# 13docx

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\*\*CHAPTER START\*\*  
  
<h1>Solo Leveling - Chapter 13</h1>  
  
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<p>Chapter 13</p>  
  
<p>It’s not good to attract too much attention.</p>  
<p>The attention itself is burdensome, and I didn’t want this phenomenon to be known to others.</p>  
<p>As they say, don’t stir up trouble unnecessarily.</p>  
<p>I wanted to quietly raise my stats without anyone knowing.</p>  
<p>‘Besides, there’s no problem with leaving the hospital.’</p>  
<p>Fortunately, all the test results came back normal.</p>  
<p>I was in a state where I could be discharged at any time.</p>  
<p>In fact, it seemed like the Association and the hospital were subtly hoping I’d leave.</p>  
<p>It must be a waste to spend so much money on the treatment of an E-rank Hunter.</p>  
<p>S-rank Hunters have the privilege of having all their medical expenses covered by the state, but that was a completely different world, unrelated to Jin-Woo.</p>  
<p>So, leaving the hospital at this point didn’t seem like a bad choice.</p>  
<p>Besides, there was something I wanted to check.</p>  
<p>“Where did I put it…”</p>  
<p>As Jin-Woo rummaged through his pocket, something came out.</p>  
<p>It was a key that shone with a golden light.</p>  
<p>At first glance, it looked like a simple piece of jewelry.</p>  
<p>Jin-Woo stared at the key for a while before putting it back in his pocket.</p>  
  
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<p>While going through the discharge process, a young nurse came running in a fluster.</p>  
<p>“Huff, huff! Mr. Sung Jin-Woo, are you leaving now?”</p>  
<p>“Huh? Ah, yes.”</p>  
<p>It was Choi Yoora, the nurse in charge.</p>  
<p>Yoora made a disappointed expression at the mention of his discharge.</p>  
<p>Jin-Woo was puzzled, not understanding why.</p>  
<p>Did I make some kind of mistake? But nothing came to mind.</p>  
<p>Yoora hesitated for a moment before pulling out a small memo pad.</p>  
<p>“Could you write down your contact number for me?”</p>  
<p>“My contact number?”</p>  
<p>“Yes… if that’s okay.”</p>  
<p>Is there some test result they need to send me later?</p>  
<p>Jin-Woo took the memo pad without much thought.</p>  
<p>But all Yoora handed him was the memo pad.</p>  
<p>When Jin-Woo stared at her, Yoora’s face turned red.</p>  
<p>“What, what’s wrong?”</p>  
<p>“Uh… there’s no pen.”</p>  
<p>“Ah, ah, just a moment.”</p>  
<p>Perhaps she forgot in her hurry, Yoora flusteredly turned around.</p>  
<p>‘Wait, a pen? If it’s a pen…’</p>  
<p>Just as he thought about it, a pen appeared in his hand.</p>  
<p>It was a pen he had stored in his Inventory. Just by thinking about it, the pen had automatically appeared.</p>  
<p>Once an item was stored in the Inventory, it could be freely retrieved or stored just by thinking about it.</p>  
<p>It was a convenient feature of the Inventory.</p>  
<p>Jin-Woo, who had confirmed the pen in his hand, called Yoora back.</p>  
<p>“I found a pen here.”</p>  
<p>“Ah, really? Phew— that’s a relief.”</p>  
<p>Yoora placed her hand on her chest and let out a sigh of relief.</p>  
<p>Jin-Woo smiled as he wrote down his phone number.</p>  
<p>It was always like this.</p>  
<p>Items from the Random Box always came in handy later.</p>  
<p>When a raincoat came out, it rained the next day. When a paper cup for a water dispenser appeared, the glass cups ran out the day before.</p>  
<p>Sometimes completely unnecessary items like band-aids would appear, but most of the time, they were used appropriately.</p>  
<p>“Here you go.”</p>  
<p>Yoora happily took the memo pad Jin-Woo handed her.</p>  
<p>Then she bowed her head slightly.</p>  
<p>“Then, I’ll be in your care.”</p>  
<p>“Ah, yes. I’ll be in your care too.”</p>  
<p>Yoora quickly turned around and disappeared somewhere in a hurry.</p>  
<p>Jin-Woo tilted his head as he watched her retreating figure.</p>  
<p>‘But… what does she mean by “I’ll be in your care”?’</p>  
<p>That cute nurse is really friendly.</p>  
<p>With that thought, Jin-Woo left the hospital with a light heart.</p>  
  
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<p>The first place he went to was the Hunters Association building located in Guro District, Seoul.</p>  
<p>Since Hunters use special devices for their phones, he had to apply directly at the Association.</p>  
<p>An Association employee looked at the monitor and spoke.</p>  
<p>“Your Hunter phone will be ready in about two weeks.”</p>  
<p>“Huh? It’ll take that long?”</p>  
<p>Jin-Woo’s eyes widened.</p>  
<p>The phone he had was destroyed when he was chased by the Divine Statue in the underground temple.</p>  
<p>But it would take two weeks to get a new one?</p>  
<p>“If you need a phone urgently, we can lend you a temporary one, but it’ll cost about 50,000 won.”</p>  
<p>50,000 won… Not to buy, but just to borrow. That’s a hefty amount.</p>  
<p>Considering his current financial situation, it was too much.</p>  
<p>‘It’s not like I’m expecting any calls anyway.’</p>  
<p>The Association would contact him at home if they couldn’t reach him by phone. So, there was no need to spend money on a temporary phone.</p>  
<p>Jin-Woo shook his head.</p>  
<p>“I’ll just wait.”</p>  
<p>“Understood. We’ll send the new device to your home as soon as it’s ready.”</p>  
<p>“Thank you.”</p>  
<p>Jin-Woo got up from his seat.</p>  
<p>With that, his business was done.</p>  
<p>Today’s Daily Quest had already been completed, and the process of applying for a new phone at the Association was quickly finished.</p>  
<p>As Jin-Woo left the Association building, he took out the golden key again.</p>  
<p>‘Now it’s time to figure out what this is.’</p>  
<p>Information about the key appeared in green text.</p>  
<p>[Item: Dungeon Key]</p>  
<p>Acquisition Difficulty: E-rank</p>  
<p>Type: Key</p>  
<p>A key that allows you to enter an Instant Dungeon. Can be used at Exit 3 of Hapjeong Station.</p>  
<p>It was inside the Random Box he received as a reward for the Daily Quest.</p>  
<p>At first, he wondered what kind of key it was, but when he saw the acquisition difficulty, he realized it wasn’t an ordinary item.</p>  
<p>It was also the decisive reason he decided to leave the hospital.</p>  
<p>‘An entrance key to an Instant Dungeon…’</p>  
<p>Even if it’s an Instant Dungeon, a dungeon is still a dungeon.</p>  
<p>He had many painful memories of dungeons.</p>  
<p>There was a time when he participated in an E-rank Raid and suffered serious injuries, ending up in the hospital for a whole week.</p>  
<p>Back then, he survived because he had comrades, but…</p>  
<p>If he could enter a dungeon with this key, he would have to go alone.</p>  
<p>After much deliberation, he made a decision.</p>  
<p>‘If it’s just a quick in-and-out, it shouldn’t be a problem.’</p>  
<p>If things go wrong, I can always run away.</p>  
<p>Lately, I’ve been running 10 kilometers every day, so I’m confident in my ability to escape.</p>  
  
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<p>Thinking so lightly was a mistake.</p>  
<p>\*Thud, thud!\*</p>  
<p>“A wall… appeared?”</p>  
<p>He knocked on the invisible wall and shouted towards the outside, but there was no response.</p>  
<p>People were just busily going about their own business.</p>  
<p>Occasionally, someone would walk towards the inside of Hapjeong Station, but their figures disappeared as soon as they crossed the transparent wall.</p>  
<p>It seemed like this place and the other side were different spaces.</p>  
<p>When Jin-Woo tried to force his way out, another message appeared.</p>  
<p>\*Ding.\*</p>  
<p>[You cannot leave the dungeon. Defeat the boss or bring a Return Stone.]</p>  
<p>It was the same message over and over.</p>  
<p>The Dungeon Key he had disappeared as soon as he stepped inside Exit 3, and by the time Jin-Woo realized something was wrong and tried to turn back, the path was already blocked.</p>  
<p>He thought there might be a Gate or a secret door somewhere inside Exit 3 that would lead to the dungeon, but it was different from what he expected.</p>  
<p>Moreover, unlike regular dungeons, free movement was impossible.</p>  
<p>“It’s different from a dungeon…”</p>  
<p>Jin-Woo sighed and turned around.</p>  
<p>What came into view was a subway station that had turned into a jungle.</p>  
<p>Vines were sprawling messily on the walls, and the stench of rotting corpses filled the air.</p>  
<p>From afar, the occasional sound of beastly howls could be heard.</p>  
<p>“…”</p>  
<p>It wasn’t that there was an entrance somewhere near Hapjeong Station—the entire station had become a dungeon.</p>  
<p>Jin-Woo took out the Steel Sword from his Inventory.</p>  
<p>\*Ding.\*</p>  
<p>[Item: Kim Sang-Shik’s Steel Sword]</p>  
<p>Attack Power +10.</p>  
<p>With the way back blocked and no way to contact anyone, he had no choice but to move forward.</p>  
<p>Jin-Woo swallowed hard and slowly descended the stairs.</p>  
<p>He held his breath and looked around, but there was no sign of anything unusual.</p>  
<p>But he couldn’t let his guard down.</p>  
<p>Among Magic Beasts, there were many that could hide their presence, even if they weren’t high-ranked.</p>  
<p>No, perhaps because they weren’t high-ranked, they hid their presence and waited to ambush.</p>  
<p>As he passed the restroom and went further inside, he came across the underground shopping area.</p>  
<p>The stores were old and broken, resembling ruins.</p>  
<p>Looking at the ruined stores and the empty passageways under the dim fluorescent lights, he felt a chilling atmosphere.</p>  
<p>\*Flicker, flicker.\*</p>  
<p>A few of the fluorescent lights flickered as if they were at the end of their lifespan.</p>  
<p>As Jin-Woo walked, stepping on the weeds that had grown thickly on the broken tiles, he felt an uneasy sensation and looked around.</p>  
<p>“…”</p>  
<p>Everything was quiet, but he felt like he was being watched from somewhere.</p>  
<p>And that smell.</p>  
<p>A foul stench, like the smell of a dead animal with flies swarming around it, was wafting through the air.</p>  
<p>It was a smell Jin-Woo was familiar with, having frequently entered dungeons.</p>  
<p>‘This smell… it’s a Beast-type Magic Beast.’</p>  
<p>But he couldn’t sense any presence around him.</p>  
<p>It was as if it was hiding, waiting for the right moment to strike.</p>  
<p>‘Are you hiding and waiting for an opportunity?’</p>  
<p>Then I’ll give you that opportunity.</p>  
<p>Jin-Woo deliberately turned his back and started walking slowly back the way he came.</p>  
<p>Beasts tend to pounce when their prey shows its back.</p>  
<p>Beast-type Magic Beasts aren’t much different.</p>  
<p>Just as he took about three steps, something happened.</p>  
<p>\*Crash!\*</p>  
<p>Something burst out from the shattered display window of a clothing store behind him.</p>  
<p>That something landed on the ground and immediately lunged towards Jin-Woo’s neck.</p>  
<p>“Growl!”</p>  
<p>Jin-Woo, who had been prepared for an attack, swung his sword backward almost reflexively as soon as he heard the sound.</p>  
<p>It was a purely instinctive movement!</p>  
<p>\*Swish—!\*</p>  
<p>The sharp blade sliced through the jaw of the beast that had pounced on him.</p>  
<p>The creature, now separated from Jin-Woo, let out a scream and rolled on the ground.</p>  
<p>“Kiiiiing, Kiing!”</p>  
<p>It was a large wolf with red fur.</p>  
<p>With its snout cut off, the wolf writhed in pain, thrashing its body around.</p>  
<p>Upon closer inspection, a name floated above its head, just like the centipede he had seen in the Penalty Zone.</p>  
<p>Steel-Fanged Lycan.</p>  
<p>But unlike before, the name was white instead of red.</p>  
<p>‘No time to hesitate!’</p>  
<p>Now that the creature was injured and unable to move, it was the perfect opportunity.</p>  
<p>Jin-Woo lunged forward.</p>  
<p>As he swung his sword down with force, the Lycan’s head was cleanly severed.</p>  
<p>“Crack!”</p>  
<p>The Lycan let out a final cry before dying.</p>  
<p>[You have defeated the Steel-Fanged Lycan.]</p>  
<p>“Yes!”</p>  
<p>But the joy of victory was short-lived!</p>  
<p>From the darkness beyond the shattered display window, two more Lycans emerged, having been hiding their presence.</p>  
<p>Oh no, were there more?</p>  
<p>Jin-Woo’s eyes widened.</p>  
<p>“Grrr!”</p>  
<p>The two Lycans bared their terrifying fangs and closed the distance in an instant.</p>  
<p>Jin-Woo’s brow furrowed.</p>  
<p>In his excitement, he must have swung too hard, as the sword was now deeply embedded in the ground and wouldn’t come out easily.</p>  
<p>‘It’s stuck on something.’</p>  
<p>At that moment, one of the Lycans leaped towards Jin-Woo’s face.</p>  
<p>“Damn it!”</p>  
<p>Jin-Woo ducked.</p>  
<p>The Lycan, unable to control its speed, crashed headfirst into the ground.</p>  
<p>\*Crunch!\*</p>  
<p>As its fangs struck, cracks spread across the stone floor.</p>  
<p>‘No wonder it’s called Steel-Fanged.’</p>  
<p>But there was no time to marvel.</p>  
<p>The other Lycan was still charging straight at him.</p>  
<p>The sword still showed no signs of coming loose.</p>  
<p>“Damn it!”</p>  
<p>With no other choice, Jin-Woo abandoned the sword and threw a punch with all his might at the oncoming Lycan.</p>  
<p>\*Whoosh!\*</p>  
<p>With a terrifying sound of wind, his fist shot forward in a straight line.</p>  
<p>\*Crunch!\*</p>  
<p>With a single blow, the Lycan’s head exploded.</p>  
<p>The headless body of the Lycan hit the ceiling before plummeting straight to the ground.</p>  
<p>\*Thud!\*</p>  
<p>“…?”</p>  
<p>Jin-Woo’s eyes widened as he stared at his own fist.</p>  
<p>It was an unexpected display of monstrous strength.</p>  
  
\*\*CHAPTER END\*\*