

# ETERNAL THIEF

## Chapter 21: Black Fox

"Why are you yelling? You're also a thief. Humph!" Black Fox's beautiful eyes narrow as she snorts, clearly offended by Ace's reaction. She wasn't acting like her usual cold demeanor.

Ace takes a deep breath and calms down. He knew from the start that this girl wasn't normal but also didn't imagine she was crazy as well.

Who wanted to be a thief if they have a second choice? Like himself at the beginning, he didn't want to be a thief but with this system, didn't have any option but to choose this road. Now things have changed and Ace didn't dislike being a thief, on the contrary, he was grateful towards the system for giving him this chance to become someone extraordinary.

"Why?" Ace wanted to know just why she wants to be a thief.

"My mother was a thief and from the Shadow Devil clan. One of the top ten clans of All-Devil Continent." Black Fox replied with some pride in her voice, but there was also a hint of deep sorrow in her eyes.

"Y-you're a DEVIL?" Ace thinks this world was going crazy.

A real devil was right in front of him! How could he not think it was crazy?

First, Ace discovers someone for the number three race of this world a Hunter who happened to be his adopted Lil Sis, and now he meets someone from the 'Devil Race' that was the Number One Race of this world.

"No silly let me finished first. My mother was a shadow devil but my father was a human. I'm a half-shadow devil and half-human." Black Fox clear Ace's misunderstanding.

"And why are you telling me this?" Ace was startled. It was probably a great secret but she was telling him like it was nothing.

"I think for working together we should trust each other. Since I know about you, you should also know about me." Black Fox nodded seriously to herself as she wraps her hands around her big chest and looked even more attractive.

"So you're a half-devil and half-human. Wait! What this has anything to do with forming a partnership with me?" Ace was perplexed.

"You're so silly! Just let me explain first." Black Fox told annoyingly.

'She's unmistakably a crazy girl.' Ace thought in frustration but didn't say or show it to his face. Because he was afraid she would start saying something meaningless again.

"So my father was a human and my mother was a devil. He saved her from human cultivators when she was being chased and attacked by them. After that incident, they fell in love." She starts her story again from the start.

Ace didn't speak this time he also finds it quite interesting because it was very rare for a devil to fell for a human. Devils never mate with other races it was an extremely rare case.

"After they made their decision to stay together forever. They settled in a 1-Star city because there, they will be safe and live peacefully and no one would be able to find about my mother's identity as well as my father's past.

"However, two years later after I was born. A group of cultivators came, they were not from the lands of cities. They were searching for my father because before my father meets my mothers he was a high-ranking officer of some great power but he betrays them and runs away with my mom.

"But they still find him in the end even in this barren place with some kind of strange treasure. My mom has no choice but shows her origin of the shadow devil clan and because of it, they find out about my mother's secret.

"They were four of them and they all as strong as my father. After bitterly fighting one of them was killed by my father. Seeing my father killing one of their men, the two who were fighting with my mother use a treasure to sneak attack my father. But my mom saw it first and use her body to block it. That treasure was poisonous and my mother died after getting hit by it.

"My father saw my mom getting hit by the poisonous attack and died and madly fights to avenge her and he killed the one who uses that poison attack. But another one sneaks attack him from behind.

"My father fights an intense battle against both of them but in the end, those two men have some kind of strange ability and they escape from my father with their life. But father was also gravely injured and he fell in deep despair after losing my mother.

"He quickly takes me here to river flower city to seek shelter from his friend. After one month we arrive here, my father's wounds were almost healed. But he was afraid that those two men will come back again. He also wanted to take revenge on that power behind them because they killed my mom, so he left me behind with his friend and said he will come back after a year.

"After my father's departure, I was left alone here. But my father's friend takes care of me for a year and a half time, sadly he was not a kind-hearted person and has ulterior motives though.

"After one and half years he thinks my father died while seeking revenge. Thus, he was not afraid anymore and sells me to Grant Family young Miss. He sold me to her for some Ruby coins." Shadow fox finished her story and became extremely distressed while talking about her parents especially her mother's unfortunate death.

Ace has a nostalgic expression on his face after hearing her tragic story.

'Her past is more painful than mine.' Ace thought morosely,

"So why did you find me?" Ace softly asked he didn't look at her with hostility like before.

"After that man sold me to Lyla Grant who's also Asher's mother. She first wanted me to become Asher's maid after she seeing my appearance and give me training.

"I was just four years old but I'm a haft-devil and I had extremely high awareness since I was young that how I remember those events clearly. However, I was afraid of others abandoning me after my mother's death and my father's disappearance moreover, that man sold me after. Therefore, I did what Lyla told me to and start learning how to be a good maid.

"But when I turn 7 years old my shadow devil clan 'Blood Memory Heritage' begins to awaken. I gain memories of some skills and cultivation techniques from my shadow devil lineage, I was confused at that time and tell about these memories to Lyla.

"She didn't believe me first but when I show her one of the lineage skills she immediately takes me to her family head and told him everything. That old man was extremely knowledgeable and immediately guessed that I'm a devil because in this world only the devil possesses the blood memories heritage.

"He wants my lineage memories and I was naïve so I told him everything. But my memories were incomplete and he finds out he can't cultivate my devil clan skills or technique. He does some test and discovered I'm not a pure-blooded devil and loses interest in me." Black Fox's eyes turn cold as she continued.

"I later found out that when a devil turns 7 years old it starts to inherit memories from their ancestors through blood this is what they all called Blood Memory Heritage, Exactly what kind of memories they got it solely depends on the devil's blood density.

"That's why devils are the No.1 Race of this world they didn't need any techniques or skills they just need the density of their bloodline to be high and they can even awake their ancestor's full memories of cultivation. But I was only half-devil and that's why my skills and techniques were incomplete." Black Fox becomes dejected in the end.

Ace didn't know what to say after hearing the Black Fox story. He felt pain in his heart for this girl and felt an unknown feeling he never experiences before.

"Grant family head lose interest in me after confirming that I'm an only half devil. But he didn't let me roam around freely, after I showed him my skills he knows I was a natural-born Assassin and very dangerous because I'm a shadow devil.

"Hence, he planted this black mask on my face. It is like a slave mark but much more advance. Slave marks can control a person with force but if that person were to become too powerful the slave mark will shatter. But this mask is like a high-level slave mark. It can't be undone by normal means and that's why I come to you to form a partnership. Only you can help me!" Black fox touches her mask it was a vicious curse and she always wanted to escape from these people's clutches but was powerless to do so.

"So, you want me to finds out a method to undone this slave mask?" Ace now has some idea why she wanted to form a partnership with him. He was still a little confused 'why him' though?

"I don't want you to find a method... Because I already know how to undo it. I only want you to get it for me." Black Fox mysteriously answered.

"Where is it then and what will I get after getting it for you, since it's an equal deal you have to give me something, right?" Ace was sympathizing with her but it didn't mean he would risk his life for sympathy.

"I prepare MYSELF!" Black Fox giggles as she performed a more seductive posture to show her fine curves.

"Stop joking around and tell me seriously or I can't help you." Ace retorted while breathing hard. He nearly falls from his chair after hearing 'Myself' and sees her sexy posture. His heart was beating fast for some reason, he never felt this kind of feeling before.

"NO! I'm serious! Didn't I say before I always want to be a thief like you? After you free me from this hell hole I'll be your partner in crime and join you to become a great thief." Declared Black Fox and it seems she was dead serious about becoming a thief.

"You know what you are crazy! Why would you want to be a thief and if you want to be one you can be one but ALONE" Ace bark in frustration, he simply can't deal with this crazy girl anymore.

"The reason is very simple my mom was also a great thief. When my father found her she was escaping after failing her job. She used to tell me stories of her adventures and how she stole from bad guys who bully innocent people. I was fascinated by her stories at that time and always wants to be like her. I'll become a Great Thief who stole from bad guys." Black Fox foxlike eyes were shining like stars when she told her 'grand goal' to Ace.

Ace nearly swore out loud after hearing her words!

## **Chapter 22: Partnership With A Devil!**

"Your mother was a thief and you want to become like her?" Ace repeated her words in bewilderment.

"Yes. That's been my dream since young but after I become a Grant Family slave my life didn't belong to me anymore. They train me to become an Assassin after discovering my special abilities. I didn't have any choice but to obey their order. After my training was complete, Lyla Grant gives me to her son Asher Kelby to do his bidding.

"He was adored by both his Father the current head of Kelby family and his grandfather the head of Grant family also Lyla's father. He was also the one who planted this slave mask. That's why he let me go to Asher's side, knowing I can't do anything because I had this mask on my face." Black Fox's eyes turn cold while mentioning Kelby and Grant's family, she resented both families to bones. How could she not be? It was because of them she was living as a slave all these years.

"But if you are bound by this slave mask then how can you resist the orders and seeks my help?" Ace asked in puzzlement.

Even if Ace was new in the cultivation world he clearly knew how slave marks work. The bearer of this mark can't resist their master control. Thus, if this fox mask was really more powerful than the normal slave mark it would be night impossible for her to resist Asher's will.

Black Fox said gravely. "This is because one of my lineage skills that no one knows about, I can bypass this mask control with it. But it can't help me get rid of it, if they find out about this skill they will kill me."

"YOU?! Are you an idiot? Are you not afraid of me telling them your biggest secrets? What if I sold you out to save myself from Asher or kill you right now to shut your mouth after that no one will ever know about my secret." Ace continues gloomily, "As for Kelby and Grant's family, I can hide or even leave the city, and you know exactly that I'm capable of doing it. So why are trusting me so much!?"

Ace didn't know her or she wasn't his relative or anything important either. Then why was she telling him her secrets one after another like it was nothing it made him quite uneasy. Because this girl was by no means a fool, she finds his hidden identity with so few clues.

"Heh heh, You would never do it because you are like my mother, you robbed that fatty because he was an evil person and always bully the poor. You even helped those innocent people's families who were killed by Billy in his madness. You give all those dead people families 10 ruby coins without letting them know. But do you know? They all know it was the 'Black Ghost' who help them when no one was listening to their pleading.

"They called you a Hero of justice. My mother was also this kind of thief. She always stole from rich and bad peoples and helps the needy when no one wanted to help them." Black Fox nostalgically said as she remembered her mother's words and her stories even now because she was her Hero.

Her father always scolds her mother not to tell her this kind of story, but she never listens to him and always tells her about her great adventures and achievements.

Black Fox still remembered her mother telling her about the variety of thieves, "Remember Eva there were three types of thieves. First, those who stole for poor and rich peoples alike, whether they were good or bad. The second type is those who stole from only the weak because they are cowards who run from the strong and bully the weak. The third type was the rarest those who only stole from evil people and help the weak." That was the last thing she told Black Fox before her tragic death.

"Your mother was really a good person and I can't compare with her." Ace sincerely said without hiding his awe for that great thief.

Eva giggles after seeing Ace's goofy face, "That's why I wanted to find you and form a partnership. Because you are a loyal person and you will not do something so shameless to sell your comrade for saving your own neck." She has deeply investigated Ace before she makes her decision to form a partnership with him.

"Tell me how can I free you from this slave mask and about Kelby's family strength I want to know all about it," Ace asked, he wanted to help her if he could but more importantly wanted to complete his mission.

Now Ace has some idea what kind of family Kelby truly was after hearing her story. A number three family of the whole inner region and he has to empty their treasury in two years. He nearly cursed the system.

"Oh, your next target was the Kelby family looks like I didn't misjudge you. You really are a 'kind-hearted thief' just like my mother." Black Fox was relieved after confirming her assumption about Ace being a 'kind-hearted thief'. In her eyes, he was going to 'Judge' Kelby family the black-hearted family who treats her like a slave and do all kind of evil deeds.

Ace's face flushed when he heard Black Fox's words. He wanted to clarify her misunderstanding but was afraid that she would beat him if he told her he wanted to do robbery for his own selfish purpose.

'She has definitely some screws loose in her head.' Ace nodded and decided to let her be.

Ace was not the 3rd category thief he was actually a new type of thief, that robbed others to get stronger. It was that simple.

"Cough... cough" Ace Cough twice to hide his embarrassment. "Listen? Can you not talk about this and just simply tell me how can I helped you get rid of this mask and in return, you can give me all the information on the Kelby family."

Ace gave in, he didn't want anything from this crazy girl anymore. If she can just give him information about Kelby's family security or even helped him get in there, he was happy with just that.

"Humph. First, you have to form a partnership with me and we will be a team from now on. Then like a real team, you will help your partner first then do official business together." Black Fox snorted clearly dissatisfied with Ace forgetting something so important this quick.

'What official business?? That's a mission from the system!!' Ace really wanted to yell this but held himself back.

'Sigh' Ace sighs helplessly, "Fine we will form a team and I'll help you first but if your skill is not enough or you slow me down, I'll escape and leave you behind. Now tell me how can I help you!!!" There was clear frustration in his voice.

"See that wasn't so difficult. I promise you that I will not slow you down and always follow your order. Since you're the team leader name our team first." Black fox said excitedly, she was looking at Ace with great expectations.

"What team leader? And why do we need a name??" Ace asked hurriedly he didn't like where this conversation was going.

"Since you're more skilled than me in thievery and you already 'famous thief' you will be our team leader and in future, our team will be famous in whole worlds so we should have a magnificent name that will stuck fear into bad guys hearts." Explain Black Fox while imagining their glorious future with gleaming eyes.

'She is definitely a madcap.' Ace nodded while smile bitterly.

"Fine fine! I'll be the leader but for the name of the team let's talk about it in the future when we become famous or something like that." Ace didn't even want to form a team much less name it so he just said random things to assure Black Fox.

"You are right we will decide on a name when we become famous." Black Fox seriously nodded in agreement.

Just as he expects, 'She totally buys it!'

"Now we are team and partners so we should introduce ourselves. My name is Eva Jude and you can call me Eva from now on." Black Fox or Eva introduced herself while advancing her snow-white hand towards Ace.

"Ace White just call me Ace, not the team leader." Ace smile wryly as he shakes her delicate hand.

Ace didn't know his forced-formed team will shatter the entire piece of the Golden Sky World in the future.

"Ok Ace. Now you have to help your partner." Eva giggled, it was clear she was quite happy.

"Just tell me already!" Ace was on verge of going insane and didn't even want to know about Kelby's family anymore. He only wants to know how to solved her problem and shut her annoying mouth. Because in Ace's eyes she talks too much!

But if Asher sees her talking like this, he would think that this was someone else in the black fox mask. Because she never said more words than she needed. She only answered if you ask her questions and becomes mute after answering the question. This was how the usual Black Fox behaves, Coldly!

But in front of Ace, she acts like a spoiled child and why she was doing this even she didn't know. She just felt close to Ace for some strange reason the moment they meet.



"OK! I'll talk stop annoying me." Eva annoyingly said after seeing Ace was going to explode anytime.

'YOU'RE THE ANNOYING ONE HERE!' Ace roll his eyes and retorted in his heart.

"If you want to help your 'precious partner' you have to infiltrate Grant Family's treasury!" Eva sounds like a little girl who was quite excited about her big adventure with her team leader of course.

"W-WHAT?!?" That night the whole Inn heard a shrill scream fill with regret and resentment.

## **Chapter 23: Infiltrating Grant Family!**

Ace wanted to cry but no tears flow. he was regretting now. He should've escaped from here the moment the room door was opened and should've run far away from Eva. But alas, there was no medicine of regret in this world.

Now he already promised her so he will help her. His parents and grandparents always teach him to never break his promise or go back on his words.

'That Kelby family was already difficult to deal with and now I have to rob the Grant family as well. If I robbed even one of them the other will be on high alert. It's not the outer region after all, and Eva will be in trouble if I robbed Kelby's family first, that Asher will definitely notice something and maybe become suspicious of Eva.' Ace thought gravely, 'She is irritating but she is a kind-hearted and straightforward girl. She even tells me about her biggest secrets I can't abandon someone who put their trust in me.'

Ace was in a predicament because if Eva didn't tell him about her past and secrets, he would've already chosen to do the system's mission. Besides, he didn't want to admit it but it was his first time making a 'friend' in little life.

"Why are you perspiring like rain? We can rob both families at the same time if you want to rob the Kelby family that much." Eva said softly after seeing Ace acting so silly, she finds it quite amusing though.

"How can we rob them both?!" Ace demands instantly, If he can he didn't want to rob anyone of them.

"My mom once told me how she robbed three treasuries at the same time!" Eva told Ace proudly about her mom's achievements as if it was her own.

"Tell me about it." Ace ignored Eva's who was acting haughtily like a peacock and urge her to tell the whole story.

Ace wasn't an expert thief and was a new bud in this domain. He can rob one of the big families here but two at the same time was a near-impossible task for him with his current skills. Thus, if Eva's mother was really a great thief then her experience was very precious helpful to him.

"Listen carefully," Eva earnestly begins to tell Ace.

After two hours,

Ace's eyes were shining like stars after listening to Eva's story and were amazed by the way thievery can be done. He was now fully convinced; Eva's mother was really a Great Thief and he learned a lot from just by this one tale.

'Which fool says being a thief is easy? Too much planning is needed just for single thievery. In my opinion, being a thief is even harder than ascending heaven.' Ace mused bitterly but there was a particular thrill in his eyes.

"First we have to select a target, you can do that and I will be going to infiltrate the Grant family. If we do this we have to tend extremely carefully, if we make a mistake even a little we are finished. I can always escape but you will die as a result so remember to be very cautious." Ace reminds her gravely.

Ace didn't consider Eva an outsider anymore because she was helping him more than he asks for and unknowingly he really starts to treat her like a teammate.

"Don't worry about it. The most important task will be done by you and that made you the core of this plan. You have to be careful more than me." Eva said with a light chuckle.

She has also noticed Ace's change in attitude and feels genuine concern from his voice. She was very happy about it. After all, she did all this to win Ace's trust and honestly wanted to form a team with him. Because her mon once said to her, "A great thief needs a great partner." Therefore, Ace was the perfect partner for her, he was smart, has great skills, loyal, and trustworthy. She also has to admit he was 'somewhat handsome' as well.

That's why she told the truth from the beginning because she knew a person like Ace would never abandon or betray a true friend. Furthermore, she vaguely felt very close to him and put all her trust in him for some unknown reason and that faith comes directly from her blood and soul!

Eva didn't dwell on this strange inexplicable feeling and think it was just because she meets a thief like her mom. All her attention was on the plan of robbing both families who treated her like slaves for many years, finally, it was time for her sweet revenge.

She was excited and afraid at the same time. Excited because her dream was becoming true and can finally become like her mother, and afraid because she didn't want her team with Ace to break with any mishaps.

"You should go first and report to Asher. He can be a huge hindrance to our plan so we should get rid of him as soon as possible." Ace said with an evil smile on his face.

"Okay! I'll see you tomorrow." Eva faded like smoke after look at Ace one last time.

"She does have some skills." Ace smiled lightly.

---

In the morning at Kelby shop top floor.

"You can't find him?!" Asher's angry voice resounded on the entire top floor.

"Yes! He was remarkably quick to escape the city after getting rid of Caleb's party. After my investigation, I found that the inner gate guards see a person with the same features leaving the inner region." A cold yet sweet voice answer. She was Eva or right now Black Fox, she was wearing her usual full-body black armor and her eyes were as cold as ice. She looks nothing like the lively girl who meets Ace last night.

"That fraud run away after he does this to me, damnable! I can't sleep in peace until I torture him. Go and find where he came from, just find anything!" Asher bark while grinding his teeth in anger. He determines and will not stop until he finds Ace.

Black Fox emotionlessly said, "I already did and it appears he was from the Red-Mountain City."

"What!? Red Mountain City." Asher's face turns ashen because he clearly knew where this city was but the actual problem was Red Mountain City was a 1-Star City! Meaning a large size city where he can't mess around wantonly.

"Are you certain that brat was from Red Mountain City?" Asher asks uncertainly.

"Yes I already checked twice and he is apparently from the red mountain city." Answer Eva coldly.

Asher didn't even think about Black Fox can lie to him. Because she was with him for five years and never lies to him or failed her mission even once. She was like a machine that never gets tired or disobeys orders. That's why he trusted her blindly. It never occurs to him that this was Ace and Eva's plan to lead him in the wrong direction and make sure he didn't get in their way.

Asher pulls a long face and becomes extremely frustrated. He was having a hard time believing that someone has escaped his grasps and the person was who makes him smell rat shit! This was his greatest humiliation of life and he can't even get revenge now it made his anger reached a new level.

But he can't go to a 1-star city just to get revenge, right? Even if he goes there where can he find him in that big city? He didn't even know how his mortal nemesis looks like only Caleb knows.

Eva spoke when Asher was about to swallow his disgrace and give up on vengeance, "I also find this note from where he was staying." She gave a white folded paper to Asher.

This small paper was going to be the last straw that broke the camel's back!

Asher brows tightly frown and received the paper, "How's was my GIFT? Hehehe!" Those words were filled with ridicule and scorn.

"DAMNABLE BASTARD!!!" Asher explodes furiously, his handsome face turns black as charcoal and veins pop out on his forehead as if they going to explode anytime. He knew exactly who wrote this letter just by these disdainful words.

"Black Fox! Go and request help from my grandfather. I want that bastard no matter the cost. Even if I have to go to hell myself." Asher roar with a face full of hatred. He finally loses his reasons and never even thought that Ace planned to send him out of the city.

"YES!" Eva vanished after receiving Asher's command, 'Idiot.' She mocks Asher in her heart.

Meanwhile, when Asher was blowing his top, Ace was heading towards the Grant family territory.

Suddenly a gust of wind passed him and a little piece of paper appears in his empty hand. He didn't surprise by this because he knew this was Black Fox.

Ace read the little note and snicker sinisterly, "That idiot really believed it, just like Eva said he would." In the letter was a report on Asher's current actions. After reading he sends a little heavenly qi in the letter and it turns into fragments.

'It's my turn I guess.' Ace activates stealth and vanishes into Grant's family territory.

Grant family was ranked second in the inner region because they have an expert at the peak of Qi Gates realm, just half step away from reaching Qi Foundation Building Realm. He was Asher Grandfather the current family head of the Grant family Rylan Grant.

Qi Foundation Building Realm was the next realm after Qi Gates ream. Only the City Lord was in this realm and because of it his family the Layton Family were ranked first in the inner region.

Ace was currently standing in front of a rundown building.

It was the servant area of the Grant family. All the servants live in this old building. Grant Family didn't allow servants to go outside of their territories because in Grant family eyes they were not people they were mere slaves.

Ace hurriedly went inside the building he knows security isn't tight here, who cares about the security of slaves? So, if one can pass through all the family checkpoints and reach the servants' area there is no security at all.

Ace enter the old building,

The inside was clean but there was some strange smell inside. Ace saw rows of rooms and all the doors have no locks. One can enter as he wishes. This is the treatment Grant's family gave to their servants, they treat them like animals.

Ace felt rage, he didn't think noble families of the inner region were worse than the outer region. At least in the outer region, they didn't treat humans like animals. Actually, they did it just that he didn't know about it yet.

He suppressed his seething anger and quickly goes to the upper floor. Here were fewer rooms than on the 1st floor but these rooms were without any doors and inside were young boys. But their condition was worse than death they were wounded all over their bodies some didn't even have limbs.

These boys were 'sparing partners' for young masters of the Grant family. They have only one job and that is to get beaten. They were like living dummies that helps Grant family younger generation to test their skills. If they died during 'sparing' no one will care. They will be replaced by new ones. There were insignificant stones to sharpen the younger generation of Grant's family.

Ace was here to became a 'Sparing Partner'.

## Chapter 24: Grant Family

Grant Family, Servant Building on the second floor.

Ace saw those seriously injured and lifeless boys not much older than him. He felt intense ferocity in his heart and really wanted to get justice for them but alas he wasn't strong enough.

This was the true face of the cultivation world where strength is supreme.

Ace swallows the rage and moves forward deep into the 2nd floor. All these doorless rooms were occupied by at least two boys, when they saw Ace with their lifeless eyes they didn't react at all, because almost every day new 'sparring partner' will be delivered. So they didn't think about Ace much, he was just another unfortunate one.

Grant Family captures these boys from Wastelands, Wastelands were the lowest level lands of the entire human continent. Therefore, no one cares if the Grant family treats those wastelandians like slaves.

These young boys were personally selected by elders of the family and if they find something was not right with their identity they would kill them without any second thought. But in all these peaceful years they become lazy and their selection became less meticulously.

Because of it, Ace infiltrates this servant building and becomes a 'sparring partner'. He finds an empty room and sits in a corner.

He closed his eyes and begin to ponder over the Dual Shadow Swords technique, he has two years to complete the system mission and in meantime, he needs to get stronger. He has to reach higher levels in his skills and techniques, especially in Dual Shadow Swords it was the hardest to master.

The stealth and silent steps were only stepped away from perfection since they were his most important skills. He also needs to level up the True and False eyes without this mysterious eye skill he can't locate the hidden traps or arrays. And of course, he didn't forget about the final two forms of treasure opening hands, without it he wasn't a true thief.

But in his grand scheme this time the most important skill was Pick-Pocket. When Ace thought of Pick-Pocket he couldn't help but grin mysteriously.

In the evening Ace open his closed eyes because he heard footsteps of three men approaching.

After five minutes' three men come outside Ace's room and one of them exclaimed, "Hmm? Why is there still a person without any injuries here?"

Ace heard this startling voice and finally saw three armored men, they were clearly guards of this servant building who were goofing off when Ace enter the building.

"Hey, little shit was you hiding last time when we were selecting 'sparing partners'?" The second one condemns sinisterly. His name was Aklam.

"He was lucky last time to escape our hand but this time he can't escape. Hehe!" Laugh the third one evilly, his name was Luman.

"Little rat since you're perfectly fine you can be 'sparring partner' of Third Young Miss today, and you have quite a good face so she will definitely 'treats' you well. Haha" the who exclaimed first snickers darkly, he was Julo.

"Take him with others. Let see if you can live to see tomorrow after getting Third Miss 'care'." Order Julo to Aklam behind him.

"Let go little shit." Aklam comes to Ace and was going to grab him forcefully but Ace stands on his own and starts to walk towards the other two guards nonchalantly.

"Oh aren't we full of energy? Let see if you can still even stand after 'practicing' with Third Young Miss." Julo smirk at Ace and starts to select others 'sparing partners' and didn't pay Ace any more attention.

After selecting 10 boys with Ace being one of them. Except for Ace all of them were wounded and has scars on their faces, one of them was shivering visibly while another one was crying his eyes out.

"Only ten?" A dissatisfied voice sounded from outside of the building.

"Head Butler these ten were the only bunch left who can even walk properly. Look we event find a fresh 'piece' for Third Young Miss to play with." Answered Julo respectfully as he pointed his finger towards Ace who seemed impassive. His previous domineering face was replaced with a courteous one.

This person standing outside the servant building has a small and chubby stature, he was a middle-aged man with a short black beard. His name was Kylan Grant and he was the Head Butler of Grant family east district.

Grant's family territory was quite big and it was impossible to monitor all of the territories of the family with little manpower. So the whole Grant Family territory was divided into four districts. East, west, south, north district. Each district has one Protector at peak of Qi Gates Realm and one Head Butler. In the center of all four districts was the main Mansion of the Grant family. In the main Mansion lives, Family Head and his family. These four family districts were divided between the elders of the family.

Head Butler Kylan was here to find new 'sparing partners' for east district young masters. But all of the other 'sparing partners' were gravely injured. Because those youngsters didn't hold back at all, if they were in good mood they would at least spare their life. But if they were in bad mood these wastelandians boys would be beaten to death just to vent their anger.

"New batch isn't here yet?" Ask Head Butler Kylan with clear frustration on his chubby face.

Julo politely answered, "Not yet head butler but I ensure you that it will arrive tomorrow morning."

"Fine, I'll come tomorrow then." Head Butler Kylan sighs helplessly.

"Yes, we will specially select good ones for you head butler." Aklam thumps his chest while giving grantee to the Head butler.

Kylan nodded his head in satisfaction and turn toward ten 'dummies' and said, "You nine will be delivered to others young masters while you in perfect condition will follow me."

Kylan takes Ace and the other nine were taken away by other servants who come with him towards the east district of the Grant family. Ace was scanning the surroundings curiously while walking with Butler Kylan.

East district was the biggest district of the Grant family, and people who live here all held a very high position in the Grant family.

After walking for 5 minutes Ace spotted a beautiful large house, he saw a beautiful garden with colorful flowers outside. Ace was observing the flowers when an angry yet soft voice sounded, "Kylan, where is my sparring partner!?"

"Boy it seems your luck is not very good, it seems Third Young Lady Gracie is angry for some reason." Kylan sniggers darkly while he looked at Ace as if he was a deadman.

As Kylan was talking to Ace, the house closed-door blast opened and a little girl about 5 feet tall with a slender figure, come out. She was Gracie Grant Third Miss of Grant's



family. She held quite a power in Grant's family because she was the niece of Rylan Grant. She has a remarkably willful personality.

When Kylan saw Gracie was storming towards him with a long face, he quickly grabs Ace's hand and move him in front of himself and quickly said, "Young Miss look this is the 'sparring partner' I bought for you today, and he isn't injured at all. He also has quite a face."

Gracie heard Kylan's words and finally shifts her gaze towards Ace. Even she was stunned for a moment after seeing his handsome face especially those shining dark blue eyes; that gave him an unknown charm, with pale skin and long inky hair Ace looks like some young prince.

Gracie has to admit maybe he's the most handsome boy she ever saw. She quickly hides her surprised expression and acts like she didn't move by this sparring partner at all. However, from Ace's soul sense how could she escape? He immediately notices a change in her mood.

"Hmph! What can I do with this little white sheep? He can't even withstand a single strike from me." Gracie snorted and act like she was still in bad mood.

Kylan didn't have Ace's soul sense as cold sweat begins to form on his forehead and quickly said in a panic tone, "Y-young Miss don't look at his face, He is after all from wildness and his body has to be strong if he wants to survive in wastelands." He was afraid that she would want him to become her 'sparring partner' today and hurriedly begin to explain about wastelandians.

It was true that if someone wants to survive in wastelands one has to become a hunter. One could not live in wastelands comfortably like people in the city. They have to hunt for food and fight with those wild demonic beasts to live. That's why they have naturally strong bodies. If not for the poor quality of Qi in wastelands and other strange reasons these wastelandians would've ruled the lands of cities long ago.

Just because of it they didn't have any strong experts and these strong families captured their youngsters wantonly. Some use them to become stepping stones for their young generation like the Grant Family, and others use them as high-quality slaves.

It was also a mystery why the wastelandians never has any Qi Foundation Realm Cultivator.

## **Chapter 25: Thief's Skill Pick-Pocket**

Gracie snorted as she rolls her eyes at Head Butler, "Humph! We'll see about that after I try. Since you bought him here already, I'll forgive you for being late. Now go and don't disturb me, I've learned some new skills that I want to practice." she enters her house after giving Kylan an unfriendly glance.

Kylan pretends to not see anything and quickly warns Ace, "You have to follow Young Miss' every order if you want to live. Don't displease her in any way, now go."

Ace ignores Kylan's warning and follows Gracie with his head down. However, they both didn't notice an astute glint flash past his eyes, 'I didn't think; this Gracie would deliver herself to me this early and so easily.' He thought gloatingly.

Gracie saw Ace following her attentively and couldn't help but nodded in satisfaction after seeing this 'respectful' lad. Because most of the wastelandians would stare at her with hatred and resentment when they first come here.

"Mhmm, A slave should behave just like this." She mutters loudly to aggravate Ace, but he only grins coldly.

She opened a door and Ace saw a big open space in the back of her house. There were sharp sword marks on the ground and rows of weapons were arranged on the side. It was clearly her personal training ground.

Gracie said indifferently, "Quickly don't waste my time and pick any weapon and attack me with everything you have."

Ace didn't move and meekly said, "May I speak few words with Third Lady first?"

Gracie frowns as she knitted her brows after hearing Ace's request, but didn't attack him immediately. she only smiles darkly and said, "Speak but if I don't like what you said, I will cut your tongue so you can't speak anymore."

Ace pretends as if he didn't see her dark smile and said respectfully, "Young Miss here's a thing; ever since I was little, I can use a special skill."

When Gracie heard Ace's words her eyebrow raised a little, she didn't think this barbarian of wastelands can use a special skill. Moreover, she didn't feel any strong Qi in Ace's body, he was clearly a mortal so how could he use a skill?

Gracie can't feel Ace's cultivation base because of Heavenly Qi, only someone with two major cultivation realms higher than Ace can feel his true cultivation base. Others would only think of him as a normal mortal.

That's was also the reason why Ace was not worried about others finding out about his status as a cultivator because someone with two whole realms higher than Ace can't be founded in 2-Star City or even in 1-Star City easily. Of course, he finds out about this after paying Thief Points to the system while gritting his teeth, when he was anxious about this fact.

Furthermore, it's not like mortals can't learn or use the skills, it's just that these kinds of characters were extremely rare and all of them were geniuses among geniuses.

'Could it be this barbarian is a genius?' Gracie promptly shook her head, 'How could someone from wasteland be a genius? Maybe he was just lucky.' This was the only explanation.

However, Gracie was still hooked and said playfully, "Mmm, A 'special skill' you say? Fine show me and if it isn't something special you know what's going to befall on you."

Ace hurriedly shook his head, as if he was in a panic, "Young Miss I didn't dare to use it on you and only need some other person to show it to you."

Ace was showing fear towards Gracie and also probing her character to see if he could really move forwards in the next step of his plan with her or not.

Gracie lost her patience and rebuked angrily, "Now use it already, it doesn't matter if it's me or someone else because if I didn't like what I see, you are dead!"

Ace quivered a little, acting like he was afraid and hurriedly closed his eyes and began to use 'Pick Pocket'. The moment the skill was active, a formless thread shot from his finger straight towards Gracie's waist like an arrow.

Gracie didn't seem to notice that formless thread and stood still in her place waiting for Ace to use his skill. When the formless thread touched her waist, it suddenly disappeared and in Ace's hand appeared a small yellow pouch.

Ace knew this would happen so he wasn't shocked by this but what happens next thoroughly shocks him when he heard a sweet voice in his mind that he didn't hear for quite some time,

"[Pick Pocket succeed. Host steal 2 trash grade pills and 100 ruby coins.]

[Rewards: 0 Thief Points]"

Ace was flabbergasted by this unexpected system announcement, "You're telling me if I can pick someone's pocket, I get TP as a reward?!" He shouted in his mind dumbfoundedly because he didn't know he can earn TP with this skill.

Ace was just acting according to his plan and didn't know that pick-pocket has this kind of use. This skill was his weakest because he didn't practice it much however, recently he has found out that this skill was not a normal skill at all. Because this skill can be used with the 'Soul Qi' as well.

Actually, it works more perfectly with Heavenly Soul Qi than Heavenly Qi, because he didn't have to be close to the target and can use this skill from afar.

Just like now, he has to active pick-pocket with his Soul Qi, and the moment his soul Qi touch's the target it instantly takes the target's most important belongings and sends them to Ace's hand directly. The most astonishing thing was the target can't notice it at all.

Ace found this peculiar side of this skill when he was getting used to his Heavenly Sense. He discovered; he can use the pick-pocket within his Heavenly Sense Range by using soul qi. He was very happy at that time, but he didn't imagine that this skill can help him collect TP.

Ace calms his excited heart because he was in front of Gracie and didn't want her to find something was wrong with his acting.

When Gracie saw the little yellow pouch appear in Ace's hand her eyes went wide and nearly pop out of her eyesockets with shock. She subconsciously touches her waist and bewitches because she didn't find her yellow money pouch. Because it was already in Ace's hand.

Before she could recover from her shock Ace quickly spoke first, "My lady this one apologized for his offense but the Young Lady was the one who gives her command so this lowly one can't disobey her. I hope Young Miss can show some grace and forgive this small person offense."

Ace bows lightly and politely give her yellow pouch back to her. He was shivering a little as if he was afraid she would kill him so he was begging for mercy first.

Gracie finally snapped out of her trance and quickly took her yellow pouch from Ace's hand and stare angrily at him, "YOU! You... dare to steal from me.... and now you dare to beg for forgiveness? T-tell me how you do it... and teach me that skill, then I'll think about not punishing you!" She wasn't angry at all, on the contrary, she was very excited.

'If I learn this kind of skill, with it I can steal from others without them knowing anything.' These were her actual thoughts.

Ace was expecting this so he quickly answered with a panicked face, "Y-young Lady, i-it is not that I don't want to teach you, it's just that I can't teach you or anyone at that. This

is a skill that I learn unknowingly even I don't know how I can do it. This skill came to me when I was five years old."

Gracie's face fell and angry surfaced on it after she heard Ace reply, "Then why did you show it to me if you can't teach it to me?? Do want to steal from me?!" She grips her sword's hilt more strongly. If Ace didn't tell her a reasonable answer she would attack him without holding back.

Ace told her his 'original motive' with a horrified-sicken face, "Young miss I didn't want to steal from you! I showed it to you because I'm not good at fighting and after I came here, I saw all those other 'brothers from wasteland' conditions. I was afraid of death so I thought that if I showed enough value, I can be spared from this fighting and live a little easy life from all those 'brothers' in that building." He shook his head vigorously as he explains his real 'purpose.'

As expected Gracie seems to calm down a bit after she heard Ace's explanation because it was extremely reasonable; if he wants to live, then he has to show his worth,

Gracie also didn't suspect any lie in Ace's answer either. Because she, herself has already killed more than ten wastelandians.

Gracie finally calms down and said in a deep voice, "Then what your mean is; you can steal from others and give those things to me. In return, you want better treatment from those other slaves? Do you think you are in a position to negotiate with me?!"

"Who said I give my stolen thing to Young Miss? If I got caught no one knows where their stolen things are, right? And no one knows I can speak did they, young miss?" He respectfully smiled at Gracie after he said those meaningful yet meaningless words.

Gracie was astounded by Ace's cunningness. 'Is he saying he will be mute in other people's eyes and give all those stolen things to me, and no one knows? But if he betrays me, and spills the beans I will be in huge trouble. So how can I trust him?' She mused.

Ace quickly spoke as if he read her mind, "Young Miss you can plant one of those slave marks on me!"

Once again Gracie was startled by Ace's decisiveness.