, coming all the way here with such a small group? It would have been better for them to hunt at the entrance of the subway station. There wouldn’t be that many monsters there since Yuwon had already culled their numbers significantly.

‘Why don’t I check out the situation.’

Yuwon looked around. Inside the convenience store, the closest objects to him were soda cans. He grabbed one in each hand.

[Activating Monkey’s Eyes]

Using a skill with a higher proficiency was always a mystical experience. As soon as the eyes were activated, he could feel all his senses evolving. He could hear sounds more clearly and became hyper-aware of his surroundings. He could feel everything. Their footsteps, presences, and even breathing. He could easily follow the movements of the Man-Eating Rats that were darting around the place.

Yuwon raised his arm and flung the can with all his might.

Wooosh—!

Shatter—

Pop—!

The can smashed through the glass window and hit a Man-Eating Rat. The resulting impact made the can and the rat’s head explode.

Splatter—

Thud—

Yuwon threw the other can in his hand.

Pop—!

The zombie that was biting the man also ended up with its head blown off.

That took care of the immediate threats.

Yuwon grabbed another can from the stack near him and walked out of the convenience store.

“Don’t be loud when someone’s sleeping...”

YuWon looked back and forth at JooYeon and SeongChan.

“Now, I’m up.”

Woosh, tup—

YuWon tossed the can up and down in his hand.

Suddenly...

POP—!

In an instant, the can flew from YuWon’s hand, blowing apart another rat’s head.

Slash, slice—

Stomp—!

A Moss Spider and a Man-Eating Rat got sliced in half, and the other Moss Spider got crushed under Yuwon’s boot.

Gurgle, gurgle—

Poison leaked out from the crushed Moss Spider and bubbled on the floor.

It all happened in a flash.

JooYeon was speechless, unable to even voice her gratitude. She just stared blankly at the soda can that laid on the floor.

‘He killed those monsters? With that?’

They were hard to kill even with a knife. And Man-Eating Rats were so nimble, it was difficult to even get a clean attack on them up close.

Yet Yuwon defeated them just by throwing some cans around and cut down the rest at a speed she couldn’t even perceive. She knew that levels and stats were a thing that existed now, but...

‘That’s actually possible?’

JooYeon pushed her amazement aside, as she realized that she still hadn’t properly thanked the man for saving their lives.

“Th-Thank you. You saved us.”

“Ugh... Thank—”

The bite from the zombie must have been excruciatingly painful because SeongChan couldn't even properly finish his sentence.

Yuwon rummaged around his inventory pouch, pulling out an ointment and tossing it over to SeongChan.

“First, put some of that on. It should be quite effective. What's your Constitution at?”

“Huh? Right now... Should be 17...”

“So you won't die, then. You might not be able to use the arm that was bitten anymore, though.”

“Uhm, say again?”

“Rub it on right now. It might not be too late.”

SeongChan was shocked at being told he might not be able to use one of his arms anymore. He quickly applied the ointment on the bite.

Meanwhile, JooYeon sighed in relief and sat down on the floor before asking, “Have you been hunting here this entire time? Isn't the station pretty dangerous?”

The subway station was an off-limits area for most people. Monsters appeared there more frequently, and though it rarely appeared, the Subterranean Snake was so dangerous, even a decent-sized group of participants would have a hard time against it.

“I wasn't here the entire time.”

After hearing YuWon's response, JooYeon made a face that said, ‘That's what I thought’. The subway station was so infested with monsters, there was no way he had been there for long.

YuWon continued talking. “This is just my rest area-slash-restaurant.”

“What?”

A rest area?

YuWon stood back up.

“My hunting ground is elsewhere.”
