

## Chapter 2301

A few days later, the younger twin returned from Golden Sands Mountain.

Like the old shepherd, his eyes looked dull while his movements were stiff. He hadn't said anything ever since he returned.

The villagers deliberately observed him closely and saw some sand in his mouth.

After refusing to eat or drink, he passed away a few days later.

The villagers hid a distance away from the younger twin's grave after burying him.

They wanted to find out if a dead man would crawl out from it. Otherwise, it was just a myth spread by some despicable tomb robbers.

Later that night, the villagers who hid from afar were shocked by the scene before them.

Thump! Thump!

They heard some knocking noises from the grave, followed by the sound of someone prying open a wooden plank.

Crack!

Then, they heard the person break the wooden plank and begin digging the soil.

After merely ten minutes, the grave's surface collapsed, forming a large hole. Slowly, the "dead man" crawled out from the grave!

Witnessing the terrifying scene, a few timid villagers went into shock, while the others were overcome with fear as well.

After crawling out of the grave, the corpse ran speedily toward Golden Sands Mountain and soon disappeared into the darkness.

The villagers eventually went home, yet they continued to shiver in fear for quite some time.

The news traveled fast, and people from nearby villages knew about it very soon. Since then, no one dared to set foot on Golden Sands Mountain.

Moreover, because the road toward Golden Sands Mountain was buried in golden sand, the villagers could not head there even if they wanted to.

The restaurant owner paused for a while and continued, "Speaking of which, there's something else which is peculiar. There are seven roads that lead to Golden Sands Mountain. While six are buried in golden sand, the remaining one is always clean and accessible. Nonetheless, it is a treacherous mountain trail. So far, not many villagers have successfully left the village using it. Some villagers even claimed they saw spirits of soldiers passing by at night. Since then, we always say that the road is specifically reserved for the spirits."

After listening to it, Sole Wolf thought for a while and asked, "Have you guys seen any of those who died after going to Golden Sands Mountain again? Did they come down from Golden Sands Mountain?"

The restaurant owner shook his head in response. "Nope. They disappeared as soon as they came back to life."

Sole Wolf continued to ask, "Do you know a place called Ghoul Cliff near Golden Sands Mountain?"

The restaurant owner shook his head again and replied, "Ghoul Cliff? I grew up here but have never heard of it."

Sole Wolf said, "It's okay. Could you please

let me know the direction of the trail that leads to the mountain?"

The restaurant owner shot him a helpless face and advised him, "Are you that determined to head toward Golden Sands Mountain?"

Unperturbed, Sole Wolf said, "Just let me know the direction, and don't meddle with things that don't concern you."

Since his advice fell on deaf ears, the restaurant owner said, "Let me tell you the truth. You guys can't get to Gold Mountain even if I lead you to it. Since the trail is too treacherous, only Crippled Williams successfully went up the mountain and returned safely. Even I couldn't do it."

Sole Wolf asked, "Oh? Who is Crippled Williams? Why is he so special?"

The restaurant owner explained, "Crippled Williams is the elder brother who came down from Gold Mountain. He is the only survivor we know over the years."

Intrigued, Sole Wolf continued to inquire, "I see. Please tell me where Crippled Williams' house is."

Staring at him, the restaurant owner shook his head and heaved. "Young man, why must you look for trouble? I mean, it's not a place for you to look for excitement. Instead, you'll lose your life there."

As Sole Wolf had lost his patience, he took out a pile of cash and threw it on the counter. "Cut the crap. Just tell me where Crippled Williams' house is."

The restaurant owner was stunned upon seeing the money. Good fortune has come to me!

As expected, there was no way he would let go of the opportunity to make big money.

## Chapter 2302

He can die however he wants to as long as he gives me money. After all, I've tried my best to stop him.

With that, the restaurant owner told Sole Wolf the location of Crippled Williams' house.

As soon as Sole Wolf got the answer, he walked out of the kitchen and gazed at Zeke.

Zeke stood up and left with everyone else.

Later, Sole Wolf asked, "Zeke, did you hear the conversation between the restaurant owner and me?"

Zeke nodded and said, "Yes, I heard it."

Sole Wolf added, "I suspect something is amiss about Crippled Williams!"

Zeke agreed, "Yes, I'm thinking the same too. Let's meet Crippled Williams!"

"Okay!"

With the directions given by the restaurant owner, they soon found Crippled William's house.

Although the village was remote, most houses were made of tiles and bricks.

Judging from his mud brick house, they presumed that Crippled Williams was poverty-stricken.

The door was half the size of those of other houses. As they looked through the gap, they saw that the messy courtyard was full of grass and rubbish.

Moreover, the stink that came from the toilet almost suffocated them.

As they walked into the dilapidated courtyard, Sole Wolf shouted, "Crippled Williams, are you home?"

However, a silence ensued.

It was the same even after Sole Wolf shouted again.

With his eyebrows furrowed, Sole Wolf came up to the door and knocked on it. "Crippled Williams, are you home? Please come out. You have guests."

Creak!

When someone opened the broken door, the stench instantly filled the air, and many blowflies flew out of the house.

Cough, cough, cough!

Even Sole Wolf, who used to hide among corpses for a few days, couldn't stand the stench.

Moments later, a "beggar" came out from the house.

It wasn't an exaggeration to say that he was even more unkempt than a beggar.

The man was in tattered clothes and looked disheveled. Also, parts of his body that weren't covered by clothes were covered by dirt instead.

There were wrinkles all over his face, and his eyes were soulless.

He said, revealing his yellow and dirty teeth, "Why did you scream and disturb my sleep? D\*mn it!"

Zeke frowned and asked, "Are you Crippled Williams?"

He nodded and replied, "Yes, I'm Crippled Williams. Why were you looking for me?"

Zeke quickly explained, "I heard that among all the villagers, you're the only one who can go up Golden Sands Mountain."

Crippled Williams kept his head up high upon hearing that. After all, it was the only thing he could be proud of.

"Yes. I'm the only person familiar with the trail leading to Golden Sands Mountain. The trail is very secluded, so much so that even a god can't discover it!"

Zeke said, "Great. In that case, we'd like to invite you to lead us to Golden Sands Mountain."

Much to his surprise, Crippled Williams grew nervous upon hearing it and turned around to head back to his room.

Sole Wolf quickly stopped him and said, "Stay right there. What are you doing?"

Crippled Williams glared at Sole Wolf and said, "Get out of my way."

"You motherf\*cker..."

Just as Sole Wolf was about to burst with rage, Zeke gazed at him, signaling for him to stand down.

Then, Zeke asked, "What do you mean? Are you not willing to bring us to Golden Sands Mountain?"

Crippled Williams replied mockingly, "You'll only have a ten-percent chance to survive for going up Golden Sands Mountain. I have a fifty-fifty chance. In other words, you want me to lead you to your death. Do you think I'll do this? Even though I look like a living dead, I still wish to stay alive and don't want to end my life so soon."

After Crippled Williams finished, Sole Wolf said, "I'm sorry, but you have no choice but to go with us."

Unperturbed, Crippled Williams said defiantly, "I'm sorry, too. I'm afraid I can't do as you wish. There is nothing you can do about it. I would rather be killed by you guys than face the things on Golden Sands Mountain."

Instinctively, Zeke asked, "What are the things on Golden Sands Mountain? Why are you so scared?"

As soon as Zeke brought it up, Crippled Williams wrapped his arms around his head and squatted down.

Then, he murmured in a trembling voice, "I don't know. I have no idea. Please don't ask me. I won't tell anyone. Please don't punish me. I beg you not to punish me..."

Crippled Williams' insanity began to engulf him once again. He became more agitated and showed symptoms of going into shock.

Zeke immediately took out his Ammo Needle and started treating Crippled Williams, forcing him to calm down.

The Ammo Needle had incredible results in suppressing pain and tranquilizing a patient. Five minutes after the treatment, Crippled Williams finally calmed down and slowly regained his sanity.

Zeke got straight to the point. "Tell me, what conditions do you have to take me to the Golden Sands Mountain?"

Anger gripped Crippled Williams at Zeke's persistence. "Do you not understand my words? I already told you. I won't take you to Golden Sands Mountain even if you kill me."

Ares had lost all his patience with the crippled man's stubbornness. "Let's not waste our breath on him. Since he has a death wish, let's grant it to him."

Next, Ares unsheathed his sword and pointed it at Crippled Williams' neck. "Last chance. If you refuse to take us,,I'll slice off your head."

However, no sign of fear crossed Crippled Williams' face. "All right, do it quick then. My brother has been complaining to me in my dreams that he'd been feeling chilly lately and asked me to bring him a blanket. It looks like he predicted that I'll soon meet him."

Ares glanced at Zeke, waiting for his order.

"Even if he doesn't lead us, we can find the way ourselves. We don't have to beg him."

Zeke shook his head. "Things are not as simple as you think."

He shifted his gaze to Sole Wolf. "Sole Wolf, how much money do you have? Take it all out."

Sole Wolf was speechless. Crippled Williams would rather die than lead us. What makes Zeke think he'll care about this bit of money?

Despite his thoughts, Sole Wolf didn't dare to disobey Zeke's orders and took out all the money on him.

Unexpectedly, Crippled Williams' eyes sparkled when he spotted the money. His face trembled fervently from excitement.

He reached out his trembling hand to touch the money. "So much money... There's so much money..." he kept mumbling to himself.

Sole Wolf and the rest were stunned. It seemed like they had underestimated the power of money.

Sole Wolf soon snapped out of his shock and swiftly pocketed the money before Crippled Williams could touch it.

"Want that?"

Crippled Williams nodded. "I want it! Of course, I want it!"

Sole Wolf negotiated, "Then agree to our condition and lead us to the Golden Sands Mountain."

Crippled Williams hesitated briefly before accepting their offer readily. "All right, deal."

With that, Sole Wolf threw the small bag of money to Crippled Williams.

Crippled Williams instantly pocketed the bag. His hands clenched the pocket forcefully as though someone might snatch it from him.

At that point, Zeke and the others realized that money was more important than life to Crippled Williams.

Zeke said, "Now that you've accepted our payment, you'll have to fulfill your part of the agreement. I'll cut your head off if you go back on your words."

Crippled Williams replied, "Of course, even I have that bit of trustworthiness, but I have some conditions if you want me to lead you to the mountain."

Zeke said, "Name it." Crippled Williams warned, "I have three important principles. I have never broken them, and the three of you are to follow suit. If you don't abide by my principles, I'll return the money to you, and you can take my life if you want."

Zeke repeated, "Name it."

Crippled Williams listed, "There are three kinds of people that aren't allowed up the mountain with me. Firstly, pregnant women. Secondly, children. Thirdly..."

After a short pause, his gaze landed on Zeke. "Thirdly, anyone with the last name Williams isn't allowed up the mountain."

Zeke and the rest were shocked.

We can understand the first two conditions since pregnant women and children will most likely die if they trek up the mountain. That's perfectly understandable. However, what's with the third condition? Does he have a grudge against the Williams family?

Zeke asked, "Tell us the reason you can't take members of the Williams family up the mountain with you."

Crippled Williams replied, "Simple because I'm also a Williams."

Zeke questioned, "What does that have anything to do with not bringing a Williams up the mountain?"

Crippled Williams said, "Trust me when I say it does. We'll leave now if you agree to my conditions. If you don't... Sorry, but please don't disturb me after this."

#### Chapter 2304

Zeke agreed, "Okay, we agree. There isn't anyone with the surname Williams here."

Suddenly, Crippled Williams shouted in rage, "Liar! All of you are liars! Get lost! I'm not doing business with you. I never do business with liars."

Crippled Williams turned around and left.

Zeke and the rest were confused as they couldn't understand the reason for Crippled Williams' sudden rage.

To them, it was just a white lie.

Zeke realized perhaps Crippled Williams had encountered liars before, and it left a traumatic scar on his psyche. That could be the reason for his hatred for liars.

Taking in a deep breath, Zeke stopped Crippled Williams. "We didn't lie to you."

Crippled Williams stared Zeke dead in his eyes and said, "Do you take me for an idiot? Do you think I can't read your name? You won't die peacefully! A bunch of stupid liars!"

Crippled Williams' extreme reaction piqued Zeke's curiosity. "You know someone's name just by looking at them?"

Crippled Williams huffed, "I can't, but I recognize Williamses. If I'm not wrong, you're Williams."



Zeke and the others were baffled. What skill is this? How did he discern those with Williams as their last name?

Nevertheless, Zeke was not buying it. He didn't believe Crippled Williams could distinguish it with his eyes alone.

I'm sure he has some other ways. Now, things are getting interesting.

Zeke was getting more interested in Crippled Williams' skill.

Zeke conceded, "Alright. I admit I'm a Williams. I won't go with you, so just bringing them will do."

Crippled Williams still shook his head. "That won't do. You might stealthily follow us."

In truth, Zeke was planning on doing just that.

Zeke asked, "How about I promise I won't follow you? How do I get you to trust me?"

After contemplating briefly, Crippled Williams finally uttered, "Follow me."

"To where?" Sole Wolf asked cautiously.

Crippled Williams answered, "Just follow me and stop asking so many questions."

Sole Wolf was still worried, but Zeke shot him a glance, getting Sole Wolf to stop asking.

Zeke followed Crippled Williams out of his house to the cemetery at the east end of the village.

Zeke was about to ask Crippled Williams the reason for bringing him there when the latter suddenly dropped to his knees in front of one of the tombstones.

"I have come to see you, my brother. I was in a rush this time, so I came empty handed. Please forgive me. I need your help to monitor him. If he takes a step away from your tombstone then inform me immediately. Don't worry. They gave me a lot of money. I'll pay someone to clean your tombstone with it, but you have to watch this guy first."

Crippled Williams shot to his feet after his speech.

With a puzzled look, Zeke questioned, "This is the grave of your twin brother who died on the Golden Sands Mountain?"

Crippled Williams nodded. "That's right."

Zeke said, "Didn't your brother's corpse come back to life before fleeing to the Golden Sands Mountain, and it hasn't returned till this day? Does this grave have a body?"

Crippled Williams glared at Zeke with viciousness in his eyes. "Shut up! His corpse might not be here, but his soul is. It will be here for all eternity. His soul will be watching you. If you dare to make a move, he'll inform me at the very first moment. I won't bring you to Golden Sands Mountain even if you beg me after. It'll be best if you stay here obediently and don't leave this spot."

Zeke nodded, "Don't worry. I won't walk around."

Crippled Williams left a few more orders before whirling around and leaving.

Once Crippled Williams was out of sight, Zeke began to study the tombstone..

Meanwhile, Crippled Williams reached his home shortly after. "Okay. We can go now."

Sole Wolf asked curiously, "Where's Zeke? Where have you taken him to?"

Crippled Williams said, "Want to know? I can send you there, and you can stay there with him. You won't be following us to Golden Sands Mountain then."

## Chapter 2305

Sole Wolf wasn't worried about Zeke's safety. Crippled Williams is no threat to the Great Marshal.

Sole Wolf looked up at the sun and probed, "Should we start our hike tomorrow? It's already too late today. The sun will have set. by the time we reach Golden Sands Mountain. It'll be dangerous then."

Crippled Williams was annoyed. "Scared? You don't have to come with me if you are. Tell you guys what. The only reason I'm willing to take you to the mountain is that I'm in the mood, but I might change my mind tomorrow."

Sole Wolf and Ares exchanged glances at his words.

In all honesty, Sole Wolf didn't mind heading up the mountain at that instant. After all, the faster he got there, the higher the chances of Killer Wolf's survival.

The only reason he asked was to probe Crippled Williams. Crippled Williams wants us to reach Golden Sands Mountain by nightfall. Does he have an ulterior motive?

Their wariness toward Crippled Williams heightened.

Sole Wolf said, "Let's go then. We'll follow you. Better to get there as soon as we can."

Crippled Williams hobbled as he led them at the front.

Even though one of his legs was lame, his walking speed wasn't any slower than that of any other average person.

Their hike wasn't fast, but it wasn't too slow either.

With their speed, they would reach Golden Sands Mountain just after nightfall.

Meanwhile, Zeke had exuded some of his energy and was patiently scanning the tombstone.

After a round of scrutinizing, Zeke confirmed the grave was empty. I don't see a bone in there, let alone a corpse.

Above the mound, however, he caught something familiar. These are cursed parasitic worms!

Zeke's guard went up when he sensed the

cursed parasitic worms.

Our motive here is to search for Cesar and rescue Killer Wolf. Cesar is most likely the elder of the Black Muraco Clan. So what does it mean? The discovery of a cursed parasitic worm on the tomb of Crippled Williams' brother. It means Crippled Williams is probably working with Cesar. The phenomena on the Golden Sands Mountain is most likely related to Cesar. I'm sure Crippled Williams is using the cursed parasitic worm to monitor me..

After a thorough scan of the entire grave, Zeke soon found the cursed parasitic worm.

It looked like some sort of spider but was odd-looking with a fiery red pattern on its back.

Zeke didn't dare to risk killing the insect with force. If I deal with the cursed parasitic worm forcefully, that worm will inform Crippled Williams. My plan will be a bust then.

After mulling it over, the Progenitor of White Muraco Clan came to his mind.

It's best to use a cursed parasitic worm to deal with another cursed parasitic worm. Zeke called for White with his telepathy.

Zeke asked, "Whitey, have you and Dawnie returned to White Muraco Clan safely?"

White answered, "Yep, we just got back."

Perhaps White was grateful to Zeke for allowing it to bring Dawnie back with it, so it didn't object to being called Whitey.

Zeke said, "That's great. I need your help."

White questioned, "What do you need my help with?"

Zeke answered, "I want you to force a cursed parasitic worm to submit to you."

White immediately complained, "Hang on. I just forced a submission from another cursed parasitic worm. I'm exhausted. My strength is at an all-time low. I won't have the energy to get up even if you put a female beside me. Yet, you want me to force another worm to submit to me now? Do you want me to die from exhaustion?"

Zeke hurriedly explained, "Rest assured. This one is weak. I trust that you can easily overpower it."

White mocked, "Now, listen carefully, Zeke. You can't take advantage of me like this. Nothing you say will work this time. I don't want to risk my life working for you."

Zeke sighed. "What a pity."

## Chapter 2306

White's curiosity poked its head out. "Pity? What pity? What is there to pity?"

Zeke answered, "The cursed parasitic worms have been around for thousands of years. All great empires eventually fall. There's a quick way to return to the limelight, but now because of you, your clan members will fall after a hundred years and eventually die out. Don't you think that's a pity?"

White said, "Hey, Zeke. What nonsense are you spewing? I already have the Dragon Bloodline in my hands. The cursed parasitic worms shall rise to glory and won't die by my hands, so don't curse me like that."

Zeke returned, "Who said you have the Dragon Bloodline in your hands? Dawnie isn't young anymore. I'm finding a husband for her. In fact, I've already set up a blind date for her. I'll send her back to her hometown to meet with the guy. Say, do you think it's better if you inform Dawnie or I give her a call?"

Crack!

Zeke was taken aback by the noise. "What's that sound? Talk to me, Whitey. Why are you staying silent?"

White said, "Fine. I'll tell you what sound that was. That's the sound of me grinding my teeth in rage. Do you know what I want to do now? I want to skin you, drink your blood, and eat your flesh! Desplicable, shameless, and vulgar! How could you be so shameless? Yet, you still have the face to call yourself the Great Marshal. You're the disgrace of Eurasians."

Zeke said, "Oh, I see you're having fun cussing me out. It seems our deal is off the table. All right then. It looks like it won't be possible to have you inform Dawnie about her blind date. I'll have to give her a call myself then."

"Wait!" White shouted. "Zeke, you agreed to let Dawnie stay at the White Muraco Clan for a while, so how could you go back on your words now? Does your conscience not hurt? A great marshal with such a shameless attitude. Aren't you afraid of the Eurasians' contempt when they hear about it?"

Zeke said, "Quit your nonsense and pick a choice quickly. I don't have time to wait for you."

White was infuriated. "Ah! What sins have I committed in my past life to have met a ruffian like you in this life? I agree, okay?"

Zeke smiled. "Now, that's a good kid."

White yelled, "Shut up! Don't utter anything irrelevant. I feel like puking at your voice. Give it to me straight. Which worm do you want me to control?"

Zeke answered, "The cursed parasitic worm is about six feet from me. I can feel that it isn't that strong, so it's probably a normal cursed parasitic worm. Can you control it remotely?"

White extended its senses briefly and said, "I can do it."

Zeke said, "Do it later. There's something I have to warn you. The owner of the worm has given it an order to watch me. It will report to its owner if I make any movement, and that will put a dent in my plan. Hence, you're going to have to force its submission before it can report to its owner."

White said, "Got it. I'll try my best."

Zeke was still worried. "You don't sound convincing. You can't just try your best. You have to succeed. If my plan fails, I'll send Dawnie to the blind date all the same."

White said impatiently. "Fine. I got it already! You'll have to be the middleman if I'm doing this remotely. I'll control your body and try to elicit a resonance with it. All you have to do next is space out. Let go of your mind and allow me to control your body."

Zeke nodded.

Soon, Zeke felt an attack on his consciousness.

He knew that it was White trying to control his body, so he didn't resist and gave it up to White.

As he let go, his consciousness slowly faded into darkness.

## Chapter 2307

After an unknown amount of time, light entered Zeke's eyes as he regained consciousness.

As soon as he recovered his senses, he asked eagerly, "Whitey, was it successful?"

Unexpectedly, the Progenitor chuckled.

Zeke frowned. "Whitey, why the f\*ck are you laughing? Was it successful or not?"

The Progenitor began laughing more hysterically. It was practically tilting its head back as it guffawed.

D\*mn it!

Zeke was anxious to know the result, so he directly gave it a mental whip. "Answer me. Was it successful or not?"

At that, the Progenitor swiftly replied, "Successful. Successful. Of course, it was successful."

Finally, Zeke could put his mind at rest. "Then why are you laughing?"

The Progenitor answered, "When I took control of your body earlier, I checked your memories too. I did not expect you to be an abandoned child from a rich family. You even used to beg for food on the streets and nearly died from hunger. The funniest thing I saw was when your fiancée dumped you, not to mention that she did it during the wedding. Hahaha! If the public knows their idol that they revere actually has such an unpleasant past, do you think your reputation will be tarnished?"

Zeke's face was grim. Again, he whipped the Progenitor with his mind.

"Ah!" it wailed in agony. "I'm sorry. I was wrong. Stop hitting me!"

Zeke uttered, "Keep an eye on this cursed parasitic worm. Do not put your guard down before I come back. If its master asks about its condition, instruct the parasitic worm to answer its master that everything is fine. Do you understand me?"

"Yes. Yes, I understand." "Good."

After saying that, Zeke turned on his heels and went to track Crippled Williams and the others' trail.

By the time he returned to Crippled Williams' house, the latter had already left with the others.

Fortunately, Sole Wolf knew Zeke would go back there to track their whereabouts, so he deliberately left a trace of energy at the scene.

By following the energy trail, Zeke caught up with Sole Wolf's team.

He kept a safe distance between himself and the team, communicating with Sole Wolf using telepathy. "Sole Wolf, how's the situation? Is there any unusual occurrence?"

Sole Wolf replied, "Everything is normal. Crippled Williams did not do anything suspicious."

"Okay. You must be extra careful. I found a cursed parasitic worm at Crippled Williams' brother's grave, and Crippled Williams instructed the cursed parasitic worm to monitor me. I have strong reasons to suspect that Crippled Williams is colluding with Cesar. The peculiar events on Golden Sands Mountain must all be Cesar's doings."

"Hah!" Sole Wolf sneered. "I've been guessing that Crippled Williams is tainted."

It is indeed as I've imagined. Zeke, don't worry. Crippled Williams does not pose a threat to us."

Zeke exhorted, "You mustn't let your guard down. Let Ares and the others know about this too."

Sole Wolf answered, "Understood!"

With their team's unique hand sign system, he directly gestured to everyone, sending the message to others that Crippled Williams was problematic.

The others immediately grasped the message and became more vigilant.

Throughout the journey, the team discovered that all six main roads leading to the higher part of the mountain were indeed blocked by sand. The layers of sand had accumulated to an average

man's height. If an ordinary person stepped foot on those routes, they would undoubtedly be caught up and drowned in the sea of sand.

Sole Wolf asked Crippled Williams in curiosity, "Is there a desert nearby?"

The latter sniggered. "Desert? We are in the central plains. There's no desert around here!"

"If there isn't any desert nearby, where did all this sand come from?"

"I do not have the answer either. All right. We've arrived at the only road leading up to Golden Sands Mountain. Subsequently, all of you will have to shut up and follow closely behind me. Do not blame me if your carelessness leads to your death," Crippled Williams said while pointing at the route ahead, which led up to Golden Sands Mountain.

Then, everyone turned to look in the direction where his finger was pointed at.

## Chapter 2308

The route ahead was more fitted to be termed as a steep slope instead of a road because the path was extremely narrow.

Even the lanes in the countryside were in better condition as the narrowest part of the route could only allow one person to cross at a time, and the person would have to walk sideways.

Moreover, the slope was scattered with small pieces of rocks. The slightest mistake would cause a person to slip and fall.

Naturally, Sole Wolf and the others could effortlessly cross the slope.

They wondered if Crippled Williams, who was disabled, could climb up the slope.

Crippled Williams gazed at the path ahead and said wistfully, "This road is more challenging than any other road you've taken. Perhaps it is even more perilous than all hazardous areas combined! So, do all of you dare to climb? You can still choose to back out before we journey further." Sole Wolf teased, "If even a cripple like you aren't afraid, wouldn't it reflect badly on us if we're scared since that will mean we are worse than a cripple?"

Crippled Williams glowered at Sole Wolf in anger. "Cripple? Haha. I am much more adept at climbing this road than all of you who can walk normally."

"That's enough. Stop bluffing. Just lead the way, and we'll see for ourselves if you're speaking the truth!"



"Deal! I'll show you what I'm capable of today!"

Then, Crippled Williams took the lead to climb the slope while Sole Wolf and the others trailed closely behind him.

To Sole Wolf and the others' astonishment, Crippled Williams was not lying after all.

Despite not walking as fast as an ordinary person on flat grounds, Crippled Williams was exceptionally quick in covering the distance of the slope. He could accurately adjust his posture according to the terrain at a speed not different from a normal person.

In fact, he was even more agile in crossing most narrow areas than an ordinary person. Not long after, they successfully crossed the slope and arrived at the foot of Golden Sands Mountain.

Sole Wolf and the other team members looked up at the mountain's peak, only to realize that the summit was much taller than they had imagined. The mountaintop was hidden among the clouds.

Crippled Williams gazed upward at the sky and uttered, "All right. This is Golden Sands Mountain. My job is done. I'll be going back now."

He turned around and was about to leave after saying that.

"Hold on! Aren't you climbing up the mountain with us?" Sole Wolf hastily called out to Crippled Williams.

The latter replied, "Haha. We made a deal. My task was to bring all of you to the foot of Golden Sands Mountain. I did not promise to accompany you further."

"Let me ask you. Do you know about Ghoul Cliff?"

Crippled Williams nodded. "I do."

Sole Wolf, Ares, Nameless, and the others turned agitated at once.

"Hurry up and tell us the location of Ghoul Cliff!"

"Why don't you lead us straight to Ghoul Cliff?" one of them suggested.

The sooner they locate Ghoul Cliff, the higher the chance for Killer Wolf to survive.

Crippled Williams voiced, "Don't get too excited just yet. Let me make myself clear before I say anything else. I am unsure if the Ghoull Cliff you mentioned is the same Ghoull Cliff I'm referring to."

The others were slightly stunned. "What do you mean by that?"

Crippled Williams explained, "There are indeed a lot of cliffs around here, but only a few are named. Among these cliffs, none of them is called Ghoull Cliff. However, I do know of a cliff with over thousand or even ten thousand bodies buried underneath. That's why I personally call that cliff Ghoull Cliff. As to whether that is the same Ghoull Cliff you're looking for, I do not know."

Sole Wolf asked in surprise, "Oh? Why are there over ten thousand bodies underneath the cliff?"

Crippled Williams elaborated, "That's a long story to tell. The tale happened in an ancient dynasty a few hundred years ago. During that time, many people were actively migrating. One of the migrating colonies consisting of ten thousand people coincidentally passed through this cliff. At that time, a river flowed underneath the cliff. Due to the low temperature there, the river's surface was coated with a thick layer of ice all year long, providing a safe passageway for people and carts to travel. On normal days, the villagers around there would cross the ice surface like a road. Everything was fine and peaceful for decades."

## Chapter 2309

Crippled Williams paused briefly before continuing, "However, the weather was not favorable during the year of the large-scale migration. Due to the warmer climate, the layer of ice on the river's surface became thinner and could not bear the weight of a colony with ten thousand people. The ice shattered when the colony arrived in the middle of the river. Everyone fell into the river and either drowned or froze to death. There are at least ten thousand bodies underneath the river flowing under the cliff. That's why I call it the Ghoull Cliff."

Sole Wolf quickly said in agitation, "The Ghoull Cliff we are looking for is most probably the same place you are describing. Please bring us to Ghoull Cliff because we have something very important to do there."

Crippled Williams refused him outright. "No way, no way! I disagree! We made a deal earlier. I have no obligation to bring you to Ghoull Cliff. Let me give you a piece of advice. Do not go to Ghoull Cliff unless there is a necessity. If you go there..." He lowered his voice and added in a mysterious tone, "I assume you all have heard of the presence of a devil who can

devour humans' souls on Golden Sands Mountain. It is highly probable that Ghoull Cliff is the den of that soul-devouring devil. Do you think you'll survive going into the devil's den?"

Sole Wolf replied, "Soul-devouring devil? That is pure nonsense. Don't worry. Even if there is a devil, we can defeat him. Hurry up and bring us to Ghouel Cliff now."

"No way, no way!" Crippled Williams continued shaking his head in refusal. "I still have a long life to live. I'm not going to accompany all of you to die."

In the end, Sole Wolf took out two stacks of cash from his pocket and showed Crippled Williams the money. "Bring us to Ghouel Cliff, and these two stacks of cash will be yours."

Crippled Williams' eyes shone at the sight of the money.

He contemplated for a few moments before gritting his teeth and said, "Okay. I'll bring you there, but all of you must listen to me. Also, if we encounter danger, I'll ditch you all and flee on my own. None of you can blame me if that happens."

"Rest assured. Not only will we not become your burden, but we'll even help you to escape... if we truly stumble into a dire situation beyond our abilities."

Crippled Williams took the stacks of cash. "Deal!"

With the others following him, he walked half a circle around the bottom of the mountain and halted beside a pine at last.

The pine, with an extremely broad, flat topped crown, was the only greenery on Golden Sands Mountain. The other areas were covered in sand.

Crippled Williams uttered, "We'll climb up from here. There will be a cave halfway up the mountain, and we'll stop there."

"Okay," everyone else replied.

Crippled Williams led the group again, climbing in front.

Sole Wolf and the others trod on his heels.

Golden Sands Mountain was similarly layered with sand. Due to the soft texture of the surface, one would slip and fall if one was not careful.

Nevertheless, the journey was child's play to Sole Wolf and the other team members.

Initially, Sole Wolf thought Crippled Williams would face trouble climbing the mountain that time around. However, the latter yet again exceeded his expectations.

Crippled Williams was very familiar with the terrain there, to the extent of recognizing the placement of every stone and the location of every pit.

His speed was even comparable to Sole Wolf and the others.

Evidently, Crippled Williams frequented that place.

That observation prompted Sole Wolf and the other team members to grow more puzzled. Why does Crippled Williams come here so often when he knows this is a forbidden area?

Their doubts toward Crippled Williams intensified.

Around half an hour later, the group finally arrived in the middle of the mountain.

Just as Crippled Williams had stated, there was indeed a cave there.

The cave was deep and dark. No one could see anything beyond the entrance, much less the other end of the cave.

Sole Wolf glanced at the cave's interior before asking, "Will we reach Ghoul Cliff if we make our way through this cave?"

"Nope." Crippled Williams shook his head.

"There's only a one in a thousand chance for you to reach Ghoul Cliff if you venture into this cave."

"Why?" Lone Wolf and the others were baffled. "Don't tell me there is more than one exit for this cave?"

Crippled Williams nodded. "That's right. This cave's interior is extremely complex and branches out to multiple different smaller caves. I am the only person alive who knows the correct way to reach Ghoul Cliff. No one else has this capability."

## Chapter 2310

Sole Wolf took a deep breath, inhaling a mouthful of the dusty air. "All right. Please show us the way."

Crippled Williams regarded the team with a solemn expression. "I'll repeat this one last time. You all must listen to me after we go inside. I will not bear the responsibility if any of you goes the wrong way. Moreover, we may lose our lives should we take the incorrect path."

Sole Wolf replied, "Sure."

Crippled Williams added, "If any danger befalls us when we're inside, I advise you all to run for your lives and leave the others behind. If you help the troubled person, both of you will certainly die. However, if one of you focuses on escaping, there may still be a chance to survive."

Sole Wolf said, "Okay."

Crippled Williams took a deep breath to brace himself. "All right. Let's go in."

Walking in the front, he ventured forward slowly and cautiously.

Soon, all of them were engulfed by darkness. Crippled Williams took out his portable torchlight.

Instinctively, Sole Wolf and the others wanted to switch on their torchlight as well.

However, Crippled Williams suddenly yelled, "Stop! Do not turn on the torchlight!"

Sole Wolf and the other team members were puzzled. "Why?"

Crippled Williams answered, "This is the devil's territory. Do you plan to make us an easy target by illuminating all the torch lights and inviting the devil to attack us? It is sufficiently bright by relying only on my torchlight."

Although Sole Wolf and the others did not believe in the devil's existence, their most urgent task on hand was for Crippled Williams to lead them to Ghoul Cliff so that they could rescue Killer Wolf.

Therefore, they conceded and switched off their torch lights as Crippled Williams had instructed.

They proceeded carefully ahead. After a short while, they reached the first intersection.

The cave branched out into four tunnels that would lead them in four different directions.

Crippled Williams went into the tunnel on the leftmost side without hesitation.

The group moved along that tunnel for approximately ten more minutes before arriving at another intersection.

Crippled Williams led them into the second tunnel from the right.

They walked for another thirty minutes and stumbled into seven or eight more intersections.

The number of branching tunnels at the cave junctions was irregular. Some split into four tunnels, while others branched into seven. One could never memorize the correct route without experiencing the journey repetitively.

Sole Wolf's sense of foreboding intensified the further they progressed. He noticed the apparent man-made carving marks on the wall of the cave.

Are these caves sculptured by man instead of being naturally formed?

He expressed the doubt in his mind by voicing, "Crippled Williams, it seems to me that someone created this cave. Who do you think they are, and why did they put so much effort into fashioning such a large construction?"

Crippled Williams replied in annoyance, "How should I know? Anyway, I didn't carve this cave."

His attitude irritated Sole Wolf, who decided to be patient and tolerant for the sake of locating Killer Wolf as soon as possible.

And so, they proceeded forward while stopping a few times during the journey for around two hours. Finally, they reached a dead end. The path ahead of them was blocked with no other way out.

Sole Wolf and the others began grumbling.

"Hey, what's the matter with you, Crippled Williams? Why is there no more road ahead? Don't tell me you lead us down the wrong way!"

"D\*mn it. Do you think you can handle the consequences for impeding our matter?"

Crippled Williams frowned. "How come we took the wrong route? There's no way I would misremember it. You guys wait here for a moment. I'll survey the surroundings."

With that, he turned on his heels and retraced his steps outward.

Wariness gnawed at Sole Wolf as he stared at Crippled Williams' departing figure from behind.

He suddenly patted his forehead and shouted, "Crippled Williams, stop right there!"

Crippled Williams halted in his tracks, turned his head around, and flashed an evil smirk at Sole Wolf.

Dread surged within Sole Wolf at the sight of Crippled Williams' smile. His heart was in his mouth.

Boom!

The cave shook terribly all of a sudden. Then, a large boulder fell from above, completely sealing off the tunnel's entrance.

Sole Wolf and the others were trapped inside while Crippled Williams stood outside.

Damn it!

## Chapter 2311

Immediately, Sole Wolf and the others hardened their faces.

Crippled Williams has been plotting against us since the beginning.

Gritting his teeth, Sole Wolf shouted in the direction of the tunnel entrance, "How dare you scheme against us, Crippled Williams! We've underestimated you."

"I'm sorry, but you're mistaken. I did not scheme against you guys. I do intend to bring you to Ghoul Cliff. However, I'm only going to drag your corpses all the way there!" Crippled Williams replied.

Sole Wolf snorted. "If you know what's good for you, you'll let us go now. Otherwise, I swear we'll rip you apart when we get out of here!"

"Tsk, ts! You can't blame me for what happened to you. I told you not to come, but you wouldn't listen to me. You only have your own obstinacy to blame. Maybe now you've finally learned your lesson." Sole Wolf sneered in response because he knew he and the others could break the boulder effortlessly with their energy.

Yet, just when they were about to do so, they heard a rustling sound behind them.

Upon turning around vigilantly, Sole Wolf and the others noticed the appearance of countless little holes in the wall of the cave, from where thousands of bee-like creatures emerged.

Like a dark cloud, the creatures hovered and buzzed above the group's heads, causing the men to shudder as if they had trypophobia.

Before Sole Wolf and the others could react, the creatures swooped down in an attempt to attack them.

Hence, they formed an energy barrier almost subconsciously to protect themselves from the assault.

As a result, the bee-like creatures were repelled, failing to harm Sole Wolf and the others.

Right when Sole Wolf was about to release a surge of energy to kill the creatures, Zeke's voice suddenly sounded in their minds. "Sole Wolf, don't kill them!"

"Zeke, Crippled Williams played us false. He's trying to have these bees sting us to death!"

"No, those aren't bees; they're just cursed parasitic worms that look like bees."

"Cursed parasitic worms? Sh\*t, why are there so many of them here? Nobody can convince me that Crippled Williams has nothing to do with Cesar. Not a chance! If you ask me, I think these cursed parasitic worms were bred by Cesar."

"Sole Wolf, I need you guys to pretend as if you've been poisoned by the worms. Play along so that I can find out what Crippled Williams is up to."

"Okay, Zeke. We'll do it your way," responded Sole Wolf after taking a deep breath.

"Good. From now on, do as I say." Zeke issued the same command to Ares, Nameless, Alfred, and Tyler.

"Great Marshal, we have no idea what it's like to be attacked by cursed parasitic worms since we've never experienced it before. How do we fake it?" inquired Tyler.

Zeke did not know how to answer that question.

To be honest, he, too, was none the wiser about the type of cursed parasitic worms they were facing. Thus, he would not know the signs and symptoms one would display from being poisoned by those worms.

However, most victims of the worms looked like robots, moving stiffly and reacting slowly.

"Just pretend that you're robots," was all Zeke could offer as a piece of advice.

"Got it!"

Sole Wolf and the others then acted like machines and stood completely still.

Because the group was shielded by the energy barrier, the cursed parasitic worms could not harm the men in any way.

After about ten minutes, the boulder blocking the entrance of the tunnel slowly sank into the ground.



The second the rock moved, the worms returned to the holes in the wall and disappeared without a trace.

Crippled Williams walked in and smirked deviously as he eyed Sole Wolf and the others, who were frozen like statues.

"What a bunch of idiots! They thought they could take me on just because they outnumbered me. What a joke! Look how I've beaten them anyway in the end."

Suddenly, a man's hoarse voice came from seemingly nowhere. "Another batch so soon, Crippled Williams? What do you have for me this time?"

## Chapter 2312

Crippled Williams hurriedly got down on one knee and answered the mystery man respectfully, "Master, I've brought you strong men in their prime. Please have a look."

Sole Wolf and the others could clearly sense someone sizing them up.

"Not bad, not bad at all. Well done, Crippled Williams," praised the hoarse voice in satisfaction.

Crippled Williams was thrilled to hear that. "Thank you, Master! I'll keep up the good work."

"Good. You'll have your reward as promised. I'll even throw in a little extra this time. Now, get them out of here and wait for the metamorphosis to complete before sending them back here."

"Yes, Master!" Crippled Williams responded immediately.

It was only after the voice disappeared for a long time did he slowly and cautiously rise to his feet.

"Very well. You guys have brought me good luck. It's been a while since Master last commended me," he uttered with a satisfied smile. "Don't worry. After you're dead, I'll be sure to send flowers to your grave."

Then, Crippled Williams took out a bell from his pocket. "Let's go. Follow me!"

As soon as the bell rang, Sole Wolf instinctively hopped forward.

Huh? Furrowing his eyebrows, Crippled Williams sized up Sole Wolf curiously.

Immediately, Sole Wolf and the others got nervous. D\*mn it! Has he figured it out already? How can that be? I don't think we've given ourselves away, have we?

Zeke's voice sounded in Sole Wolf's mind. "Why did you hop?"

"I'm supposed to do that when Crippled Williams rings the bell," responded Sole Wolf.

"Who told you that?"

"That's how they do it on the television. You know. The zombie movies."

"You're not a zombie. Why would you even

"Very well. You guys have brought me good luck. It's been a while since Master last commended me," he uttered with a satisfied smile. "Don't worry. After you're dead, I'll be sure to send flowers to your grave."

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"I'm supposed to do that when Crippled Williams rings the bell," responded Sole Wolf. "Who told you that?"

"That's how they do it on the television. You know. The zombie movies."

"You're not a zombie. Why would you even think you're one? You can walk. Just do it like a robot."

"All right. I got it!"

When Crippled Williams rang the bell again, Sole Wolf followed the man with a stiff gait.

Only then did Crippled Williams' suspicion subside.

Zeke had decided to come out of hiding and patiently waited where he knew Crippled Williams would pass.

Crippled Williams led Sole Wolf and the others out of the cave and down Golden Sanoir, going back the way .

They had only made it halfway through the journey when Crippled Williams noticed a figure ahead, immediately, he tensed up.

Since this area well-known to be off limits to outsiders, it's unlikely that anyone else would be here. There's no way that's an ordinary person, especially when they appear here and now.

Suspicion arose in his heart, and he called out warily, "Hey, who's there? What are you doing here?"

Zeke turned his head slowly, but Crippled Williams did not recognize him at first sight since he did not believe Zeke could catch up to them.

Crippled Williams was overconfident in the cursed parasitic worms, which were supposed to notify him immediately if Zeke had trailed him.

Since he did not get any notifications, Crippled Williams assumed that Zeke remained at the grave.

"Who are you? You look somewhat familiar," inquired Crippled Williams curiously. In response, Zeke smiled faintly. "Have you forgotten about me already? We've only been apart for a few hours."

What? Crippled Williams could hear a buzzing sound in his mind as if a bomb had been set off in his head.

His eyes widened in shock, and he yelped, "We've only been apart for a few hours? Don't tell me you're Zeke!"

"The one and only!" announced Zeke with a nod.

How is that possible?

Crippled Williams exclaimed, "If you really did leave my brother's grave, his spirit would've notified me! What the heck went wrong? What's happening here?"

"I think it's time for you to drop the act, don't you? There never was a spirit. You just sent a cursed parasitic worm to keep an eye on me."

Crippled Williams inhaled sharply and stared even more intently at Zeke. "How did you find out about the worm? Who are you, exactly?"

"You don't get to speak to me, so summon your master," ordered Zeke.

## Chapter 2313

Crippled Williams quickly took a deep breath to compose himself. "Fine. I admit, I've underestimated you, but do you think I'm going to go down without a fight?"

"Then, show me what you got," Zeke taunted with a smirk.

"Oh, don't worry. I'll show you everything I got!"

After ringing his bell, Crippled Williams gestured for Sole Wolf and the others to march forward and commanded, "Attack him! Either he dies, or you do!"

However, the men who were supposedly under his control simply sneered at him.

Looking over his shoulder, Crippled Williams frowned at Sole Wolf and gave the order again. "Attack him now!"

Still, Sole Wolf and the others remained unmoved.

Crippled Williams gradually realized that something was amiss when they remained unresponsive even after he rang the bell again.

At once, his heart sank. Sh\*t! They must be pretending to be poisoned by the cursed parasitic worms.

With nowhere left to run, Crippled Williams figured his only option was to return to the mountain and seek his master's help.

Hence, he charged toward Sole Wolf and the others like a madman in an attempt to break through the enemy line.

However, he underestimated his enemies' physical strength. While he was sent stumbling backward after throwing himself at Sole Wolf, the latter remained unmoved like a mountain.

"Who... Who the heck are you people?" questioned Crippled Williams as he inhaled sharply, trying to ease his dizziness.

In response, Zeke snorted coldly. "Let me ask you this, Crippled Williams. Do you want to live or die?"

"That's not for you to decide. You're mistaken if you think you've already gotten me cornered. When my master hears about this, you'll all be dead!"

After turning his head, Crippled Williams was ready to shout in the direction of Golden Sands Mountain.

However, before he could do so, Zeke released a wave of energy to seize him.

In an instant, Crippled Williams felt as though he had been buried in cement, for not only did he fail to make a sound, but he also had trouble breathing.

At that moment, a wave of intense fear washed over him. What the heck did he just do to me? How did he freeze me and stop me from shouting? He didn't even lay a finger on me!

These people probably aren't inferior to Master.

Crippled Williams was completely devoid of hope then because he never thought anyone would beat him at his own game.

"This is your last warning. Try anything again, and I'll crush you!" threatened Zeke as he approached Crippled Williams.

With that, Zeke canceled the energy cast on the latter.

Terror-stricken, Crippled Williams collapsed to the ground because of his weak legs.

"W-Who are you, and why did you ambush me?" he asked in a hoarse voice after gulping.

"You don't get to ask me questions, but you better answer mine because I don't think you can withstand my Ammo Needle." Zeke took out the said needles and waved them threateningly in front of Crippled Williams.

However, Crippled Williams did not seem afraid. Those are just needles. How painful can they be? Compared to the suffering I've experienced, they'll probably be like mosquito bites to me.

The man even began to despise Zeke for the seemingly laughable threat. If his only instrument of torture is needles, he's just embarrassing himself.

Sole Wolf and the others could tell what Crippled Williams was thinking merely by looking at the man's expression.

Smiling deviously, they could already imagine how Crippled Williams would beg for mercy soon.

"Here's my first question. Who exactly is your master?" questioned Zeke coldly.

To that, Crippled Williams replied boldly, "I don't know."

"Very well, then! You're a ballsy one!" Zeke nodded before throwing the first Ammo Needle at Crippled Williams, who immediately grimaced because of the unbearable pain.

Never did he imagine that a needle that small could induce so much pain. This is ten times worse than getting pricked by a regular silver needle.

No, this is a hundred times worse!

## Chapter 2314

Nevertheless, Crippled Williams thought the pain was still tolerable.

Hence, he simply grunted and continued to ignore Zeke's question.

"Second question. Is your master's name Cesar Muraco? He's the one you referred to as a devil, yes?" continued Zeke with a smile.

In response, Crippled Williams scoffed at Zeke and looked away, refusing to entertain the man.

"You're quite interesting, aren't you?" Zeke commented and launched another silver needle, which precisely landed at a location. that would cause excruciating pain to Crippled Williams.

"Ah!" The second attack was ten times worse than the first, so Crippled Williams involuntarily let out a scream of pain.

The spot where the needle punctured felt like it was burned by fire and sulfuric acid, causing his breathing to quicken as he broke out in cold sweats.

The man could not help but stare at the silver needles in Zeke's hand while wondering what sort of needles they were.

How can regular silver needles cause so much pain? This feels even worse than getting skinned alive! D\*mn it! What should I do? At this rate, the third needle is probably going to kill me!

Zeke then proceeded to voice his third question. "The villagers that died on Golden Sands Mountain in the past, did you kill them with the same method as well? What's your goal?"

Just when Crippled Williams was still hesitating over whether or not he should answer the question, he got struck by the third needle as expected.

"Ah!" The pain was so great that the man immediately went into shock.

Crippled Williams slowly regained consciousness after some time, but his head was still throbbing as though someone had hit him on the head with a stick.

"Now, let's move on to my fourth question," uttered Zeke with a grin.

At that point, Crippled Williams had a mental breakdown. The pain caused by the needles is just getting greater and greater. The third needle almost killed me. I'm not gonna survive if the intensity of the pain keeps increasing!

Before Zeke could continue to question him, Crippled Williams hurriedly begged for mercy. "Please spare me! I'll tell you everything you want to know, and I promise I won't hold anything back. Just please stop it with the needles. I can't take the pain anymore!"

His cowardly behavior had Sole Wolf and the others rolling their eyes condescendingly at him.

"What happened to your tough-guy act? Is this all you've got?"

"Stand your ground. You don't want to lose my respect, do you?" "Children nowadays don't even cry from an injection, yet you just bawled like a baby. What's up with that?"

How is this even comparable to children getting injections? If you're so tough, why don't you try getting pricked by these needles? Crippled Williams wanted to curse at the men but dared not do so.

Sole Wolf and the others only left Crippled Williams alone when Zeke gestured for them to stop.

"Who is your master? Is his name Cesar Muraco?" questioned Zeke.

"I don't know much about him, not even his name. He only asked me to call him 'Master,'" Crippled Williams replied.

Upon hearing that, Zeke glared at him in a fury. "Have you not learned your lesson yet?"

His scowl almost caused Crippled Williams to wet his pants. "I really don't know because he refused to tell me his name. I'm just a lowly servant. What right do I have to demand him to tell me his name?" the disabled man explained hastily.

Zeke decided to believe Crippled Williams since it did not seem like the latter faked his fearful expression.

Then, he took out a picture of Cesar and showed it to Crippled Williams. "Take a look at this. Is this your master?"

After throwing a perfunctory glance at the picture, Crippled Williams sighed and remarked, "You may find this hard to believe, but I've never actually met him face to face."

"Bullsh\*t! Do you take us for idiots? Why would you serve the man if you've never even met him?" Sole Wolf retorted.

Crippled Williams then quickly explained, "I'm telling you the truth! I really have never seen him before. The way we usually communicate is just like what you saw today. He only orders me in the shadows. As for why I serve him, that's a long story."

## Chapter 2315

Zeke worried that Crippled Williams was trying to deceive him, so he ordered, "Tell me."

He intended to find out if the latter was honest with him by scrutinizing his expression while he talked.

"As a matter of fact, it was by chance that he became my master. Back then, my twin brother and I strayed onto Golden Sands Mountain and were stuck there. Just when a sandstorm was about to take our lives, I had an epiphany. I knew there was something weird about the sandstorm and was quite certain that it was someone's doing, so I immediately got on my knees and pledged my fealty. Moved by my action, Master decided to spare me. Unfortunately, my twin brother stubbornly refused to submit to the Master, so he lost his life in the end," revealed Crippled Williams.

"What does your master usually command you to do?" Zeke asked.

"He wants me to lead people to Golden Sands Mountain, just like I did to you guys. You're probably aware of what happens next,"

"So you're responsible for the deaths of those villagers on Golden Sands Mountain?"

"No! They died because they strayed onto Golden Sands Mountain, and it happened before I swore my loyalty to Master. Their deaths have nothing to do with me." Crippled Williams hurriedly defended himself.

Upon hearing that, Ares knitted his brows and said, "That can't be right. We've talked to the restaurant owner of your village, and he told us that you and your brother were the last to fall victims. After the two of you, nobody went to Golden Sands Mountain, so naturally, no one died there. If you're not responsible for the villagers' deaths, and nobody else died after your brother, that means you didn't take anyone to the mountain as commanded by your master. If that's the case, he couldn't have spared you."



"We live in a society governed by law, so I wouldn't dare to harm anybody. I only pledged my loyalty because I wanted to stay alive. My intention was never to hurt anyone," Crippled Williams replied somewhat guiltily.

"That doesn't sound right either. Why did you lead us here if you didn't want to hurt anyone?" Ares sneered.

"I-I..." Crippled Williams stuttered and failed to form a proper sentence.

"I'm sure you wouldn't like to find out how painful the needle can be, right? To tell you the truth, even I can't endure the fourth needle," threatened Zeke while toying with the silver needles in his hand.

At the mention of Ammo Needle, Crippled Williams no longer dared to hide the truth. Even though he was still in a mental breakdown, he blurted, "I usually trick outlanders. I'd sneak out at night to find my targets and secretly get them to the mountain. However, I only target mentally handicapped people since they're just a waste of space anyway. I'm doing Eurasia a favor by getting rid of them."

Bam!

Crippled Williams' ridiculous speech enraged all those who heard him, including Zeke, who immediately punched him and sent him flying.

Zeke's attack almost knocked half the air out of Crippled Williams.

Naturally, Zeke only used a fraction of his strength on Crippled Williams. Otherwise, the latter would have died there and then.

Terrified that Zeke would murder him in a fit of anger, Crippled Williams hurriedly begged for forgiveness.

"I'm done wasting my time on you. The sooner I rid the world of you vermins, the better. Take me to your master now!" ordered Zeke after suppressing his fury orcefully.

I swear on my life that I have no idea where he is. I'm afraid I can't take you to him even if I wanted to," Crippled Williams explained.

"How could you not know? I thought you had to take the victims back to him," Sole Wolf spat.

"No, I don't. My job is to send them to the cave where I trapped you. That's it; what happens next has nothing to do with me. Master will bring them away," responded Crippled Williams.

"Then why did you lead us out of the cave instead of keeping us there until your master comes for us?" Sole Wolf inquired curiously.

"The standard procedure is to bring the victims to the cave and let the worms eat them before taking them down the mountain to let them metamorphose for seven days. When the process is complete, they'll automatically return to the cave, where Master will go to take them away," informed Crippled Williams. "Oh right, you guys can return to the cave after seven days. Pretend as if you've metamorphosed, then wait for him to show up. With that, you'll be able to meet him."

"What do you mean 'metamorphose'? What is that?" asked Zeke.

Crippled Williams shook his head in response. "I'm not sure either. That's just what Master told me. I've asked him about it, but he just told me to do as he says and stop asking questions."

Zeke then turned to Sole Wolf and the others. "What do you guys think? Should we storm Golden Sands Mountain now or wait for the mastermind to reveal himself in seven days?"

"Zeke, we're fine with either option, but more importantly, can Killer Wolf survive that long?" Sole Wolf replied cautiously.

Ares hurriedly chimed in, "Great Marshal, I don't think we should be too hasty. We don't even know where or who our enemy is. If we strike now, not only will we risk putting Killer Wolf in danger, but we might also alert our enemy to our presence."

"We're at your order, Mr. Williams!" voiced Alfred.

"I agree with Ares. Besides, we haven't confirmed if this Ghoul Cliff of Golden Sands Mountain is the same as the one Killer Wolf mentioned. We don't know for sure that he's here," uttered Tyler.

Sole Wolf then quickly pulled out a picture of Killer Wolf and showed it to Crippled Williams. "Have you seen this person before?"

"His clothes do seem familiar," answered Crippled Williams with furrowed eyebrows after glancing at the photo.

"Think carefully. Where have you seen him?" Zeke hastened to press for an answer.

As General Cosmopolis, Killer Wolf had a unique uniform, which no more than five people in the world owned.

Since it was impossible for the others to be there, it could only mean that Killer Wolf once appeared somewhere around the region for Crippled Williams to see him.

After giving it some thought, Crippled Williams said, "Two days ago, I saw someone in the same outfit as him rushed down from Golden Sands Mountain. I was too far to see the person's face, so I can't tell you if it was him. They seem to have similar figures. Oh, one more thing. I think he was injured; there was blood dripping from his body."

"Killer Wolf probably got injured by Cesar. That's why he escaped from the mountain. Did your master chase after the injured man?" questioned Zeke immediately.

Crippled Williams shook his head. "I didn't see anybody else besides him. However, my master did contact me suddenly and told me he was hurt. He ordered me to get some people to treat him, so I was in a hurry to send you guys over."

"Cesar and Killer Wolf must've gotten injured fighting each other. That explains how Killer Wolf managed to get away and why Cesar didn't give chase. If Killer Wolf escaped Golden Sands Mountain, that means he's safe for now. We don't have to rush things," stated Zeke with confidence.

Sole Wolf, who preferred a decisive strike before, breathed a sigh of relief after listening to Zeke. "Since Killer Wolf's safe, we can take our time."

"Yes. We'll wait seven days and have Crippled Williams' master come to us," Zeke responded.

With that, the group followed Crippled Williams home.

Crippled Williams' abode was dirty and messy like a pigsty. The smell emanating from the place was almost unbearable, making it impossible for anyone to stay there.

Ares, who had been leading a life of luxury, was the first to throw in the towel.

## Chapter 2317

"Great Marshal, Killer Wolf is still somewhere out there. What about I petrol the area?" Ares volunteered. "Who knows I might be able to end that creature today?"

Zeke contemplated his suggestion for a while and finally gave the green light. "Make sure you return fast. Try not to disturb the being on Golden Sands Mountain."

"Yes, Great Marshal!"

Since Ares had spoken, many others volunteered to find Killer Wolf too, and Zeke permitted them to leave.

Before they went out, Zeke reminded them over and over again to return before daybreak so they would not disturb the locals.

However, deep in his heart, Zeke knew that there was a close to zero possibility that the people would even find Killer Wolf.

His energy had swept across the area earlier on, and he found no sign of Killer Wolf. Zeke surmised that Killer Wolf had probably escaped to safety so he could recover from his injury. If he had gotten well, he would definitely come to meet them, but since Zeke noticed that Ares and the rest were not used to the reeking environment, he allowed them to go out and get some fresh air for a bit.

Luckily, they were highly resilient, so it was not a problem for them to go about without eating or drinking for a few days.

The food Crippled Williams served was simply too disgusting for their liking.

A few days passed, and the seventh day came.

By dusk, they should have been fully metamorphosed and were supposed to go to the worm hole on Golden Sands Mountain.

When the sun started setting, Zeke and the others prepared to leave.

They got ready to set out when the moon appeared, but suddenly, they heard people wailing behind Crippled Williams' house.

The night sky was already pitch dark. When they heard those eerie cries, it made their hair stand on end.

"What's that sound, Crippled Williams?" Zeke called out.

"Ah, it's nothing. Don't mind those people," he replied dismissively.

"What do you mean?" Zeke asked angrily. "Tell me what's happening out there!"

"Fine. There's a graveyard right behind my house. I guess those people are just grieving the dead."

Sole Wolf leaped to the roof and looked down. "There's really a graveyard, Zeke. The villagers are lamenting there. There are about dozens of them."

Zeke was intrigued. "It's not even the usual time people visit their family member's grave, so why are those people there?"

"It's probably their death anniversary?" Crippled Williams guessed. "Whatever it is, you'd better hurry up to the mountain. It'd be problematic if you guys were late."

The more Crippled Williams tried to divert his attention away from the people, the more Zeke felt there was more to it.

He said in a severe tone, "Wait. Does this

mean all these people lost their loved ones on the exact same day? This is unusual. Imagine dozens of people dying on the same day. Tell me, Crippled Williams, what happened to those people?"

"All right. All right. Well, a flood happened a few years ago, and some of the villagers drowned. After that, they decided to bury them together since they died on the same day."

Crippled Williams' answer might seem totally logical, but still, it was not enough to satisfy Zeke's curiosity.

He could tell from Crippled Williams' facial expression that he was not comfortable discussing this issue. Besides, his flimsy house seemed a couple of decades old. If there were indeed a flood, his house would have been brought to rubble.

Since Zeke did not buy this story, he went out and stopped one of the family members who happened to be passing by.

"My deepest condolences," Zeke said at first.

The elderly man tipped his hat, replying, "Thank you."

"I heard these people died because of a flood a few years ago. They said it took the lives of many. Is that why all of you are mourning their deaths?"

"Nonsense!" The old man was irked,

"Our village is high above sea level. How could there even be a flood?"

## Chapter 2318

Zeke glared at Crippled Williams from the corner of his eyes. The man was already shaking in fear when he found out that he was caught lying to Zeke.

I knew it! I knew you weren't telling the truth!

The elderly man trailed Zeke's gaze and saw Crippled Williams. He asked sarcastically, "Did he tell you they died because of a flood?"

Zeke nodded.

The man glowered at Crippled Williams. "I'll kill you, Crippled Williams!"

Zeke interrupted, "Wait. Could you tell us what happened? How did they die? Does this have anything to do with Crippled Williams?"

The old man's face fell in grief as he recalled the past. "I don't want to talk about it. It's been so many years anyway."

Sole Wolf came forward and dropped a bag of money in front of the man. "I bet your story is worth this much? What about you bring us through what happened? We've very interested."

That was what Sole Wolf was best at doing.

Solving problems with money was his forte. Besides, this tactic worked well in a destitute village like that. To the locals, money was the only way for them to escape their fate.

Indeed, when the old man saw the money, his jaw dropped to the ground.

"Y-Yes! I'll tell you everything!" the man instantly agreed when he saw the staggering amount of money.

He could not believe he had just run into someone who could completely change his life for the better, but he soon doubted his luck.

"Are you really giving me all of these money?"

Sole Wolf nodded. "Yes, but there's a condition. You have to tell us what happened. No lies."

The man nodded without having a second thought. "I won't spare you any details!"

When Crippled Williams saw this, he figured he could also have a share in this, so he ran over to Zeke.

"Give me the money. I can tell you guys what happened too! I'm involved as well. I can give you an even more detailed account."

Before he could even reach for the bag of money, Sole Wolf kicked him, and he fell to the ground.

Zeke looked back at the old man. "Your story, please."

The old man took the money and carefully put it into his pocket as if he was afraid that someone else would take it away.

Then, he took a deep breath and began his story. "They died because of Crippled Williams."

"Hey, watch what you're saying!" Crippled Williams fumed. "They died because of the demon on Golden Sands Mountain. It has nothing to do with me!"

The old man argued, "Oh really? They wouldn't have gone up the mountain if it weren't for you!"

Crippled Williams was piqued. "That was for their own sake!"

"Yeah! You keep telling yourself that. I don't buy a single word you said."

The old man whipped his head back toward Zeke and continued, "The villagers believed that there was a creature residing on that mountain, and that sparked fear among the villagers. People lived in terror because of the creature. At that time, Crippled Williams and his brother moved back to the village after having worked elsewhere. They told the villagers that they had acquired a certain skill to get rid of demons. They even said they could foresee the future. They offered to eliminate the creature on the mountain, but the villagers would have to pay a price for that. At first, no one believed in them, but when they really predicted some events accurately, the people started thinking maybe they really possessed the prophetic ability, so they pooled together a huge sum of money so the brothers could annihilate the demon for them."

Here, the old man stopped and looked at Crippled Williams in detestation. "They told the villagers that they needed manpower to bring the creature down, so they asked forty-nine young men to help out. The villagers did not think much and just picked forty-nine young men among them. Those were almost all the strong young men the village had at that time, and just like that, Crippled Williams and his brother brought the group up the mountain, but no one ever expected that that was the last time they ever saw those people again. When everything was over, only Crippled Williams returned. All the young men and his brother died. Those young men are the future of our village, and after they died, everyone was devastated. For that few days, the wails of grief of the families bellowed through the whole village."

The old man was already sobbing when he reached that point of his story.

Zeke looked over at Crippled Williams and questioned, "How did they die? Is it because of the demon, or is it because of you?"

Crippled Williams said defensively, "The demon, of course! There's no way I can kill so many of them! It's more believable to say that they kill me. Not the other way around!"

The old man seethed, "Is that so? Do you work for the demon? You know what? We think there's a high chance you're actually working with the demon. You might well be his bait to lure living human beings to him!"

"Are you crazy? Why would I do something like that? Stop blabbering nonsense before I rip your mouth apart!" Crippled Williams. shouted with a hint of guilt in his voice.

The old man felt like punching Crippled Williams in the face, but because he was old and frail, he had no choice but to keep quiet. If they really got into a fight, he was no match for Crippled Williams.

"Thank you for telling us the story, sir," Zeke said to the old man. "You may leave."

"Thank you!" the old man exclaimed in gratitude as he rushed away with the money in excitement.

After he left, Zeke looked back at Crippled Williams, and the latter evaded his gaze.

"So those forty-nine young men were the sacrifice that you offered to your master?" Zeke interrogated.

"Well... I mean..." he stuttered and could not even give a proper answer. Judging by his reaction, it was clear that what the old man had assumed was true.

"" Sole Wolf went over and booted him hard. "You b\*stard! They were your neighbors! Even your own twin brother was among them! How could you even

"It's not like I wanted to! I was forced." Crippled Williams sighed. While the two were arguing, Zeke remained silent. He then took a deep breath and asked, "Did you guys realize something? What the old man recounted does not fit the narrative that the restaurant owner told us."

"Really?" Sole Wolf asked cluelessly. "I didn't realize any contradiction though."

"The restaurant owner said that Crippled Williams went up the mountain with his twin brother. He did not say that there were forty-nine young men. I wonder which is the true version?"



Tyler, who had remained silent from the beginning, finally spoke. "I think the old man's story is more possible."

"Then why did the owner lie to us?" Zeke asked.

"Maybe he remembered it wrongly?" Crippled Williams suggested.

"Like one can easily forget a whole group of people."

"I have a theory, but it might sound ridiculous," Ares said.

"I'm all ears," Zeke replied.

"Well, it would be more likely for us to go up the mountain if we had believed that only one person died. If he had told us that around fifty people were sacrificed because of the quest, then we would have been deterred from our plan, so it's possible that he was manipulating us."

A meaningful smile spread across Zeke's lips as he looked at Crippled Williams. "So, are you going to tell us why he wants us up there?"

"Um... I don't know?" he answered vaguely while wearing a sheepish expression.

The smile on Zeke's face stiffened.

Somehow, Crippled Williams felt like Zeke was able to read him like a book.

When he could no longer bear Zeke's scrutinizing glare, he finally gave up the act.

"All right! I'll tell you everything!" He finally relented and told the truth.

"The owner and I are in this together. He's in charge of directing foreign tourists to me, and I'm in charge of bringing them up Golden Sands Mountain. All the money that the tourists have belongs to him."

"So does he know that you're working for the demon on the mountain?"

"I never told him, but I think he knows a thing or two about it,"

Sole Wolf was infuriated.

He was so furious he drilled a hole in the ground when he kicked the floor. "You guys are unbelievable! How could y'all kill just for money?" he shouted.

"Zeke, we should really just kill this man. He's the black sheep of this whole village. We should just get rid of him before he brings greater calamity to the people!"

## Chapter 2320

"Indeed. We should really talk to him. Let's go. It's just a few-minute walk away anyway. We need to uproot the cause of the problem."

With that said, the whole gang went over to the only restaurant in the village.

"I'm so sorry. I really did everything I can to keep the secret," Crippled Williams mumbled as he was brought over to the restaurant with the group.

When Zeke and the lot arrived at the restaurant, it was already closed, but when they got closer, they could hear the voice of the owner talking to another woman.

"There's not much to see here, actually," the owner said. "Well, except for the Golden Sands Mountain. I think it's a good spot to visit though. All the stories that I told you earlier took place on that mountain too. I think you will like it since you fancy some adventure."

The woman remarked, "Interesting. Can you tell me where is the mountain? What's it like?"

The restaurant owner cast his gaze toward the mountain at a distance. "To be honest, the few tracks leading up to the Golden Sands Mountain were already sealed off. There's only one route left that's accessible now, but you can't go up alone. You'll need a guide."

"That's great. I think it'll be nice to have someone go up there with me. I'm too afraid to go alone. Do you have anyone to recommend?"

The owner grunted for a second. "Well... I think Crippled Williams is a good option. He's kind and he doesn't charge a lot."

The woman replied, "I see. Well, thanks for letting me know. Does he live around here? I would like to meet him so we can arrange for a trip up the mountain."

"Turn right after you go out and walk all the way straight until the end. You'll see a house with a soil wall there."

The woman smiled sweetly at him and said goodbye.

She almost jumped when she opened the door and ran into the men who were standing outside.

"What are you guys doing standing here?" she said, slightly upset.

"Are you going to the Golden Sands Mountain, miss?" Zeke asked.

"Yeah. Why? Are you guys going up too? Do you guys want to tag along?"

"You'd better not go," Zeke warned.

"Why?" asked the woman curiously.

"That could be the last trip you ever take." "Nah. I've already got myself a tour guide."

"Crippled Williams, you mean?" Zeke asked.

"Yeah. How do you know? Is he famous around here?"

Zeke eyed the man beside him. "Are you not going to say anything, Crippled Williams?"

"Crippled Williams? So you're the person I'm looking for!" the woman exclaimed.

Crippled Williams nodded. "Yeah, it's me."

"Could you lead me up the mountain? It'll be safe, right?" she inquired.

"I'm sorry, I can't anymore." Crippled Williams sighed.

"Why?"

The woman was disappointed.

"It's all a hoax. No one comes down alive."

"What? I thought it was just a mountain. Does the mountain swallow people alive?" she asked.

"Who's out there?" The owner's voice rang from within as he walked over to the door.

"Oh. It's you. I thought you were gone," the owner remarked when he saw the woman.

"They told me that I'd die on the mountain," the woman replied, pointing at Zeke and the others.

What?

The owner narrowed his eyes, looking at Zeke and the group. Because it was already dark, he did not recognize them until he switched on the light.

"What are y'all doing here?"

I clearly directed them to Crippled Williams seven days ago. Why are they still here?