

# SP2 - Second Awakening

Source: [Crunchyroll](#)

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(Please feel free to edit the speaker names if incomplete or inaccurate. Names are handled on a best-effort basis depending on the info on the source file. Dialogue is left as is.)

**[00:16] Furuhashi**

I was reading a variety  
of webtoons at the time,

**[00:20] Furuhashi**

and the thing that really drew  
my attention was the artwork.

**[00:26] KR**

When the animation arrives, it will  
truly be the completion of this universe.

**[00:39] KR**

The transition from novel  
to webtoon is one thing,

**[00:41] KR**

but up to animation is something  
I could hardly have imagined.

**[00:45] Jinwoo**

Everybody, get down!

**[00:50] Chris**

...this start off as a light novel  
actually published in Korea,

**[00:53] Chris**

and then eventually Redice making  
that story into an actual manhwa,

**[00:59] Chris**

and now we get to have the anime adaptation.

**[01:02] Jang**

Japanese animation studios  
are by far the best.

**[01:06] Furuhashi**

I'm not sure how to express this,  
but we're working hard every day

**[01:10] Furuhashi**

to make sure that we live up  
to everyone's expectations.

**[01:13] Chris**

So now it's... Really, I guess in a way,  
it's at its third level.

**[01:31] Kim**

In Japan, the webtoon format  
wasn't really how it was perceived.

**[01:36] Kim**

It was seen as a kind of  
vertically scrolling manga—

**[01:41] Kim**

either that or as Korean manga,

**[01:45] Kim**

and that goes to show  
how little notoriety it had before.

**[01:59] Kim**

But over time it started  
to become more recognized,

**[02:03] Kim**

and now they're often referred to as smartoons,  
with a lot more people reading them.

**[02:17] Kim**

Hello, my name is Kim, and I work in Kakao  
Piccoma's Global Content Department.

**[02:23] Kim**

Piccoma is an app where  
you can jump on at any time

**[02:30] Kim**

to read original manga and smartoons.

**[02:36] Furuhashi**

After I had looked into it, it became clear  
that it was a global phenomenon,

**[02:40] Furuhashi**

not just popular in Japan...

**[02:43] Kim**

The first time I read *Solo Leveling*,  
I went through three or four chapters,

**[02:50] Kim**

and I had to see what happened next.

**[02:53] Kim**

I ended up staying up all night reading.

**[02:57] Furuhashi**

Part of the reason I chose  
*Solo Leveling* was...

**[03:01] Furuhashi**

I was reading a variety  
of webtoons at the time,

**[03:05] Furuhashi**

and the thing that really drew

my attention was the artwork.

**[03:11] Furuhashi**

That was the first thing  
that really struck me.

**[03:15] Furuhashi**

After that, I started thinking how  
I would like to turn it into animation...

**[03:24] Furuhashi**

My name is Furuhashi, and I'm a producer  
at Aniplex working on *Solo Leveling*.

**[03:31] Choi**

For *Solo Leveling*, we received offers  
from many different studios.

**[03:39] Takahashi**

*Solo Leveling* is being produced like  
the majority of anime in Japan,

**[03:43] Takahashi**

with a production committee,

**[03:44] Takahashi**

where you have a variety of companies  
investing in the show in order to create it.

**[03:53] Jang**

Japanese animation studios  
are the best, right?

**[03:57] Choi**

From all of those, we chose Aniplex.

**[04:01] Takahashi**

So, on the committee you have  
Aniplex, and Crunchyroll,

**[04:04] Takahashi**

along with the licensors  
from Korea, all involved.

**[04:09] Chris**

We saw the original story as a light novel,  
then to a manhwa, then to an anime now,

**[04:13] Chris**

and now we, as Crunchyroll, Aniplex,  
and all the different committee members—

**[04:18] Chris**

we get to be a part of making this be in the  
hands, in the reaches of a global audience,

**[04:24] Chris**

by bringing the anime to the world.

**[04:36] Chris**

So when we are doing co-production

**[04:38] Chris**

it means we have a much more

intimate relationship

**[04:41] Chris**

with the title and the people and  
the committee members involved,

**[04:45] Chris**

which allows us to talk about  
things at a much earlier point.

**[04:54] Kaneko**

I first learned about *Solo Leveling* when  
Furuhashi-san, the producer at Aniplex,

**[05:05] Kaneko**

showed me the project  
outline in July of 2020.

**[05:16] Furuhashi**

A big part of why I chose A-1 Pictures  
to work on the project

**[05:20] Furuhashi**

is their success with a number  
of titles, regardless of genre,

**[05:26] Furuhashi**

which really speaks to  
their level of ability.

**[05:30] Kaneko**

Hey there, folks, I'm Kaneko,  
an anime producer from A-1 Pictures,

**[05:35] Kaneko**

and it's a pleasure to be here.

**[05:37] Nakashige**

I'm the series director, Nakashige,  
and thanks for having me.

**[05:44] Nakashige**

When I first read it, my initial reaction  
was "So this is what's popular now?",

**[05:50] Nakashige**

but also a twinge of nostalgia.

**[05:54] Nakashige**

It reminded me of how,  
when I was doing art in 2009—

**[05:58] Nakashige**

when I was still drawing as an amateur—

**[06:01] Nakashige**

I used to read a lot of  
vertically oriented manga.

**[06:06] Nakashige**

So it also took me back to that time.

**[06:09] Kim**

I'd say there are three big differences

between smarttoons and Japanese manga.

**[06:15] Kim**

One being that smarttoons,  
like their name would imply,

**[06:21] Kim**

are designed to be read  
on smartphones or on the PC.

**[06:27] Kim**

That means scrolling vertically.

**[06:32] Kim**

Another thing is that they tend  
to have a faster pace, per-chapter,

**[06:38] Kim**

with the amount of information  
conveyed being simplified.

**[06:42] Kim**

And the last big difference  
is that they're completely in color.

**[06:55] Furuhashi**

I have to say, my favorite thing  
about *Solo Leveling* really is the art.

**[07:01] Furuhashi**

The action plays out in this really  
cool, stylish, and stoic fashion,

**[07:05] Furuhashi**

which is a big part of its appeal.

**[07:10] Furuhashi**

Beyond that, there's also the fact that  
the story takes place in the real world.

**[07:18] Furuhashi**

It is not a story about traveling  
entirely into another world,

**[07:22] Furuhashi**

which I think makes it easier to get into.

**[07:31] Jang**

Aniplex has a great production system.

**[07:36] Jang**

For the character design, there was  
the original work, the webtoon, to refer to.

**[07:45] Jang**

The anime characters were  
designed with that as the base.

**[07:51] Jang**

Every step had to be confirmed by D&C.

**[07:59] Nakashige**

With regards to what advice we received  
from the staff of the webtoon,

**[08:04] Nakashige**

we got to speak to them, as well  
as the author of the original novel.

**[08:08] Nakashige**

So, for example, there would be characters  
who didn't show up in the webtoon.

**[08:11] Nakashige**

They'd be brought up in dialog  
but wouldn't appear in the artwork,

**[08:15] Nakashige**

so we would ask, "Well, what are they like?"

**[08:20] Nakashige**

Other than that, we'd ask things like  
"While the protagonist is doing this,

**[08:27] Nakashige**

what are the other characters  
up to around that time?"

**[08:31] Nakashige**

and then seed those elements into the script.

**[08:50] KR**

As producers of the webtoon,  
we're similar to assistants.

**[08:54] KR**

When we get to see the first animations,  
we'll continue to provide feedback.

**[09:01] KR**

That's how we pushed the process  
forward up to this point.

**[09:14] Sung Jinwoo**

*That might be why I was able to tell...*

**[09:17] Sung Jinwoo**

Everybody, get down!

**[09:33] Cho Myung**

What the hell?!

**[09:35] Joo Jae-hwan**

Nobody mentioned this!

**[09:36] Ra Hyeyoung**

What is going on here?!

**[09:37] Joo Jae-hwan**

How should I know?!

**[09:38] Kim Sangshik**

You all right?

**[09:39] Park Beom-shik**

Yeah. How about you, Kim?

**[09:41] Kim Sangshik**

I'm fine.

**[09:42] Lee Joohee**

No more... No more!

**[09:46] Sung Jinwoo**

*What is happening here?*

**[09:49] Sung Jinwoo**

*How is this possible?*

**[09:51] Sung Jinwoo**

*We're trapped. We're done for.*

**[09:54] Sung Jinwoo**

*We're dead. Dead.*

**[10:00] Sung Jinwoo**

*We're gonna die!*

**[10:05] Furuhashi**

In terms of adapting a webtoon into an anime,

**[10:09] Furuhashi**

I'd say the biggest difference  
is probably the pace of the story.

**[10:14] Furuhashi**

For example, with a webtoon,  
a single collected volume...

**[10:16] Sung Jinah**

You need to take better care of yourself!  
Do you know how worried I was?!

**[10:20] Furuhashi**

For a typical manga, that would cover  
two to three episodes worth of material.

**[10:22] Sung Jinah**

You always end up a mess,  
even when everyone else is fine!

**[10:27] Furuhashi**

But for a webtoon,  
it really is much faster paced,

**[10:31] Furuhashi**

so a collected volume is only about  
one and a half episodes of material.

**[10:40] Furuhashi**

And that was one hurdle  
we needed to deal with.

**[10:43] Furuhashi**

So, in order to overcome that,  
we added a bit of extra meat to the story

**[10:48] Furuhashi**

with an eye towards the overall adaptation.

**[10:52] Nakashige**

It's such a brisk read

**[10:53] Nakashige**

that it can sometimes be a little  
too breezy for 20 minutes of TV,

**[10:57] Nakashige**

and with film you need  
upswings and downswings,

**[10:59] Nakashige**

so we try to think hard about how to control  
that, what to add and what to subtract.

**[11:06] Nakashige**

It'd be simple to just say  
this is an episode,

**[11:08] Nakashige**

it's going to contain  
this many chapters of story,

**[11:10] Nakashige**

but as an animated product that'd result  
in something that's pretty monotonous,

**[11:14] Nakashige**

and wouldn't properly convey  
how entertaining the original was,

**[11:18] Nakashige**

so like I said before, we consider  
where to add additional stuff,

**[11:22] Nakashige**

and where to subtract extraneous stuff,  
in order to help develop the pacing.

**[11:33] Kaneko**

This is an original work from folks in a  
different country with different sensibilities.

**[11:41] Kaneko**

And then we take that and present it to  
the world through the filter of anime...

**[11:46] Kaneko**

It's really an interesting sort  
of formula we've created here.

**[11:58] Furuhashi**

With Crunchyroll, they've been a huge help  
in regards to the localization efforts.

**[12:07] Furuhashi**

Since we want *Solo Leveling* to be  
a global hit, not just a domestic one,

**[12:13] Furuhashi**

part of that meant putting  
a focus on the localization

**[12:20] Furuhashi**

for each region it would be released in.

**[12:46] Takahashi**

At Crunchyroll, we don't often independently  
host premieres for shows before they air.

**[12:56] Takahashi**

But in the case of *Solo Leveling*, there are a lot of fans of the original work already,

**[13:03] Takahashi**

so we've been holding world premiere events across the world, starting with Los Angeles.

**[13:11] Takahashi**

This really isn't something we could do with most shows,

**[13:15] Takahashi**

so helping coordinate these different locations across the globe

**[13:20] Takahashi**

really was a new experience.

**[13:33] Chris**

So, as an example of how this gets played out,

**[13:35] Chris**

when we were talking about what is a big promotion

**[13:40] Chris**

that we could do with Japan, Korea, and the U.S.

**[13:42] Chris**

as being the three biggest markets for this title,

**[13:45] Chris**

we talked very early on about doing some sort of premiere event in these three countries.

**[13:52] Chris**

We got to be a part of those discussions

**[13:54] Chris**

and also very much have a collaborative effort with Aniplex

**[13:58] Chris**

on the premiere events themselves.

**[14:00] Chris**

So we're making sure that when we do some of these marketing promotions

**[14:04] Chris**

that we are actually including the localized nuances of the different regions,

**[14:09] Chris**

so that we can actually appeal to those fans.

**[14:12] Chris**

Because it's different for an American to view this title

**[14:14] Chris**

as it would for even someone  
in Europe, like the British,

**[14:19] Chris**

the French, the Germans will have  
a slightly different view of the title,

**[14:23] Chris**

and so we have to think about  
from their perspective,

**[14:26] Chris**

what is it that they'd be excited about.

**[14:30] Takahashi**

What we're doing with this campaign

**[14:33] Takahashi**

is operating on a scale  
that we usually don't work at.

**[14:37] Takahashi**

And I think that's personally  
helped me level up, as a producer.

**[14:44] Chris**

How's everyone doing?

**[14:48] Chris**

Who's excited for the first  
two episodes of *Solo Leveling*?

**[14:56] Chris**

It's such a pleasure  
to be here with you guys.

**[14:58] Chris**

It's been an incredible day so far,  
with the guys here from Japan—

**[15:03] Chris**

by the way, when they come  
out here, I have to tell you,

**[15:05] Chris**

you have to give the craziest  
and the loudest applause

**[15:09] Chris**

because their flight got canceled yesterday.

**[15:13] Chris**

They got here this morning.

**[15:28] Announcer**

Before we begin, as a reminder,

**[15:31] Announcer**

there is absolutely no flash photography  
or recording of this screening.

**[15:36] Announcer**

Seriously, don't make us send you

into the next dungeon.

**[16:03] Jonny Tran**

That actually blew my mind.

**[16:06] Jonny Tran**

I'm so excited to see more,  
because there's a lot of gore,

**[16:09] Jonny Tran**

some great fights, and the  
cliffhangers are set just right.

**[16:12] Justin Han**

I think this is probably my number  
one favorite webtoon of all time,

**[16:16] Justin Han**

so finally getting adapted... Y'know,  
it's like a dream come true, actually.

**[16:20] Jeremy Evans**

I haven't read it yet, but after watching  
this, I have to read everything now.

**[16:23] Chris**

The franchise itself has  
a very, very bright future.

**[16:26] Chris**

A lot of the fans who have been keeping up  
with this title from a manhwa perspective

**[16:31] Chris**

are really excited to see  
this become animated,

**[16:33] Chris**

but for those that have only  
just heard about the title,

**[16:36] Chris**

this is their chance to really get into  
this world that *Solo Leveling* has built,

**[16:41] Chris**

and to jump into this with other fans,

**[16:44] Chris**

so we're really excited to bring this globally  
to all of our audiences, and to our fans.

**[16:50] King Vader**

I've been excited ever since  
they had the teaser trailer,

**[16:52] King Vader**

so I'm kinda coming into this, y'know, blind,  
but nevertheless, I'm excited.

**[16:57] Reagan Kathryn**

The animation was stunning,  
like the voice acting was fantastic...

**[17:00] Samuel Leggett**

Japanese animation, and honestly  
Japanese film in general,

**[17:04] Samuel Leggett**

they have, like, a raw invoking emotion.

**[17:07] Furuhashi**

With *Solo Leveling*,  
in anticipation for the show,

**[17:11] Furuhashi**

I've been traveling to  
different countries for events,

**[17:15] Furuhashi**

and when *Solo Leveling* comes up,  
the crowd always erupts.

**[17:21] June Yoon**

It's one thing to scroll the pages  
of a webtoon, certainly,

**[17:26] June Yoon**

and be amused and entertained by the story  
in whatever resonances that we may get,

**[17:31] June Yoon**

but it's something else to watch it  
unfold on a screen, with animation,

**[17:36] June Yoon**

and sound effects, the mixing,  
the music, the acting...

**[17:39] June Yoon**

It really feels like everything  
came together in a cohesive piece

**[17:43] June Yoon**

that really, really, really  
feels complete, in a sense.

**[17:51] Furuhashi**

I'm not sure how to express this...  
but we're working hard every day

**[17:55] Furuhashi**

to make sure that we live up  
to everyone's expectations.

**[17:57] Takahashi**

We're all aware of how popular  
*Solo Leveling* is as a comic,

**[18:03] Takahashi**

so being involved in the anime  
adaptation is very exciting,

**[18:11] Takahashi**

as well as being a lot of pressure.

**[18:17] Stella Chuu**

This webtoon far and exceeds anything I've ever read before.

**[18:21] Stella Chuu**

It's cinematic, as you're reading it,

**[18:23] Stella Chuu**

and so now that it's finally being turned into an anime,

**[18:25] Stella Chuu**

I feel like... it's finally deserved. Like, we're here.

**[18:29] Stella Chuu**

All the fans, we've been waiting for years to get up to this point!

**[18:32] Stella Chuu**

*Solo Leveling* is here, it's an anime! Aw, let's go!

**[19:08] Chris**

I know that A-1 Pictures being the animation studio on this title

**[19:12] Chris**

will deliver that. They'll do an amazing job,

**[19:14] Chris**

and we've seen amazing past works from them,

**[19:16] Chris**

so I put a lot of faith in them, too, as a fan.

**[19:20] Furuhashi**

It's our goal to make something that will exceed everyone's expectations,

**[19:26] Furuhashi**

so we hope you'll check it out.

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