# 15docx

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\*\*CHAPTER START\*\*  
  
<h1>Solo Leveling - Chapter 15</h1>  
  
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[You leveled up!]   
[You leveled up!]   
  
Unlike regular dungeons, Instant Dungeons had a respawn mechanic.   
While Jin-Woo was clearing out the monsters on the second floor, the monsters on the first floor respawned. And while he was hunting the first-floor monsters, the second-floor monsters respawned.   
  
[You leveled up!]   
[You leveled up!]   
  
Jin-Woo went back and forth between the first and second floors, hunting monsters until his level stopped increasing.   
‘Who knows when I’ll get another chance like this?’   
  
By now, he had reached a point where he could predict where and how the monsters would appear.   
“A monkey falling from above.”   
He gracefully dodged the long claws of the monkey monster falling from the ceiling and stabbed his sword into its chest.   
\*Keeek!\*   
“One cat from the left and one from the right.”   
He swiftly beheaded the black panthers pouncing from both sides.   
\*Kyaak!\*   
\*Kek!\*   
  
[You have defeated Blade Claw Briga.]   
[You have defeated Black Shadow Razan.]   
[You have defeated Black Shadow Razan.]   
  
This marked the end of the second floor.   
Once again, he had completely cleared the second basement level.   
However, his level had been stuck at 15 for a while now. It seemed that 15 was the limit for the first and second floors.   
  
“Stats.”   
[Stats]   
Strength: 45   
Stamina: 24   
Agility: 24   
Intelligence: 24   
Senses: 24   
(Available Stat Points: 0)   
  
By the time he reached level 15, his stats had significantly increased.   
His Agility was also nearing 25.   
Once his Agility surpassed 20, he could clearly feel the difference between Strength and Agility.   
Agility didn’t make him faster; it made his opponents’ movements appear slower.   
‘It’s like watching a slow-motion video.’   
The scenes of the monkey falling or the panther charging appeared to him in slow motion.   
It felt like time was being sliced into precise segments.   
It became easier to dodge enemy attacks and land his own.   
In short, he became truly ‘agile.’   
Speed is always relative.   
The higher his Agility stat, the greater the gap between him and his opponents, making his movements appear impossibly fast to them.   
‘If both Strength and Agility increase, the synergy would be incredible.’   
That was his final assessment of the Agility stat.   
  
“By the way.”   
Jin-Woo’s gaze shifted.   
“What about over there...”   
He saw the stairs leading down to the third basement level.   
There was a reason he had been repeating the first and second floors despite having access to the third floor.   
‘It’s chilling.’   
As his Senses stat increased, the eerie aura emanating from the third floor grew stronger.   
There was undoubtedly something powerful down there.   
He could feel it without even seeing it.   
Jin-Woo recalled the message he had heard at the entrance.   
[You cannot leave the dungeon. Defeat the boss or retrieve the Return Stone.]   
The existence of the Boss.   
Jin-Woo had repeatedly gone back and forth between the first and second floors, leveling up as much as possible to prepare for the Boss.   
Even with all this preparation, he began to feel nervous as the time to descend approached.   
Jin-Woo lightly slapped his cheeks with both hands.   
‘I can’t just leave the dungeon without even seeing the Boss, right?’   
A moderate level of tension was essential for maintaining peak condition.   
This was just right.   
Jin-Woo gripped his sword with both hands and slowly descended the stairs.   
Did the stairs feel longer than usual, or was it just his imagination?   
He swallowed hard.   
The lighting was much dimmer than on the first and second floors, but he had no trouble seeing.   
‘Is it because of my Senses stat?’   
His vision seemed to have improved.   
  
As he cautiously descended, he saw the tracks where the subway trains ran.   
Or rather, what used to be the tracks.   
Instead of trains or rails, the path was filled with black water.   
‘What is that?’   
It didn’t look like tracks anymore—it resembled a lake or a river.   
Just as Jin-Woo took a step closer to inspect it, something long and log-like shot out of the water.   
\*Ssshhhiiik!\*   
‘It’s fast!’   
In the blink of an eye, the ‘thing’ that had surged toward him was not a log but a snake as thick as one.   
“Hup!”   
Jin-Woo hastily struck the snake’s head with his sword.   
\*Clang!\*   
Jin-Woo’s eyes widened.   
“What?”   
He had succeeded in deflecting the snake’s charge, but his trusty steel sword had shattered.   
Jin-Woo turned around in surprise.   
The snake, seemingly startled by the unexpected counterattack, didn’t immediately attack again. Instead, it coiled up at a distance and glared at Jin-Woo.   
‘The Ruler of the Swamp, Blue Fang Kasaka.’   
Its name, written in orange, was clearly visible.   
It was incomparably faster and tougher than the white-named regular monsters.   
‘Even a magic-infused sword shattered against it.’   
Jin-Woo swallowed hard as he observed Kasaka.   
The snake’s blue scales shimmered, covering its entire body like armor.   
The scales were densely packed, making it impervious to sword strikes.   
Punching it would be out of the question.   
  
Just as Jin-Woo’s thoughts reached that point, Kasaka, having assessed its prey, charged again.   
Even seeing it a second time, the speed was terrifying.   
\*Ssshhhiiik!\*   
Jin-Woo narrowed his eyes.   
‘Here it comes!’   
As he focused his mind, Kasaka’s attack, which had been a blur at first, became clear.   
It was the power of his Agility stat.   
The moment Kasaka opened its mouth to strike, Jin-Woo swiftly twisted his body, dodging the attack while pinning the snake’s head under his armpit and squeezing with both arms.   
\*Crunch!\*   
Jin-Woo’s Strength stat was nearing 50.   
A terrifying pressure was applied to the snake’s arteries.   
Unable to escape, the snake writhed in agony.   
Jin-Woo gritted his teeth and tightened his grip.   
\*Bang! Bang!\*   
Even as his body slammed into the walls and floor, Jin-Woo refused to let go.   
‘If I hadn’t leveled up as much as possible...’   
Hypotheticals were endless.   
But Jin-Woo’s mind was filled with thoughts.   
If he hadn’t pushed his limits.   
If his Strength stat hadn’t been abnormally high.   
He might have struggled immensely to defeat Kasaka.   
This place might have become his grave.   
But the decision not to descend to the third floor immediately had been wise.   
It was the right call.   
\*Crunch!\*   
With a sickening sound, Kasaka’s skull shattered.   
  
[You have defeated ‘The Ruler of the Swamp, Blue Fang Kasaka.’]   
[You leveled up!]   
[You leveled up!]   
  
As expected of a Boss monster.   
Defeating Kasaka instantly raised his level by two.   
Jin-Woo clenched his fist.   
His level, which had been stuck at 15, had now risen to 17.   
In just one day, he had gone from level 1 to level 17—an insane rate of growth.   
‘But.’   
No one hunts Boss monsters just for the experience points.   
When it comes to Boss monsters, it’s all about the loot!   
As he examined the lifeless snake, two glowing items appeared from its body.   
‘Two items from a Boss?’   
Jin-Woo reached out with a delighted expression.   
\*Ding.\*   
[Item: Kasaka’s Fang] has been found. Would you like to acquire it?   
[Item: Kasaka’s Poison Sac] has been found. Would you like to acquire it?   
“Acquire both.”   
As soon as he spoke, a bone dagger and a pouch filled with liquid appeared in his hands.   
  
[Item: Kasaka’s Fang]   
Acquisition Difficulty: C   
Type: Dagger   
Attack Power +25   
A dagger made from Kasaka’s fang. It retains Kasaka’s poison, inflicting paralysis and bleeding effects on attack. Can be stored in your inventory or sold at a shop.   
Effect ‘Paralysis’: The target has a chance to be immobilized.   
Effect ‘Bleeding’: The target loses 1% HP per second.   
  
Jin-Woo nodded.   
‘A dagger made from its fang, not bone. The options seem decent.’   
  
Next was the pouch.   
[Item: Kasaka’s Poison Sac]   
Acquisition Difficulty: A   
Type: Potion   
A pouch containing refined Kasaka poison. Extremely rare drop from Kasaka. Drinking the poison grants tough skin but permanently damages muscles due to toxicity.   
Effect ‘Kasaka’s Iron Scale’: Reduces physical damage by 20%.   
Side Effect ‘Damaged Muscles’: Strength -35.   
  
Jin-Woo’s expression was a mix of joy and sorrow.   
Kasaka’s Fang was a great replacement for his broken steel sword.   
With more than double the attack power and the added paralysis and bleeding effects, it was perfect.   
‘But the Poison Sac is a bit...’   
At first, he was thrilled to get an A-rank item, but after reading the description, it wasn’t something to celebrate.   
The 20% physical damage reduction was a fantastic option for an A-rank item.   
However, the penalty of losing 35 Strength was devastating.   
Especially since he had been focusing his stat points on Strength, the loss was even more painful.   
It was a double-edged sword.   
No, it was more like a bitter pill.   
Maybe he could use it later when his Strength stat was high enough that losing 35 wouldn’t matter, but for now, it was too risky.   
“...I’ll just store it for now.”   
With a bitter expression, he placed the dagger and potion in his inventory.   
If it had been an A-rank dagger and a C-rank potion, he might have felt less regret. After all, a C-rank potion could just be discarded.   
  
Then a message appeared.   
[The Boss has been defeated. The dungeon will now return to its original state.]   
In an instant, his vision blurred, and after a brief moment of dizziness, everything returned to normal.   
Looking around, he was in an ordinary subway station.   
The lighting was bright again, and the water that had filled the tracks was gone.   
“But why is there no one here?”   
Not only were there no people, but there were no trains either.   
He checked the time, wondering if the subway had already stopped running.   
The clock showed 10:00 PM.   
He had entered Hapjeong Station around noon, meaning he had spent over nine hours here.   
‘That’s a long time.’   
If his fatigue hadn’t been restored with each level-up, he would have collapsed from exhaustion several times by now.   
‘But it’s still too early for the subway to stop running.’   
After waiting for a while with no trains arriving, Jin-Woo decided to leave the station.   
As he walked, he didn’t see a single person.   
As he trudged up the stairs, someone called out to him.   
“Hey!”   
He had never been so glad to hear a human voice.   
Jin-Woo looked up.   
It was a soldier holding a gun.   
“Who are you? Why are you coming out of there? Didn’t you hear the broadcast?”   
The soldier’s serious expression made Jin-Woo’s face stiffen as well.   
“What’s going on?”   
“What do you mean, ‘what’s going on’?”   
The soldier, who had been approaching, noticed the broken sword in Jin-Woo’s hand.   
After it broke, it hadn’t gone into his inventory, and he couldn’t just leave it behind, so he had carried it out.   
Seeing this, the soldier’s expression changed.   
He carefully examined Jin-Woo’s appearance.   
Upon closer inspection, Jin-Woo’s clothes bore the marks of battle.   
The soldier’s stern expression softened.   
“Are you a Hunter?”   
  
\*\*CHAPTER END\*\*