CROSSING WORLDS: PORTAL FANTASY IN NOVEL THE LION THE WITCH AND THE WARDROBE, KOREAN NOVEL *SOLO LEVELING* AND COMIC MANGA *THAT TIME I GOT REINCARNATED AS A SLIME*

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Abstract

This article explores the representation of portal fantasy in three distinct works: *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* by C.S. Lewis, *Solo Leveling* Volume 1 by Chu-Gong, and *That Time I Got Reincarnated as a Slime* Volume 1 by Fuse. The research problem centers on how the portal fantasy formula is adapted and represented in different literary forms novels and manga. Drawing on theories from Farah Mendlesohn on fantasy genres, E.M. Forster on key elements of novels, and Will Eisner on comics, the study employs a comparative literature approach and qualitative methods, including close reading and textual analysis. The analysis focuses on key elements such as setting, plot, motif, and character to uncover how these works embody the portal fantasy genre. The findings reveal that each work utilizes the portal concept uniquely to achieve distinct narrative purposes: *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* emphasizes the contrast between the real world and a magical one, offering moral and exploratory adventures, *Solo Leveling* presents a dynamic, challenge-filled journey that serves as a metaphor for personal growth and transformation and *That Time I Got Reincarnated as a Slime* explores themes of identity and adaptation through the protagonist's reincarnation in a fantastical world. The results highlight the versatility of the portal fantasy genre in conveying complex themes of transformation, identity, and exploration across different media. This study contributes to a deeper understanding of how portal fantasy functions within various literary forms, offering insights into its narrative potential and thematic richness.

Keywords: Portal, Fantasy, Comic, Manga, Representation

INTRODUCTION

Secondary worlds, better known as *Isekai* and Multiverse, have become a popular phenomenon in the entertainment industry in recent years. These two genres are adaptations of the portal fantasy genre, a subgenre of fantasy, which creates new worlds often fundamentally different from the real world and follows the story of characters who are thrust into these parallel worlds. As quoted from Farah Mendlesohn in *Rhetoric of Fantasy*, "*A portal fantasy is simply a fantastic world entered through a portal*" (Mendlesohn, 2008, p. xix). In portal fantasy, the main character, typically an ordinary individual from the real world, suddenly finds themselves in a magical world, or vice versa, a character from a parallel/magical world enters the real world and interacts with the modern world. The popularity of this genre has led to the publication of many works across various media, such as comics, novels, and films.

The importance of portal fantasy, multiverse, and *isekai* in literature lies in their integral role in modern literature, especially within the fantasy entertainment industry,

which frequently produces works with these themes. The popularity of these genres is driven by their large fan base, the ease of crossover with other works, and even the revival of dead characters within the story. The concept of portal fantasy became known with the publication of Alice in Wonderland in 1865, where Alice falls down a rabbit hole and enters a fantasy world. Later, in the early 20th century, The Chronicles of Narnia (1950-1956) by C.S. Lewis introduced parallel worlds with moral and religious themes through the adventures of the Pevensie children in the world of Narnia. Although not portal fantasy in the traditional sense, this series depicts a magical world hidden within the real world, similar to how Harry Potter enters the wizarding world after receiving an invitation to study at Hogwarts. In the 21st century, the concepts of *isekai* and multiverse have evolved, becoming popular in manga, anime, light novels like *Sword Art Online* and *Tensura*, as well as in Western novels, comics, and films such as the *Marvel Cinematic Universe*. Portal fantasy exists across various media, such as novels, comics, and films. The researcher prefers novels and comics over films because most films are adaptations of novels and comics. Novels were chosen because they are a long-standing form of literature with a history linked to portal fantas, such as *Alice in Wonderland*, and because novels contain more specific details that are often cut in films due to time constraints. Additionally, novels require only narrative to portray characters, unlike films which also rely on actors. Comics were chosen because they are more accessible and cheaper to produce and distribute than films, allowing them to reach a wider and more diverse audience. As a combination of text and images, comics provide richer character descriptions and narrative details than films and are not constrained by time limits like films, allowing for more detailed storytelling.

The researcher selected the novel *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* by C.S. Lewis and *Solo Leveling* Volume 1 as examples of portal fantasy works. *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* is one of the most famous and respected classic examples in this genre, with the core element of a portal (the wardrobe) that transports characters to another world. This novel has influenced many other works in the same genre and has become an important reference point in portal fantasy studies. Its tremendous popularity and adaptations into various media demonstrate the story's appeal and flexibility. *Solo Leveling* Volume 1 was chosen as a modern example of a portal fantasy novel, featuring the core elements of the genre with "Gates" that connect the real world with other worlds full of monsters and challenges. The main character, Sung Jin-Woo, enters these worlds to fight and improve his abilities, clearly showcasing the transition between two different worlds a hallmark of portal fantasy. The worldwide success of *Solo Leveling* Volume 1 as a web novel, novel, and manhwa demonstrates the appeal and expansive world concept of the story. The comic selected by the researcher is *Tensei Shitara Slime Datta Ken* or *That Time I Got Reincarnated as a Slime*, often abbreviated as *Tensura*. This comic is an excellent representation of the portal fantasy genre in the *isekai* form. The protagonist, Satoru Mikami, reincarnates into a fantasy world after dying in the real world, beginning a new adventure as a slime monster. The portal element in this case, reincarnation that brings the character from the real world to the fantasy world is at the heart of this story. *Tensura* has gained significant popularity worldwide, both as a comic manga and in anime adaptations, indicating the appeal of the story and its expansive world concept.

The selection of the novel *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, the novel *Solo Leveling* Volume 1 , and the manga *That Time I Got Reincarnated as a Slime* Volume 1 is not only due to their strong appeal among readers but also because they offer unique

approaches to telling secondary world stories. Through comparative analysis, this research aims to uncover how different media can influence the representation of the portal fantasy formula. The study seeks to analyze the extent to which the portal fantasy formula is reflected in these three works and highlights the differences in its application across two different media. The research will also explore the similarities in the application of the portal fantasy formula in both manga and novels. Through this comparison, it will reveal how each literary form develops and brings to life the essence of portal fantasy, as well as how portal fantasy is represented in these three works. As explained by Susan Bassnett, comparative literature involves the study of literary works across cultures, is interdisciplinary, and concerns the patterns of connection in literature that span both time and space (Bassnett, 1993, p. 1) therefore, the author uses comparative literature as a method of research and cross-comparison.

The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe has received numerous awards, including being listed in *Time magazine's* list of the 100 best English-language novels since 1923. Additionally, according to a 2007 online poll, the U.S. National Education Association named the book as one of the "Teachers' Top 100 Books for Children," and in a survey published by the *School Library Journal*, it was ranked fifth among children's novels of all time. As of 2012, the book has had the largest readership in the United States and has been published in 47 foreign languages. *Solo Levelin* was first released on the digital platform *KakaoPage*, which has 2.4 million readers. Its success led to the novel being licensed in English by Webnovel under the title *Only I Level Up*, released from December 21, 2018, to June 24, 2019, and later published as a collected volume by Yen Press on February 16, 2021. *That Time I Got Reincarnated as a Slime* has also received many awards; the manga series became the first manga series based on a light novel with a total print run of at least 20 million copies. According to the latest data from February 2023, 40 million copies have been sold, with 35 million in Japan and 5 million overseas. The manga was nominated for the 45th *Kodansha Manga Award* in the *shōnen* category in 2021 and won the *BookWalker Award* in 2018. In 2017, the manga ranked fifth in the third *Next Manga Awards* in the print category, and in 2022, it won the 46th edition in the same category.

According to the book *Comics and Sequential Art* by Will Eisner, comics are a form of sequential art that combines words and images to tell a story. Comics use a montage of words and images, requiring readers to use both visual and verbal interpretive skills. Sequential art in comics involves art elements such as perspective, symmetry, and line, as well as literary elements like grammar, plot, and syntax (Eisner, 2008, p. 18). In *Understanding Comics*, Scott McCloud defines comics as images arranged in sequence with the purpose of conveying information or producing an aesthetic response from the reader (McCould, 1993, p. 11). Seno Gumira Ajidarma, in his book *Ngobrolin Komik*, states that comics are more than just a series of images (Ajidarma, 2021, p. 246). Based on the theories of Will Eisner, Scott McCloud, and Seno Gumira Ajidarma, it can be concluded that comics are an art form that combines words and images to convey information. These words and images are sequentially arranged by an illustrator or writer to tell a story or convey information. Additionally, a work is considered a comic because it includes several key elements, such as panels, speech balloons, closure the separation between panels, illustrations that explain scenes, and *SFX* sound effects, which distinguish it from graphic novels. Comic have 4 key elements : (1) When two panels are juxtaposed, there is always a separating space called "closure." According to Will Eisner in *Comics and Sequential Art*,

"closure" is the mental process where readers fill in the gaps between comic panels to create a continuous storyline. This process allows readers to connect and understand a sequence of separate images, forming a coherent narrative (Eisner, 2008, pp. 18, 100). Scott McCloud, in *Understanding Comics*, also explains that "closure" is the mental process by which readers fill in the gaps between comic panels to create a coherent storyline, helping to create the illusion of continuous movement and time despite being composed of static images (McCould, 1993, pp. 69, 70, 92). Seno Gumira Ajidarma, in *Ngobrolin Komik*, explains that "closure" is the mental process where readers fill in the gaps between panels to create a continuous storyline. Overall, "closure" is the way readers direct or read a comic, determining the direction of the story from the panels they read, or how the comic creator guides readers to understand the transitions between panels as story progression (Ajidarma, 2021, p. 257). (2) Speech balloons or dialogue balloons are also essential elements in comics. According to Will Eisner in *Comics and Sequential Art*, dialogue balloons are used to display a character's dialogue or speech (Eisner, 2008, pp. 40, 41, 42, 181). The shape and placement of the balloons can influence the reader's perception of the duration and sequence of speech. Scott McCloud, in *Understanding Comics*, adds that text balloons are complex and versatile synesthetic icons in comics (McCould, 1993, pp. 139, 140). Seno Gumira Ajidarma also states that text balloons are important elements in comics that convey a character's dialogue or thoughts, help direct the reader's attention, and provide additional context to the images (Ajidarma, 2021, p. 161). (3) Illustrations in comics serve several important functions. According to Will Eisner, images help convey the narrative and emotions, increase reader engagement, and provide context and atmosphere to the story (Eisner, 2008, pp. 12, 13, 18, 19, 20). Scott McCloud adds that Illustrations in comics function to depict actions, character expressions, and the background of the story (McCould, 1993, pp. 204, 221). Seno Gumira Ajidarma explains that Illustrations in comics are not just visual elements but also integral parts of the narrative, helping readers understand the storyline and the characters emotions without requiring much text (Ajidarma, 2021, pp. 171, 402, 403). (4) The final element is sound effects (SFX). According to Will Eisner, SFX in comics adds an auditory dimension to the visual narrative, depicting various sounds such as explosions or footsteps, often written in the form of onomatopoeia (Eisner, 2008, pp. 9, 10, 19, 20). Scott McCloud explains that SFX are visual representations of sounds written in text, helping to create atmosphere and reinforce the action in a comic story (McCould, 1993, pp. 138, 139, 140). Seno Gumira Ajidarma adds that SFX are used to add an auditory dimension to the visual narrative, helping bring the scene to life by indicating sounds such as explosions or natural sounds (Ajidarma, 2021, p. 388).

Before discussing fantasy in novels, it's essential to clarify what a novel is. In short, a novel is a long written work defined by E. M. Forster in *Aspects of the Novel* as *"fiction in prose of a certain length,"* and it is no less than 50,000 words long. Novels are described as a fundamental form of literature in their storytelling aspect, where the story serves as the backbone that keeps the reader engaged. Novels cover various aspects of human life such as birth, food, sleep, love, and death, and how these experiences are depicted in fiction compared to real life (Foster, 1927, pp. 21, 47–48). Although originally based on everyday human life, novels have a wild genre that contains human imagination, namely the fantasy genre. In the book *Mystery, Violence, and Popular Culture* by John G. Cawelti, the concept of "fantasy" is explained in several contexts. One of them is Tzvetan Todorov's theory of the fantastical genre, which lies between fantasy and realism. Todorov argues

that this genre emerged as a key feature of the transition from romanticism to realism, with narratives characterized by an unresolved ambiguity about whether the events in the story are supernatural or can be explained naturalistically. Todorov also associates the emergence of the fantasy genre with a period in the evolution of Western culture when traditional religious beliefs in transcendent supernatural realities had been eroded by the advancement of science and naturalism but had not completely disappeared (Cawelti, 2010, pp. 236, 348, 349). Fantasy has several sub-genres, which are specific categories under the main genre, each with unique characteristics, themes, and elements that distinguish them from one another. In the context of fantasy, sub-genres help classify different types of fantasy stories based on the specific elements they highlight, the setting, or the atmosphere they create. Farah Mendlesohn in *Rhetoric of Fantasy* divides fantasy into four sub-genres :

1. Portal-Quest Fantasy, Characters leave a familiar environment and enter a fantastic world through a portal. This sub-genre often involves elements of transition and exploration, with narratives typically starting in a safe and stable place before being disrupted by external chaos. A well-known example is *The Lord of the Rings* by J.R.R. Tolkien (Mendlesohn, 2008, pp. 8–9).
2. Immersive Fantasy, The world in these stories is fully realized and believable. Techniques such as familiar pity, syntactic bootstrapping, and baroquing are used to create a detailed and vivid world. The protagonist is part of this fantastic world, and the reader must navigate this strange new world (Mendlesohn, 2008, pp. xxi–xxii). Examples of immersive fantasy include William Morris's novels such as *The Story of the Glittering Plain* and *The Well at the World's End*.
3. Liminal Fantasy, this genre explores the boundary between the fantastic and the ordinary, often using irony and balance to create tension and uncertainty. The protagonist in these stories shows no surprise at the fantastic events, creating disorientation for the reader. Liminal fantasy heavily relies on a shared understanding between the author and the reader (Mendlesohn, 2008, p. xxiii). Examples include Joan Aiken's *Armitage family* stories and *I Did It* by M. John Harrison.
4. Intrusion Fantasy, this sub-genre involves fantastic elements that disrupt the real world, bringing chaos and uncertainty. In intrusion fantasy, the protagonist often becomes the only person outside the consensus reality of the story. This fantasy often brings fantastic elements into modern cities as a way to suggest that the modern world is boring and that there should be something more (Mendlesohn, 2008, p. 116). Examples of works in this genre include *The Wolves in the Walls* by Neil Gaiman and *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* by Robert Louis Stevenson. The fantasy genre has key elements that distinguish it from other genres, playing an important role in creating an engaging atmosphere and storyline. These elements include meticulously built worlds, characters with extraordinary powers, and the transcendence of logical boundaries to create a rich and imaginative narrative.

Farah Mendlesohn in *Rhetoric of Fantasy* identifies several key elements in the fantasy genre :

1. World-building : Fantasy novels often involve the creation of detailed and immersive worlds that differ from the real world. These worlds are built with coherent internal logic, allowing readers to feel as though they are truly within them (Mendlesohn, 2008, p. 279).
2. Magic and the Supernatural : Many fantasy novels feature magical or supernatural elements that are accepted as part of reality by the characters in the story. In some immersive fantasies, magic may not exist or happen elsewhere, but the setting remains fantastical (Mendlesohn, 2008, p. xxi).
3. Search and Adventure: A common theme in fantasy novels is the quest or adventure, where characters embark on a journey to achieve a specific goal. This is especially prominent in portal-quest fantasy, where characters cross portals into other worlds and undertake significant quests (Mendlesohn, 2008, p. 3).
4. Intrusion of the Fantastic: In some fantasy novels, fantastic elements disrupt the normal world, bringing chaos and uncertainty. This is characteristic of intrusion fantasy, where the fantastic intrudes upon the ordinary, creating a sense of awe or horror (Mendlesohn, 2008, p. xxii).
5. Irony and Balance: Liminal fantasy often explores the boundary between the ordinary and the fantastic, using irony and balance to create tension and uncertainty. Irony in fantasy is often used to create ambiguity and tension, maintaining a tightly structured story (Mendlesohn, 2008, p. 191).
6. Restoration and Morality: Many fantasy novels involve themes of restoration and morality, where the well-being of a land is linked to the morality of its rulers or inhabitants. Narratives often end with the restoration of order, reflecting the belief that the universe should be subject to moral principles (Mendlesohn, 2008, p. 3).

This research focuses on the portal fantasy formula, a sub-genre of fantasy that depicts the main character being transported or trapped/reborn in a parallel world or another world that is different from the real world (Mendlesohn, 2008, p. Xix). The works to be compared are the classic novel *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* by C.S. Lewis, the Korean novel *Solo Leveling* Volume 1 by Chu-Gong, and the manga *That Time I Got Reincarnated as a Slime* Volume 1 by Fuse. The research employs a comparative literature approach, which involves the study of literary works across cultures, is interdisciplinary, and focuses on patterns of connection in literature that span time and space (Bassnett, 1993, p. 1). Qualitative research methods are used to explore and understand the meanings individuals or groups attribute to social or human issues (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, Chapter 1). The method used is the formula study by Nachbar to find similarities with convention theory, which shows the formulaic characteristics from six subcategories: 1. Plot, 2. Motif, 3. Setting, 4. Character, 5. Theme, and 6. Props (Nachbar & Lause, 1992, pp. 418–425). Additionally, this research uses a close reading approach for in-depth text analysis (Damono, 2005, p. 11). This study will analyze how the *Isekai* genre is implemented in the stories, including the parallel world settings, plots, and themes in the three works. The analysis will involve identifying and understanding the elements that distinguish the three works. By using comparative literature in fantasy formulas, this research will look for similarities in the portal fantasy narrative formulas as well as the unique elements in the three works that present portal fantasy.

Data analysis techniques involve various methods to derive insights from text and image data. *"In general, data analysis techniques aim to make sense of text and image data, making these techniques crucial for understanding the information collected during the data collection phase"* (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, Chapter 9). First, to address the question of portal fantasy in two novels and one comic, the researcher will analyze through the elements of plot and motif. Plot analysis in novels is based on dialogue, narrative, thoughts, significant events, character development, and final conflicts. For comics, this analysis is drawn from the panels that structure the story, illustrations, dialogue, symbols, colors, setting illustrations, introductory text, onomatopoeia, visual narrative, conflicts, and resolutions conveyed through illustrations as well as character speech and thought bubbles. Motif analysis in novels is based on recurring elements such as frequently appearing words, phrases, character interactions that ultimately convey a message or specific situation, and their impact on the plot. For comics, motif analysis is based on symbols, illustrations, colors, and the alignment of text and images that convey messages to the reader, situations that arise from character interactions, and visual narratives that influence the plot. This analysis is grounded in Nachbar & Lause's theory of popular culture regarding plot and motif conventions, E.M. Forster's theory on key elements of novels, Will Eisner's theory on key elements of comics, and Farah Mendlesohn's theory on the fantasy genre. Second, to address the representation of portal fantasy in the two novels and one comic, the researcher will analyze through the elements of setting and character. Setting analysis in novels is drawn from places where characters act and places mentioned by characters to enhance world-building without character involvement. For comics, this includes places illustrated where character actions occur, places illustrated but with no action, only maps. Character analysis in novels is based on character descriptions from the narrative or character speech, character races, and character types. For comics, character analysis is drawn from character illustrations including expressions, physical forms, and attire, speech in speech bubbles, or thoughts in thought bubbles intended to describe or discuss other characters, colors used to depict characters, physical forms illustrated, and the SFX and symbols associated with the characters. This analysis is based on Nachbar & Lause's theory of popular culture regarding setting and character conventions, E.M. Forster's theory on key elements of novels, Will Eisner's theory on key elements of comics, and Farah Mendlesohn's theory on the fantasy genre.

Researcher also found several previous studies that can be used as references in this topic, first regarding research conducted by Tany Levy entitled *Entering Another World A Cultural Genre Discourse of Japanese Isekai Texts and Their Origin in Online Participatory Culture* in which she examines isekai series, one of which is *That Time I Got Reincarnated as a Slime* in the *study TenSura (That Time I Got Reincarnated as a Slime* Volume 1)*, the audience is given extraordinary escape and wish fulfillment in the form of validation, strength, success, and friendship that may not be available to them. This shows how effort can be rewarded and, ultimately, can lead to strong social bonds. Both solutions are realized in other worlds featuring themes, characters and rules that are more familiar to the protagonist and, through perspective-taking, to the target audience. Even though both worlds depicted are fictional in the story, isekai fulfills the "realization of fiction" by mediating the loss of boundaries between "reality" and "fiction". Here, fiction means Japanese popular culture in the form of a database, which contains characters, worlds, themes, tropes, and more. This fiction, which is well-known and attractive to otaku, can

be achieved by entering another world. Furthermore, isekai can be understood metaphorically for the social practices otaku use to "enter" other fictional worlds. most isekai viewers know what to expect from a particular text. Isekai can therefore be understood not as an "other" world (an unexplored world), but rather another "world" (a familiar imagination), which appears in many iterations and is built from the entirety of otaku media, presupposing and validating a breadth of knowledge about it. As a genre, it mediates "fictional realization" and comfort space as an alternative to "social reality".

This study aims to analyze and understand the extent to which the portal fantasy formula is reflected in the manga *That Time I Got Reincarnated as a Slime* Volume 1, the novel The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe, and the Korean novel *Solo Leveling* Volume 1. By comparing these three works, this research will highlight the differences in the application of the formula across two different media. The study will explore the differences and similarities in the application of the portal fantasy formula in both novels and manga. Through this comparison, it will reveal how each literary form cultivates and brings to life the essence of this formula, as well as how portal fantasy is represented or how world-building is executed in these three works.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

To address the representation of the fantasy portal in the two novels and one comic, the researcher will respond through the element of setting. Setting analysis in novels is drawn from places where actions occur and places mentioned to enhance world-building without direct involvement. For comics, it includes places illustrated where action occurs, as well as illustrated places with no action, such as maps. This analysis is based on Nachbar & Lause's theory of popular culture regarding setting conventions, E.M. Forster's theory on key elements of novels, Will Eisner's theory on key elements of comics, and Farah Mendleshon's theory on the fantasy genre.

To address the representation of the fantasy portal in the two novels and one comic, the researcher will respond through the element of setting. Setting analysis in novels is drawn from places where actions occur and places mentioned to enhance world-building without direct involvement. For comics, it includes places illustrated where action occurs, as well as illustrated places with no action, such as maps. This analysis is based on Nachbar & Lause's theory of popular culture regarding setting conventions, E.M. Forster's theory on key elements of novels, Will Eisner's theory on key elements of comics, and Farah Mendleshon's theory on the fantasy genre.

Jack Nachbar and Kevin Lause in *Popular Culture: An Introductory Text* cite Thomas Schatz to explain what setting is in popular culture. According to Schatz, there are two main classifications of genre settings that are useful for determining how a setting functions in conveying the meaning and conflict of a story. Schatz argues that certain genres, which he refers to as Genres of Social Order, feature settings that are inherently uncertain, where forces of darkness and savagery compete with civilization and light. These settings often serve as battlegrounds where evil forces compete with characters most like us for control of the narrative (Nachbar & Lause, 1992, p. 420).

In the fantasy genre, setting refers to the world or environment in which the story takes place. In *Rhetorics of Fantasy* by Farah Mendlesohn, settings are often constructed through layered details to create a world that is comprehensible to the reader. For example, in portal-quest fantasy, the world explored by the hero is often considered unchanging, with familiar elements that are understandable to the reader. Additionally, in

immersive fantasy, the created world must feel logical and consistent, even if it contains magical or fantastical elements. Settings in this genre are often described from the perspective of the main character, who acts as a guide for the reader (Mendlesohn, 2008, pp. 9, 54, 63). From these two theories, it can be concluded that setting is the world or environment where the story unfolds, playing a crucial role in shaping the meaning and conflict within the narrative.

Setting in Narnia
1. Professor's House
"It was the sort of house that you never seem to come to the end of, and it was full of unexpected places (Lewis, 1950, p. 13)." This house is well-known and frequently visited by people from all over England. *"It was the sort of house that is mentioned in guide books and even in histories; and well it might be, for all manner of stories were told about it, some of them even stranger than the one I am telling you now.* (Lewis, 1950, p. 55)" The Professor's house is described as an expansive and intriguing place filled with unexpected rooms and long corridors, contributing to an eerie atmosphere. It is well-known, frequently visited, and full of historical significance. The house includes various rooms like spare bedrooms and the Professor's study.

2. Lamp Post
"In about ten minutes she reached it and found it was a lamp-post. As she stood looking at it, wondering why there was a lamp-post in the middle of a wood and wondering what to do next, she heard a pitter patter of feet coming toward her (Lewis, 1950, p. 18)."   Located in the middle of the Narnian forest, the lamp-post serves as a significant marker between the real world and Narnia. It is the first thing Lucy encounters in Narnia and becomes a reference point for characters to navigate between worlds

3. Cair Paravel
"The castle of Cair Paravel on its little hill towered up above them; before them were the sands, with rocks and little pools of salt water, and seaweed, and the smell of the sea and long miles of bluish-green waves breaking for ever and ever on the beach (Lewis, 1950, p. 167)." Cair Paravel is a shining castle at the edge of Narnia, where the sea meets the sky. It is described as a majestic place with a Great Hall where the children are crowned as kings and queens of Narnia.

4. Mr. Tumnus' Cave
"It was a little, dry, clean cave of reddish stone with a carpet on the floor and two little chairs, ... with a carpet on the floor and two little chairs ("one for me and one for a friend," said Mr. Tumnus) and a table and a dresser and a mantelpiece over the fire (Lewis, 1950, p. 23)." Mr. Tumnus' cave is a cozy, clean, and warm place located at the bottom of a small valley. It is furnished simply with a carpet, chairs, a fireplace, and a bookshelf filled with interesting titles, creating a welcoming atmosphere.

5. Beaver Dam
"*bottom of which ran at least it would have been running if it hadn't been frozen-a fairly large river. Just below them a dam had been built across this river* (Lewis, 1950, p. 73)". The dam, located in a small valley, is built across a river and is wide enough to walk on, though it is icy and uncomfortable for humans. It offers views upstream and downstream of the river.

6. Mr. and Mrs. Beaver's House
"*There were no books or pictures, and instead of beds there were bunks, like on board ship, built into the wall … And there were hams and strings of onions hanging from the roof .. and against the walls were gum boots and oilskins and hatchets and pairs of shears and spades and trowels and things for carrying mortar in and fishing-rods and fishing-nets and sacks.*" (Lewis, 1950, p. 76)   The Beavers' house is a snug, warm place, different from Mr. Tumnus' cave. It is simple, with bunk beds built into the walls, hams, and onions hanging from the ceiling, and various tools lining the walls.

7. Witch's Castle
"*a steep hillside at a castle-a little toy castle it looked from where they stood which seemed to be all pointed towers. But the Lion was rushing down at such a speed that it grew larger every moment and before they had time even to ask themselves what it was they were already on a level with it.*" (Lewis, 1950, p. 153)The White Witch's castle is located in an open valley and is described as a small, toy-like castle with sharp needle-like spires. It shines in the moonlight and has tightly closed gates.

8. Stone Table
"*They were on a green open space from which you could look down on the forest spreading as far as one could see in every direction- except right ahead.*" (Lewis, 1950, p. 119).   The Stone Table is situated on a green, open hill with views of the surrounding forest and the sea. It is a large, ancient stone slab, covered with strange lines and figures, significant for its role in the story.

9. Battlefield
"*There stood Peter and Edmund and all the rest of Aslan's army fighting desperately against the crowd of horrible creatures whom she had seen last night; only now, in the daylight, they looked even stranger and more evil and more deformed.*" (Lewis, 1950, p. 162).   The battle takes place on a field where Aslan's army fights against the White Witch's forces. The battlefield is dotted with statues, indicating the Witch's use of her magic wand to turn creatures into stone.

10. Frozen Lake
"*Above the dam there was what ought to have been a deep pool but was now, of course, a level floor of dark green ice.*" (Lewis, 1950, p. 73).   Above the dam, the frozen lake is a dark green ice surface, while below the dam, the ice has formed into foamy shapes, with icicles glittering like sugar wreaths.

11. Fords of Beruna

    "It was still afternoon when they came down to a place where the river valley had widened out and the river was broad and shallow. This was the Fords of Beruna and Aslan gave orders to halt on this side of the water." (Lewis, 1950, p. 138)   This is where the river valley widens, and the river becomes broad and shallow, serving as a significant location in the story.

12. Countries Around Narnia

    Several neighboring countries are shown on the map of Narnia, including Archenland, Calormen, and others, but they are not described further in the novel (Lewis, 1950, p. 7).

Setting in *Solo Leveling* Volume 1

1. Double Dungeon Cartenon Temple

   "The room was reminiscent of an ancient temple. It brought to mind an old, damp sanctuary hidden underground. Moss grew between cracks in the floor, the walls, and even the ceiling. ... The ceiling curved to make an enormous dome-shaped enclosure. It was as big as several Seoul Olympic Stadiums combined, or possibly even larger than that. ... At the far side of the room sat a statue of an unimaginable size on a throne even bigger than it. ... Despite its huge scale, the room had a simple layout. Countless torches hung on the walls, and in front of them, various stone sentries slightly taller than the average human lined the perimeter. ... Each statue held a different object. Some had weapons while the others had books, musical instruments, and even torches. ... There, in the center of the temple, was a divination circle, the likes of which he'd never seen before." (CHUGONG, 2017, pp. 13, 14, 15). A hidden dungeon discovered within another dungeon during a D-rank raid. The double dungeon is vast, resembling an ancient temple with a large altar, giant statues, and a layout as large as several stadiums combined. The dungeon gates close upon entry, trapping the raid team until they obey the commandments of the giant statue. This dungeon is later identified as Cartenon Temple.

2. Hospital

   "The association had classified this case as top secret and made sure everyone involved kept it absolutely confidential. For the same reason, Jinwoo had been assigned a private room and the best doctors in the hospital." (CHUGONG, 2017, p. 54) After the double dungeon incident, Jinwoo is treated in a hospital in a private room due to the top-secret nature of his case. The room is equipped with a bed and a mirror, and he is attended by the best doctors.

3. Penalty Zone

   "All he could see was sand. 'A desert......?' It didn't make sense. He could've sworn that, just a few moments ago, he'd been sleeping on a bed in a large hospital located in the middle of Seoul. But he'd opened his eyes to a horizon of desert? Jinwoo took a fistful of sand and let it trickle out of his hand. It fell straight down. No wind at all. The wind wasn't all that was missing. Jinwoo

also noted that there was no sun, moon, or stars in the sky. The emptiness made it look like the sky was covered in black ink. Despite this, he could view his surroundings without any problem." (CHUGONG, 2017, pp. 65, 66) A vast desert with endless sand, no wind, sun, moon, or stars, and a sky that looks like black ink. Despite the lack of light sources, everything is visible. Jinwoo finds himself in this desolate place, which defies logic, after being in a hospital bed.

4. Café Binne
"Because it was right after lunch, there were a lot of people inside the café despite it being a weekday. 'Boss, over here!' Jinho brightly greeted Jinwoo." (CHUGONG, 2017, p. 190). A café located across from Jinwoo's apartment building, where he meets Jinhoo. It is a busy café, even on weekdays, due to its location.

5. Jinwoo's Apartment
"He could see the old apartment building in the distance. His place was on the ninth floor." (CHUGONG, 2017, p. 261) *"The rent was only 500,000 won because the apartment building was an older, shabby structure located outside of Seoul, and the gracious landlord hadn't raised the rent since a few years ago due to the unfortunate situation of Jinwoo's family."* (CHUGONG, 2017, p. 128).An old building outside of Seoul, Jinwoo's apartment is on the ninth floor. It has a low rent due to the building's age and the unfortunate situation of Jinwoo's family. The apartment is modest and affordable.

6. Hapjeong Subway Station
"Jinwoo sighed and turned to get his bearings. The subway station had transformed into a jungle. Vines covered the walls, and the stench of a rotting corpse hung in the air. He could hear some animal howling in the distance every so often. It wasn't that there was a dungeon near exit three of Hapjeong Station. The station itself was the dungeon." (CHUGONG, 2017, p. 95). An Instant Dungeon accessed with a Dungeon Key from a Random Box. The station transforms into a dark, jungle-like environment filled with threats, indicating it is not a normal dungeon but rather the station itself has become a dungeon.

7. The Insects Dungeon
"It was quiet inside the dungeon. '……' It was quiet and dark. Dongsuk gave his first order. 'Gyuhwan, light up.' 'Yes!' Gyuhwan Jo, a mage hunter, conjured a sphere of light. The place flooded with radiance." (CHUGONG, 2017, p. 137). A dark, ominous environment filled with dangerous magical creatures, primarily insects that *attack* in swarms. The boss of the dungeon is a giant spider, indicating a hierarchy among the creatures. The atmosphere is eerie, with the sound of insect feet scratching the ground.

8. Goblin Dungeon
"The majority of magic beasts in this dungeon were goblins. Goblins were classified as the weakest among humanoid magic beasts. The level of the dungeon wasn't high. Keeeeeek! Kek! Jinwoo had always found it easy to deal with these creepy little creatures," (CHUGONG, 2017, p. 227). A dungeon primarily inhabited by goblins, considered the weakest among humanoid

magical *beasts*. The dungeon is divided into three paths, and Jinwoo encounters the dungeon boss, a hobgoblin, in the left path.

9. Demon Castle
   "It was a giant building with more than one hundred floors that looked like it was going to poke the sky. Skyscraper was a very apt name for it. Jinwoo felt dizzy just looking up at it." (CHUGONG, 2017, p. 207). Located in Daesung Tower, a skyscraper with over one hundred floors that appears to be a tower of blackish-red fire. The Demon Castle is guarded by Cerberus, and hunters must defeat it to obtain the key to enter the castle.

Setting in *That Time I Got Reincarnated as a Slime* Volume 1

1. Modern World in Japan

(Fuse, 2015, pp. 7, 10)
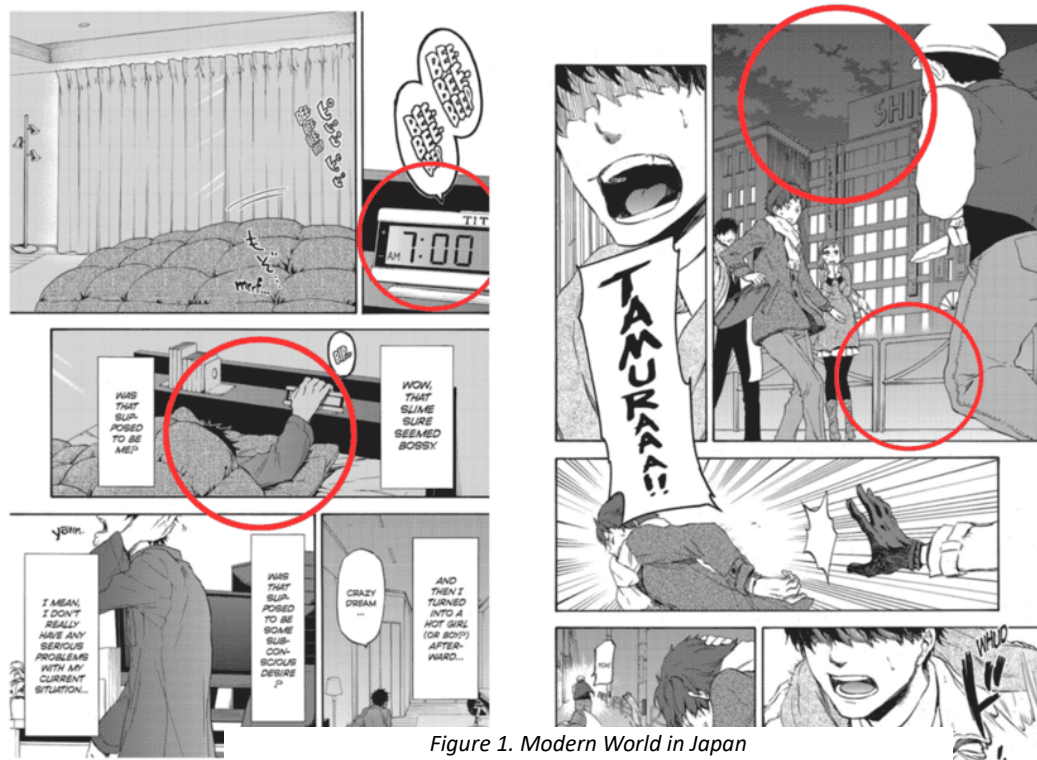
Figure 1. Modern World in Japan

The setting begins in 21st century Japan, illustrating the protagonist's everyday life with text balloons conveying his thoughts and dialogue. The scene shifts from a calm morning routine to the busy streets of Tokyo, with sound effects like "BEEP BEEP" from the alarm clock emphasizing the modern setting. The shading in the panels effectively captures the realism of a typical Japanese cityscape, particularly in areas like Shibuya (see Figure 1).

Figure 2. The Cave

2. The Cave where Veldora was Sealed

After reincarnating as a slime, the protagonist finds himself in a vast, dark cave (see figure 2). The cave is depicted with jagged rock formations and a strong sense of mystery and isolation. The panels guide the reader through this environment, with shading emphasizing the cave's depth and the atmosphere created by the echoing sound effects (Fuse, 2015, p. 33)

3. The Great Forest of Jura

Located outside the cave, the Great Forest of Jura is a vast and mysterious environment (see figure 3). The forest is dense with shadows, and the panel composition provides a panoramic view that emphasizes the scale and importance of this setting in the narrative. The shading distinguishes various natural elements, such as the towering mountains, which play a significant role in the story. (Fuse, 2015, p. 48)
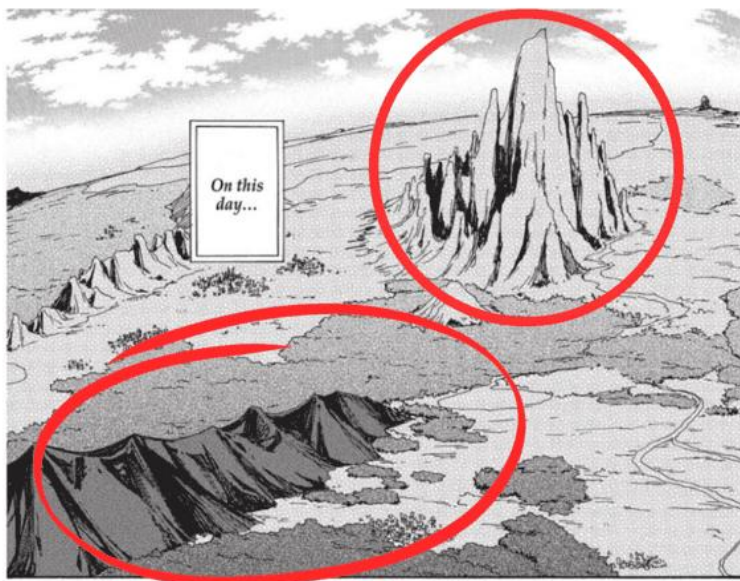
Figure 3. The Great Forest

4. Goblin Village
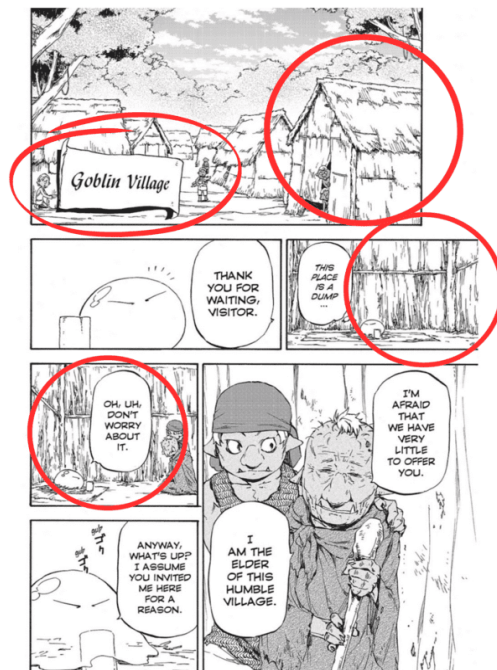
The Goblin Village is a primitive, impoverished settlement with simple wooden huts and minimal resources (see figure 4). The visual representation of the village emphasizes its struggles and the harsh conditions the goblins endure. The dialogue and character designs reinforce the village's humble and fragile state. (Fuse, 2015, p. 78)

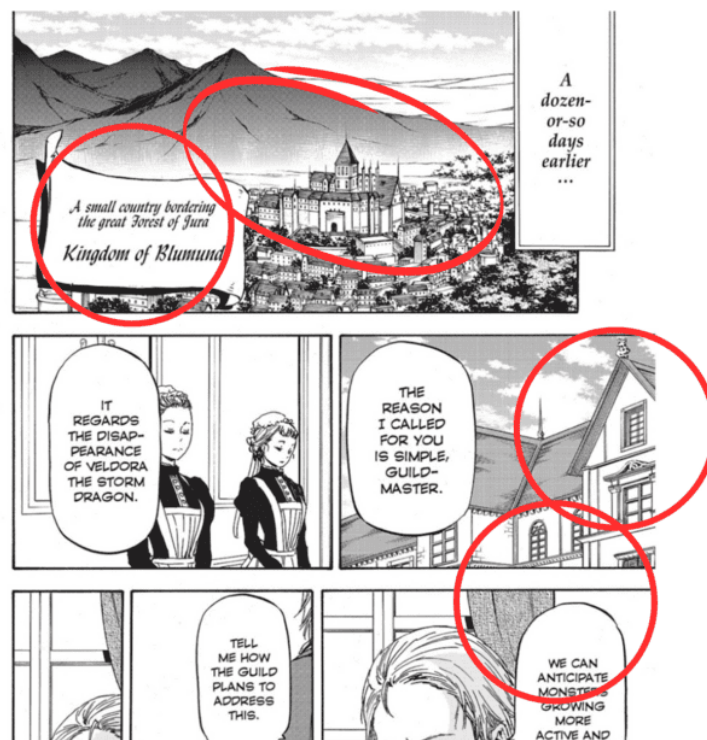*Figure 4. Goblin Village*

5. The Kingdom of Brumund

Figure 5. Kingdom of Brumund

A small kingdom near the Great Forest of Jura, the Kingdom of Brumund features medieval European architecture, with a grand castle at its center (see figure 5). The detailed illustrations and shading create a sense of the kingdom's established history and strategic importance within the story.
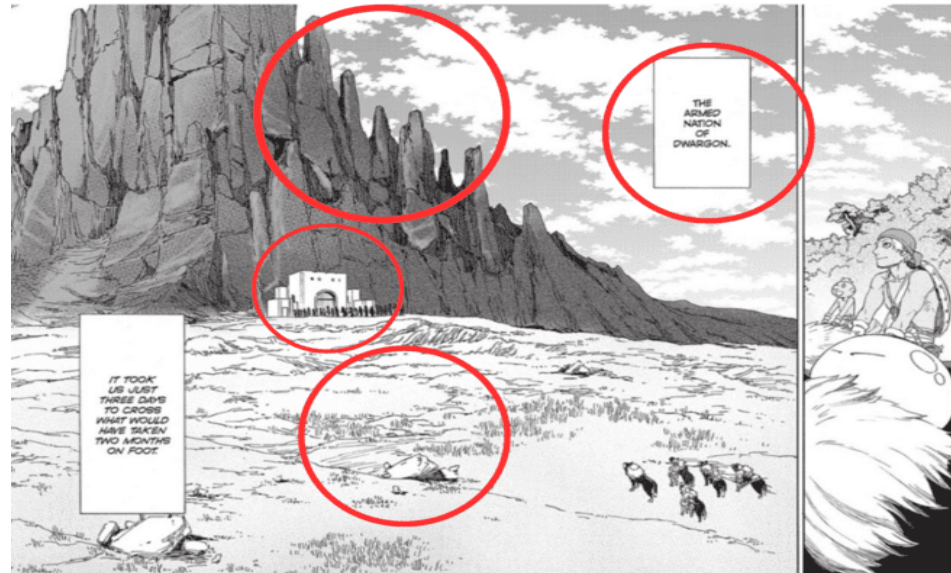
6. Dwarf Kingdom

Figure 6. Dwarf Kingdom

The Dwarf Kingdom is depicted as a fortified, isolated place surrounded by steep, jagged mountains (see figure 6). The kingdom's imposing landscape emphasizes its strength and resilience, with the architecture and shading highlighting its military nature and the challenging journey required to reach it.

7. Prison in the Dwarf Kingdom

Figure 7. The Prison

After being detained, the protagonist is placed in a prison with thick bars and a cold, unwelcoming atmosphere (see figure 7). The scene emphasizes confinement and the serious nature of the imprisonment, with dialogue and shading contributing to the setting's severity.
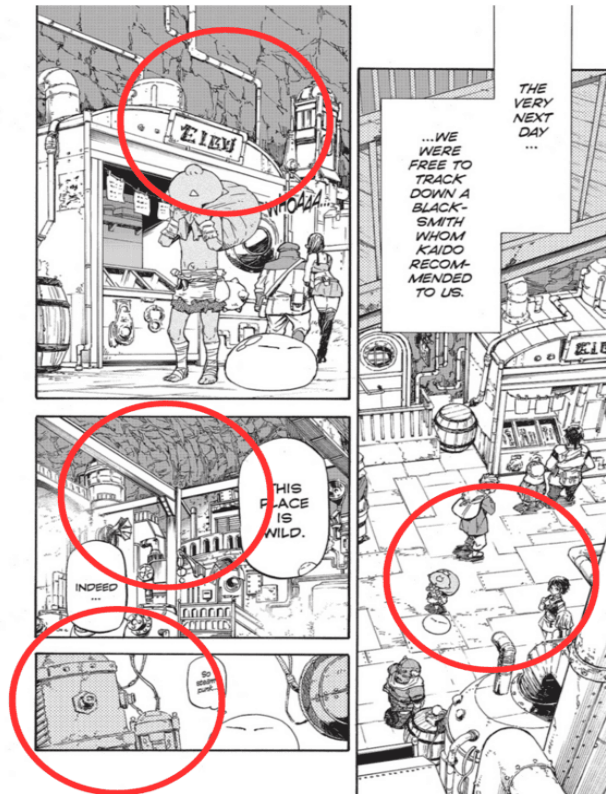
8. Inside the Dwarf Kingdom

Figure 8. Inside the Dwarf Kingdom

The industrial environment within the Dwarf Kingdom showcases advanced technological development, with detailed backgrounds of machinery and bustling activity. The setting reflects the Dwarves' reputation as skilled craftsmen, and the dialogue captures the characters' admiration for the kingdom's unique atmosphere (see figure 8).
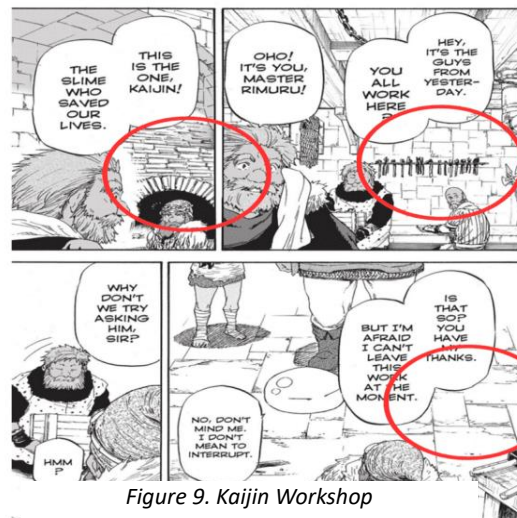
9. Kaijin's Workshop

The workshop is a well-equipped forge with brick walls, various tools, and a large furnace, highlighting Kaijin's skills as a blacksmith. The detailed backgrounds and organized tools emphasize the functionality of the space, reinforcing the workshop's active and busy nature (see figure 9).

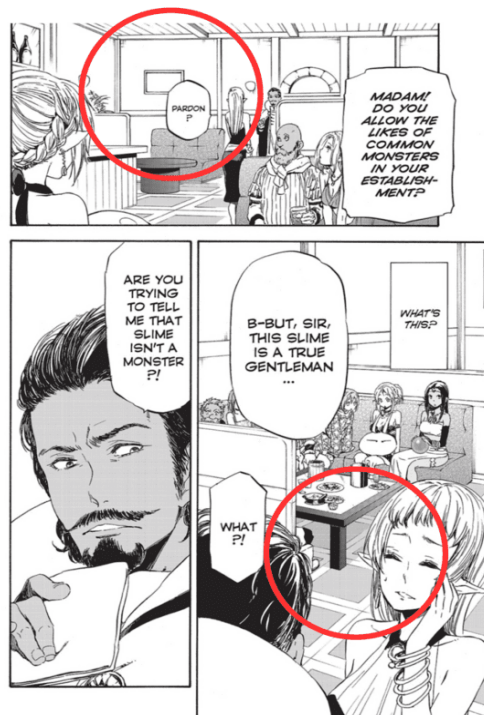(Fuse, 2015, p. 171)

Figure 9. Kaijin Workshop

10. Elf Club in the Dwarf Kingdom

(Fuse, 2015, p. 195)
The Elf Club is a sophisticated, elegant establishment with well-decorated interiors and refined service (see figure 10). The setting is depicted as upscale, with the elf hostesses' attire and interactions contributing to the club's exclusive atmosphere.

Figure 10. Elf Club

11. The Courtroom in the Dwarf Kingdom
After a confrontation, the protagonist is brought to the Dwarf Kingdom's courtroom, characterized by high ceilings, tall columns, and an elevated platform for the judge. The architectural design conveys formality and authority, with shading enhancing the somber mood of the proceedings (see figure 11).
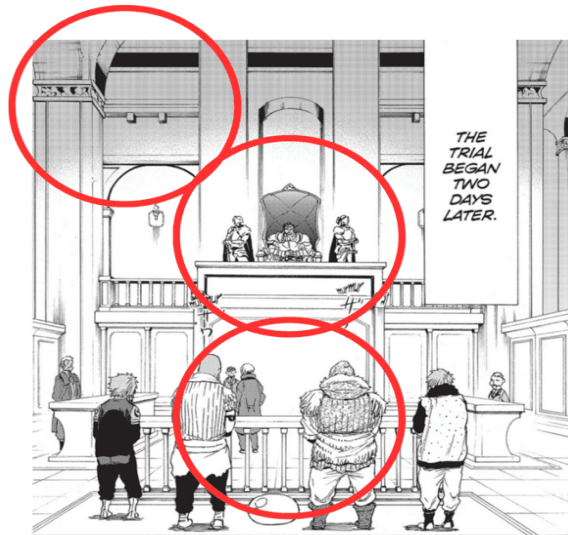
(Fuse, 2015, p. 204)

THE TRIAL BEGAN TWO DAYS LATER.

Figure 11. The Courtroom

The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe classically represents portal fantasy through the Wardrobe as physical portals that transport characters from the real world into the magical world of Narnia. Narnia itself is a parallel world full of wonders and dangers, entirely separate from the characters' original world. This setting emphasizes the concept of transitioning between two vastly different worlds, where Narnia represents a realm that must be explored and understood by the characters, highlighting the transition and exploration elements typical of portal fantasy. *Solo Leveling* takes a more modern and dynamic approach to portal fantasy through the concept of dungeons like the Double Dungeon Cartenon Temple and Demon Castle. In this work, the portal is not merely a door to another world but also a challenge that the main character, Jinwoo, must conquer. Each dungeon serves as a portal to a world filled with different dangers and challenges, emphasizing character growth and exploration within a mysterious world. This setting illustrates how portals not only connect two worlds but also function as tools for testing and developing the character's abilities. *That Time I Got Reincarnated as a Slime* uses the concept of reincarnation as a form of portal fantasy, where the main character is transported from modern-day Japan to an entirely different fantasy world, starting from The Cave where Veldora was Sealed to The Great Forest of Jura. This new world is filled with creatures and wonders absent in the character's original world, and the setting serves as a place where the character must learn and adapt to new rules. This transition demonstrates how portal fantasy can be used to explore themes of transformation and the formation of a new identity in an unfamiliar world.

Overall, these three works showcase different ways in which portal fantasy can be represented through setting. Although each work takes a distinct approach, they all use the portal element as a central mechanism to open the way to a new world that transforms the characters' lives. The settings in each work not only serve as the backdrop but also act as catalysts for character development and the exploration of deeper themes within the portal fantasy narrative.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of the analysis of portal fantasy representation in The Lion, *the Witch and the Wardrobe, Solo Leveling* Volume 1*, and That Time I Got Reincarnated as a Slime* reveals how the core elements of this sub-genre are uniquely adapted by each work to achieve different narrative purposes. *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* utilizes

portal fantasy to create a stark contrast between the real world and the magical world of Narnia, depicting a transition from mundane everyday life to adventures filled with meaning and morality. This aligns with the expectations outlined in the introduction that Narnia serves as a place of exploration and learning, where the main characters grow through extraordinary experiences. On the other hand, *Solo Leveling* Volume 1 presents portal fantasy as a more dynamic and challenge-filled mechanism. The different dungeons serve as trials for the protagonist, reflecting themes of character growth and evolution. This interpretation demonstrates how a portal can be more than just a narrative device; it can also symbolize the process of transformation and self-discovery. *That Time I Got Reincarnated as a Slime* offers a more personal approach to portal fantasy, where the transition between worlds is used to explore themes of reincarnation and new identity. The vast and diverse fantasy world becomes an arena where the protagonist rebuilds their life, consistent with the expectations in the introduction that the story would focus on exploration and adaptation in a completely new environment. Based on these findings and discussions, it can be concluded that portal fantasy in these three works functions as a bridge between the known and the unknown, not only transporting characters to new worlds but also guiding them on profound journeys of transformation. This conclusion not only affirms the expectations outlined in the introduction but also provides a deep interpretation of how portal fantasy can be used to explore existential themes and personal growth across different narrative contexts.

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