

Thief 271

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Chapter 271: Showing Worth!

"Yes, I can give it to you, but it's not on me, you can even check my storage ring, as long as you can get me out of this place, I can hand it to you once we reached my 'abode'!" Ace quickly reacted.

He knew this was his only chance to get out of here before that Demon Duke arrive. He did not know how would that Duke behave, but a person with a Demon Duke title won't be fooled like this low-rank subordinate.

Furthermore, he was basically asking Shadow to betray Duke Livy and come to his side with just a mere empty promise, so he had to win over her trust, which was probably night impossible.

But he had to try so, Ace quickly removed his Qi mark from the storage ring in Shadow's hand, he had to convince her and if this refinement technique was really important to her, she would probably believe him after examining his storage ring which was just a dummy to fool others.

However, just as he speculated, Shadow didn't seem to believe him and quested with a hint of coldness in her voice, "You're not what you seemed!"

She finally noticed the huge loophole in Ace's words. 'Why did a legendary body demon make a deal with a lowly subordinate like me?'

Shadow's sharp finger suddenly moved like lightning toward Ace's forehead!

Ace's expression turned ugly. He knew his plan of fooling this demon woman had probably been failed, and she was now testing him. Although he had grasped some situation. But he can't properly deal with it if he did not know of it at all!

Shadow send her martial sense inside Ace's head and her eyes suddenly soften for a moment before instantly turning icy as she spoke with a hint of killing intent, "You didn't have a Demon Core, you are not Demon!"

'What was that feeling of intimacy just now?' Shadow suppressed that feeling, which flashed when she scanned Ace with her martial sense and touched him.

However, Ace did not know about it yet.

He was panicking because he knew she was thinking of him as a demon and that's why she probably even spoke with him, but now she had found out he wasn't a demon because of this demon-core.

Demon Core was basically like a life of demons, located inside their brains. A demon can live without a heart, but not without a Demon Core!

That's why Ace's cover was instantly blown. If Shadow didn't astonish by his powerful physique and thought he was a powerful demon who wanted Duke Livy's throne, she doesn't even consider him a demon since he didn't have horns. But there was one more reason for Shadow's actions that even Shadow didn't know about!

Unusually, her desire momentarily blinded her, and she thought of Ace as a rare demon species. However, the moment Ace tried to win over her, she instantly senses something was amiss. So, she tested him and, in the end, he was just a paper tiger, nothing else!

Now, Shadow was feeling quite humiliated and wanted to kill Ace because he tried to trick her and nearly succeeded and if Demon Duke Livy or Warden Cane found out about it, she would be dead!

Ace's heart sank as cold sweat beaded on his forehead when he felt Shadow's killing intent and her aura rising. He knew he had to quickly act, or she would probably kill him just to hide her humiliation and blunder.

"Wait, wait!" Ace quickly surrendered and said, "I was wrong. I'm a human, not a demon. I should've told you about it sooner, but listen to me. Likewise, I can really help you get that refinement technique!"

Shadow's eyes turned even more icy as she sneered with full of disdain, "Hmph... Human?! Those inferior ants? What gave you the courage to even speak in front of the Demon Race!"

Ace's heart turn cold when he felt the arrogance that come from Shadow's words, and he was somewhat shocked seeing this kind of disdain for humans in this demon woman. He was, after all, a human, and he felt a little anger rising when he saw the contempt in her eyes, but he didn't lose his reason and argument.

"I know, but look, don't you find it strange? How did I get here, even after being an ant? I can really help you with that technique because I'm very special!"

Ace again try to talk reason with her, he knew she had an intense desire for that refinement technique and if he could just arouse it again, he'll be able to negotiate with her.

Shadow's eyes instantly narrowed when she finally thinks about it because Ace was telling the truth. She heard of humanity. It was weak and too far away from the Mighty Demon Continent.

Just reaching this continent was almost impossible for a human, much less enter this deep in Mighty Demon Continent that even a Devil won't be able to achieve.

Ace noticed the slightest change in Shadow's soul and quickly continued, "Look, I know you don't trust me, but you just enslave me and then question me."

He played his most crucial card, Enslavement, which was meaningless to him. He just needed to win her trust!

Shadow's eyes finally lit with ambiguity as she coldly questioned, "Why did you want to deal with me when you can just get the same treatment if you prove your worth to Demon Duke Livy?"

She had to admit Ace was really a rare case and if he was really telling the truth, then he can easily make a deal with Demon Duke Livy since he would be interested in Ace's 'unique' skills as well.

Ace quickly retorted, "But he won't appreciate my skills like you, right? By your words, I can tell that demon duke can probably get this refinement technique on his own. Why did he take risks with me?"

"You, on the other hand, are just like me, just a discardable pawn of their races. I prefer to work with you, who can feel exactly how I feel before I change my destiny and become free!"

His voice was filled with undying passion and 'hate' for his race, as his eyes showed a burning desire for 'freedom'.

Shadow's cold eyes finally showed a hint of emotion as she heard Ace's 'revolutionary' words. But she still can't put her future in this weak ant's words.

"If you can show me something which proves your uniqueness, I don't mind making you my slave!"

Shadow finally decided, if Ace was really as unique as he was babbling about, she didn't mind enslaving him and escaping with him from here. What gave her some confidence was Ace's unnatural body, which was impossible to achieve with his human race.

Besides, it was just what Ace said; she can never get those refinement techniques in her life, but Duke Livy can, and that's what made her take the risk. But if Ace's words were just empty, she will immediately silent him here and now and make a story that he was melted in that red liquid.

She would only receive some minor punishment but for a weak creature who can melt in his red liquid without even resisting for a few moments, no one would blame her, and they would probably think Ace was just lucky to enter this place nothing more nothing less.

Ace knew it was his last chance to prove his point. He gritted his teeth and a soul thread intently shot toward Shadow's hand. She noticed nothing, as she wasn't using her martial sense anymore after finding out Ace was just an ant.

The very next moment, Shadow's eyes intently shimmer with astonishment, because Ace's storage ring in her hand instantly vanished and somehow appeared in Ace's hand without even startling her martial sense.

"A space skill?!" Shadow's voice was filled with shock, but there was the slightest hint of elation in it.

Because space skills were the rarest skills in this world, and only people with Space Element could truly comprehend them completely. But the space element was too much, rare even in the demon race.

Ace's skill was even more shocking because she didn't even feel the space element when he used it.

Ace, on the other hand, was feeling like his head would explode at any second because it intensified his pain the moment he used his soul thread. He knew this will only make things worse, but he had to do it, or he would be in deeper trouble once that demon duke came.

He preferred Shadow because he could still fool her, but those high-ranking demons will probably kill him if they found out about his abilities!

Shadow at least won't act until he got her a refinement technique, and he only needed this time to heal his soul and escape Shadow's grasps.

[Warning: Please Refrain from using soul Qi!]

[Temporary healing effect cooldown: 489:27:58]

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Chapter 272: Renegade Shadow!

[Warning: Please Refrain from using soul Qi]

[Temporary healing effect cooldown: 489:27:58]

Ace could only smile bitterly in stillness when he saw the price he had to pay for only using a single soul thread was ten hours!

He could've used the martial threads, but then Shadow will instantly sense it because of her high cultivation, and only soul thread can escape her detection.

Furthermore, he didn't dare to tell her he was injured yet, or he would lose his significance greatly. Besides, his passive soul sense's range has also decreased to ten meters from 250 meters because of his damaged soul core.

Ace was waiting for Shadow to jump ships, and once she did this, there was no going back for her. She had to stick with him from then on.

He quickly suppressed the soul pain and said with a pale face, "I can use this space-skill in a Five-hundred-meter radius. What do you think?"

"Five hundred meters?!" Shadow was truly stunned when she heard the range of that 'space skill'.

Because it was just too great and only someone at the Soul Manifestation Realm with Space Element probably could pull this off, and the skill also had to be that high level. Besides, Ace was a mere human!

Ace knew she didn't seem to believe him and probably thought he was desperate and trying to exaggerate his skills to escape from here.

He quickly assured her, "I know it's unbelievable, but trust me, I can use this skill in a Five-hundred-meter radius. I can even show you once we leave this place to safety."

Shadow deeply looked at Ace's dark blue eyes, which were as clear as the starry sky, she didn't want to believe him but for some strange reason from the very start, she had this silly feeling that this human was 'attractive' and 'kind'!

Shadow never felt this kind of emotion before, but the moment she encountered Ace, she had this weird feeling continuously bugging her. That's why she even bothered to question Ace, or she would never talk with anyone, not even Warden Cane.

Furthermore, when she just examined Ace's mind with her martial sense, that strange feeling intensified, and she couldn't bring herself to hurt him, so she quickly retracted the martial sense and her action shocked even herself.

That's why she showed killing intent toward Ace because she thought he used bewitch technique on her and thought he was from Devil Race, but he didn't have any Devil Core either, so she quickly discarded that notion.

But no matter what, she still can't bring herself to attack Ace, and he was even acted sheepishly. That's why she listens to Ace's proposal despite her inner struggle to go as far away from him as possible, but she can't.

She even thought about betrayal after that feeling intensified, but she still convinced herself that it was all because of Ace's promise, nothing else. But she knew if this was someone else or even a real legendary body demon, she would've never believed or even talk with him.

Now that Ace had shown his skill and told her something impossible to believe. But she wanted to believe it and after seeing his clear eyes, she even felt he was the most trustworthy person in this world!

'Why, why... why did I want to follow him even though I know he was spouting nonsense? How can a human acquire a refinement technique? No, why would I behave or even start a conversation with him? I was never been like this before.

'But... he had a legendary body despite being a human and even space skill. Furthermore, he seemed quite... reliable. I should take this chance and if he didn't complete his promise, I'll... kill him!' Besides, I have to take revenge, and this is the only way!

Shadow finally decide after a huge internal struggle, she wanted to take this chance no matter what, and she had this feeling Ace will be her best choice.

Ace also notice ripples in Shadow's soul, and he suddenly thought of something that he had almost forgotten. He was so much in anxiety and because of the soul injury, he almost forgot he was dealing with demons, a race closely related to... Darkness!

'How could I forget about... [Charm]!' Ace mind race, 'According to the system, the creature of darkness will have natural goodwill toward me and in those records, demons consider closely related to darkness just like devils!

'But [Charm] didn't work on those demon guards, nor did on the warden. It didn't work on Shadow as well until now. Does it work according to the difference between cultivation and some conditions?

'Shadow only showed that strange emotion after she talked with me, and the more I arouse her desire for that refinement technique, the more that strange emotion intensified. But it seemed her strong cultivation resisting [Charm] to some extent, but as long as I can assure her I'll be able to complete her wish, the difference doesn't matter!

'If I consider it, Eva was the same. She thought I could complete her wish of freedom, and our cultivation difference was also not much at that time. That's why she trusted me quickly.

'So, with this much information, I can consider [Charm] just doesn't simply work to the fullest on every creature of darkness, but it worked in three stages first, the creature desire, second, if I could fulfill that desire, and last, the trust they put on me to complete that desire!

'No, there is still something missing. If it was still this simple, the system would never say 'every' creature of darkness, it would say 'some'. I just had to figure it out, since I had too little information.'

Ace thought about [Charm] deeply, but he knew it wasn't as simple as he considered it, and there was probably more to it than just these three stages he figured out.

Nevertheless, Ace finally had more confidence in swindle... ahem... pursuing Shadow now.

Shadow finally declared, "I'll believe you for now, but if I even find the slightest bit of lie in your words, you'll know just what the name 'Demon' means!"

Ace gulped as he knew this woman demon wasn't joking around just by seeing her icy, dark eyes. 'What a scary race.'

"Let's go. I know a secret exit!" Shadow ordered Ace to follow her toward another dark passage.

Although she was still somewhat hesitating, in the end, she gave in to her desire for power and revenge and helped Ace. She would observe him for some time and if he lies to her about anything, she'll make him regret it!

While Ace and Shadow were making their way toward the exit of Demon Duke Mansion.

Inside, a spacious hall filled with exquisite paintings and decorations,

Warden Cane was reporting the news about Ace to a Burly Demon with 3,1-meter height, dark blue skin, two feet long sharp antelopes-horns on his forehead, with a head full of blue long hair, and a horrifying aura surrounding him. His purple eyeballs were filled with viciousness and arrogance.

This was the Demon Duke of this particular territory and also the Chief of Dark Ocean Demon Tribe, Duke Livy Ocean!

The demons didn't have surnames like humans; they used their subspecies as their last name.

Dark Ocean Demon Tribe was quite prospered because they had a Demon Duke in their ranks and this gave them very high standing among the demon race and also a rich territory to control. The Ocean Demon City was the heart of Ocean Demon Tribe territory.

"Such a thing happened?" Demon Duke Livy's cold eyes instantly narrowed when he heard how Ace appeared right in the middle of his city without being detected by the array.

"It seemed so, my lord. I have already ordered Shadow to prepare him for interrogation. I wonder what my lord's thoughts on this matter are?" Warden Cane sheepishly inquired. He didn't dare to even breathe loudly in front of Demon Duke Livy, or he'll be dead before he even knows why!

"Hmph..." Demon Duke Livy harrumphed coldly as a terrifying pressure descended in the hall which made Warden Cane shake uncontrollably despite being a Golden River Core Cultivator!

"Let's see who dare to infiltrate my territory so brazenly. I'll deal with it myself and then report it to our Demon King!" Demon Duke Livy pull an icy smile on his stern face and stood up like a deadly spear.

Warden Cane looked toward Demon Duke Livy with deep fear and reverence as he quickly led the way, like a loyal dog.

Demons respect the strong, but the strong had to be a demon, or they would never bend their head because of the arrogance that comes with being a second hegemony of this world!

In just a few moments, both Livy and Cane reached the Duke Mansion Prison and headed toward the special prison cell where Cane ordered Shadow to imprison Ace!

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Chapter 273: I'll take whatever I want!

In just a few moments, both Livy and Cane reached the Duke Mansion Prison and headed toward the special prison cell area.

However, Cane's expression changed ever so slightly when he reached the special cell area, and it was empty and thought with a hint of coldness in his eyes, 'That bitch knew I was bringing Demon Duke but still didn't complete her task quickly, it seemed I have been too lenient with her lately!'

Warden Cane already decided to punish Shadow heavily for her sluggishness. But the thought of her betrayal never even accrued to him. Because Cane had brought up Shadow after she lost her entire tribe in war with another tribe right in the territory of Ocean Demons.

Although it looked like an act of kindness that Cane save Shadow and took her in. But the reality was completely different though.

"Where is the prisoner?" Demon Duke Livy coolly asked, but there was a hint of killing intent in his husky voice.

Warden Cane's heart palpitated as he knew Livy didn't enjoy being waited, and he already decided to punish Shadow even more heavily.

He quickly said sheepishly with a hint of dread, "M-my Lord, it was all my fault to hand such a matter to that degenerate, I'll immediately fetch that prisoner myself!"

"Hmph... isn't that the same girl you took in after I order you to destroy that tribe? It seemed she's as disobedient as her predecessors, Night Demon Tribe!" Demon Duke Livy sneered with killing intent.

"Yes, she's indeed the one, My Lord. I'll just take pity on her since she looked more promising and more obedient than her rebellious father. But it seemed the apple didn't fall far from the tree. I'll defiantly educate her after this!" Warden Livy quickly sang the same tone as Demon Duke Livy.

"No!" Demon Duke Livy's lips rose in a ruthless smile and his sharp fangs surfaced. He said, "I heard her mother was quite a beauty. She won't be too bad, either. Send her to my chamber tonight. I was just running out of playthings!"

Warden Cane trembled slightly before nodding. "Y-yes... it'll be her honor, my lord!"

But his thoughts were completely different. 'My lord will break another promising girl. Sigh... it's her fault. Who told you to give my lord's the reason to deal with you? Well, I always had a thought my lord let her grow to this day was probably because of this exact reason.'

Warden Cane knew the situation was already out of his hands, and now he had to find another subordinate like Shadow again, but he knew this would not be easy because Shadow had very special abilities only her tribe possess.

But alas, now that Demon Duke Livy had already decided to make her his plaything, no one can change his mind in this dukedom except his father Old Duke, who was not here.

Warden Cane left to fetch Ace first since he was more important. But he didn't find him in the red pool area, and this suddenly gave him an uneasy feeling. He quickly goes toward other prison cells, but he didn't find both of them anywhere!

Cane's expression finally changed to worse, and he knew things were going south quickly.

'Did Shadow betray me after finding out the truth about the past?! But how did she find out only Me and Demon Duke Livy know that the Night Demon Tribe was destroyed after Duke's order? This is bad!

'If she just ran by herself, it was still salivated, but if she took that essential prisoner with her, I'm doomed! Although Duke Livy didn't show it. But he comes all the way here, which means he put quite an importance on his matter and won't spare me. He won't even consider my hundreds of years' loyalty!

Warden Cane broke into a cold sweat as he knew Duke Livy's vicious nature, and he caused this blunder, so he'll take the hit first!

"So, she showed her fangs, eh!" A nonchalant yet icy husky voice rang in the silent prison.

Warden Cane's knees intently turned into jelly as a chill run down his spine when he heard Demon Duke Livy's cold husky voice, which was like a grim ripper's scythe. He knew nothing can escape from this demon's martial sense.

'I'm done for!'

Warden Cane's eyes were filled with abhorrence and resentment for Shadow!

Shadow did not know that she had just escaped a calamity because of her decision.

At this moment, Shadow and Ace were leaving the Demon Duke Mansion's Gate. Both of them were in stealth.

Shadow was quite shocked when she saw Ace's stealth because she could sense from Ace's Qi that he was only a peak 'river' realm of cultivation. But if she didn't have a special bloodline, she could never see through it even with her cultivation! She was now, even more, convinced of Ace's promise.

On the other hand, Ace was equally shocked when he noticed Shadow could see through his stealth with no eye skill or martial sense, this gave him the wrong impression that every demon can do the same.

However, this impression didn't last long after he saw those gate guards at silver river realm who didn't notice him like Shadow, and he had a sigh of relief.

"Umm... I have a request!" Ace suddenly said after they cross the mansion gates and stopped a few meters away from it.

"What?!" Shadow's eyes turned cold when she saw Ace stop moving. She knew how scary Demon Duke Livy was, and they had little time before he found out about her betrayal and escaped from the prison!

"Don't worry, it's nothing... I just want that... timber name board!" Ace said with no hint of embarrassment as he pointed toward the black name board!

Shadow was shocked and speechless when she saw where Ace had just pointed and nearly slapped him. She controlled her rage and snorted disdainfully.

"Do you think you can take that wood of Soul Trapping Banyan Tree? Let me tell you the moment you touched it, your mind will be trapped in that wood for one day, no unless you're a Soul Manifestation Realm Cultivator!

"Why do you think Duke Livy used this soul material as a mere name board? Because of this exact reason and no matter how you touch it, with Qi, some other material, or anything tangible, you'll be affected!

"Besides, this name board was given to old demon duke by the Demon King and even position here by the Demon King himself as a gift for his big contribution, or even old duke wouldn't have the skill to position it here.

"Don't you see that teeth-blade sword symbol in the corner of that board? It's the Demon King's Insignia! No one can take it as long as they didn't want their life and suffer the wrath of Demon King!

"Since you're from a lowly race, you won't understand the statue of a Demon King's insignia represents! Now, stop wasting time on things you don't understand and keep moving before Duke Livy comes after us!"

Shadow simply thought that Ace was being greedy here and courting death by eyeing something that belonged to a Demon King!

However, Ace said nothing, as merely chuckle and said, "You might be right but one thing you don't know is first, I'm not a demon nor do I know what a demon king is, and second, even if Demon King was standing here I'll still take what I want the moment I got the chance!"

Ace was telling the truth because he was a soul cultivator and his soul Qi was special, furthermore, he had defensive soul skills as well. After listening to Shadow's explanation, he was now, even more, determined to take that name board even if he had to pay the price again since the Demon King won't give something ordinary!

He quickly made a martial thread, and it shot toward that name board like an intelligent arrow. Ace didn't use soul thread since no one here besides him and Shadow and the guards were also relaxed.

Shadow wanted to stop him, but she felt Ace had already used his Qi since he was very close to him. Her heart sank as she suddenly regretted believing this belittled, reckless and greedy mongrel!

However, what happened next made her eyes wide open and flabbergasted. Right in front of Shadow's eyes, the name board that was in its position for thousands of years suddenly vanished, only leaving an impression of it!

How could she not be shocked? That board was like a symbol of Demon King's authority, and it wasn't easy to take it, either. But now Ace had taken it, suffering no consequences!

Ace grinned widely as he didn't feel any kind of discomfort even after touching it without marital Qi and storing it inside his thief's space.

He looked at dumbfounded Shadow who was looking at him as she had seen a ghost and said while smirking, "Remember, I'll take whatever I want and whenever I want, because I'm a... thief!"

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Chapter 274: Enraged Demon Duke!

Ace looked at dumbfounded Shadow who was looking at him as she had seen a ghost and said while grinning, "Remember, I'll take whatever I want and whenever I want, because I'm a... thief!"

"T-thief?!" Shadow was naturally astounded by Ace's arrogant words, as he seemed quite proud when he said he was a thief.

However, she quickly snapped out of her stupor and said coldly, "Let's go. We have little time!" She didn't have time to rebuke Ace right now, but she took a mental note to do so.

Ace also knew time was of the essence, and they had to leave this Demon City before that Demon Duke Livy could act.

However, Ace and Shadow's expression suddenly changed when they saw a doom-like dark barrier covering the golden sky!

"He found out and active the protection array of the city to trap us inside!"

Shadow's heart was heavy as she knew Livy had found out about her betrayal much sooner than she expected, and now she was trapped inside the city with Ace!

Ace's expression also wasn't much better as he looked at the dark array barrier covering the sky, and he could feel its prowess, 'This is probably a Grade-1 or even Grade-2 Array!' He deemed.

"Do you have some spot where we could hide? Buy me one day and I can get us out of here... well, probably." He asked Shadow.

Ace again pinned his hopes on the system's upgrade and rewards he didn't get after completing the mission. Furthermore, he didn't receive any notification after he stole a soul material or thief point, which means the system will only properly work after the upgrade. He just had to survive for one day.

"Escape from this Legendary Grade-2 Protective Array, You? Stop dreaming. Only a Legendary Grade-3 Rune Crafter can escape out of it alive, and even he had to pay the enormous price!"

Shadow simply thought Ace was spouting nonsense because he was a martial cultivator and his cultivation also wasn't high enough to overpower the array. Furthermore, if he could escape legendary grade arrays on his own, why did he end up captured and need her help?

'So, they used Legendary Grade for Grade Treasures. That's what a Legendary Grade is, but I still don't know if the legendary body was a Grade Body or not.'

Ace suddenly enlighten, but he didn't have time to further ponder over this matter since he knew she didn't trust his words and he had to convince her.

"We don't have any other way unless you can get us out of here, right?" Ace questioned.

He knew Shadow also can't leave this place, and she was now in cohort with him and if she turned back now Demon Duke Livy might get rid of her within moments.

Shadow also knew this, and she only betrayed Demon Duke Mansion after considering this point as well. She never thought that could leave here without paying some price in the first place.

"Let's see if you could keep your words or not. I'll give you a day and if your words were empty... heh." Shadow snorted viciously and only showed the slightest killing intent before she turned around and move in a specific direction of the ocean demon city.

Ace didn't mind her attitude, and he quickly heeled her as he thought mockingly, 'Heh, once the system upgrade was complete, my stealth would be enough to deal with you.'

While Ace and Shadow were moving toward Shadow's secret hideout, the entire Ocean Demon City was in an uproar because of the abrupt activation of the protective array.

This array was only used when the city was under siege or some powerful enemy tried to hurt the citizens. That's why every native demon was panicking and the demon's guards horridly arrive at their allocated posts.

However, at this moment, an imposing voice rang through the entire city. "Don't worry, my citizens and esteemed guests from other cities. The city is not under any siege. The array was active because a traitorous demon dared to rescue a prisoner, who was probably an intruder from another race!

"This act is unforgivable and punished by thousand deaths. That's why I'm issuing a Demon Detain Red Order!

"Any information on the traitor (Night Demon) or prisoner will be rewarded by 5,000 Peak-Grade-1 Qi Stones.

"100,000 Peak-Grade-1 Qi Stones, if anyone can capture the prisoner (Alive).

"50,000 Peak-Grade-1 Qi Stones, for the Traitor Night Demon's (Dead or Alive).

"This Red Order will remain intact until its completion, and so does the proactive array. Any casualties that occur because of red order will be compensated by my Duke Mansion, so do your best to capture those two threats to our race!"

With this, the imposing voice faded.

But the citizens and other demons who came here for either trade or some other reason instantly become excited after the announcement.

The dark ocean demons knew this voice belong to their chief, Duke Livy and with no hesitation, they get to work and start hunting Ace and Shadow. Their appearances were also made public soon after Livy's announcement.

Ace's actual face and Shadow's mask face, but because of her Night Demon Subspecies unique and distinctive traits, like dark eyes and pronghorn horns, anyone can discriminate at a glance.

Inside the Demon Duke Mansion,

Demon Duke Livy was nonchalantly sipping over something as if he wasn't worried about two criminals at all. He knew those two can't leave the city with the array active and eventually, those two will be in his hands.

However, right at this moment, the hall door snapped opened and a Dark Ocean Demon, clad in dark armor, entered with panicking expression.

"Oh, are they captured already?" Livy coolly asked as he fiddled with the big wine cup in his hand. He assumed since no one would dare to enter like this if this wasn't the case.

The demon guard's face turned paler and quickly speak sheepishly while trembling slightly, "M-my L-lord... the n... name board set up by the Demon King has gone... m-missing!"

'Bang...'

"What?! Impudent!" The wine cup in Livy's hand instantly shattered as his nonchalant expression finally changed while he roared with killing intent, "Who dared to be so insolent, stealing the Demon King's gift?! They do not know the meaning of death!"

Even if Ace and Shadow manage to somehow escape his grasp, Livy won't react like this, since both of them were like ants in his eyes. But this matter was just too grave because this was directly related to a Demon King!

He might lose his life if he didn't recover Demon King's Gift because this was blunt disrespect toward Demon King himself, losing his gift right under his nose. Furthermore, his father would skin him alive even if Demon King show some leniency for Old Demon Duke's sake.

"It has to be those two wretches! Increase their bounty by two folds, and I want them alive no matter what. Report it to me the moment you spot them. I'll deal with those degenerates myself!"

Duke Livy's expression was livid as he ordered and quickly leave the Demon Duke Mansion and start searching himself with his powerful martial sense. This matter was no longer about two criminals, as this concerned his wellbeing.

'But how could those two ants even touch the Soul Trapping Banyan Tree's timber without being effective? It can't be that foreign invader. No! It was probably that wretch who wanted to avenge her tribe by making things difficult for my Dark Ocean Demon Tribe!

'It was indeed a mistake to keep that ungrateful wretch alive, and she now caused this enormous blunder. I'll skin her alive once I found her and make her wish she was dead!'

Demon Duke Livy's eyes were filled with ruthlessness and wrath. He never even considered it was done by Ace because he wasn't from the demon race, nor he was powerful enough to enter Livy's eyes.

Livy was only after Ace because of the reward he will get from the demon king once he handed over Ace to him. But he was on the verge of getting punishment not to talk about the rewards!

Ace didn't know his action of taking a mere name board has made Demon Duke Livy himself act, and now a wrathful Qi Soul Realm Expert was searching for him and Shadow like a mad dog!

However, he wasn't feeling calm right now either because he heard the announcement himself and this make him even warier of this place because he will always escape before anyone could understand the situation or people would at least find out about it, much later.

But here beyond lower lands, these races possess unimaginable and powerful means to instantly react and counter him, just like Livy did. Now, the entire demon city was hunting him down and if he made even a little bit of mistake, he'll be done for.

This also made his mood gloomier since the thieveries in the future won't be a piece of cake anymore, and he had to think twice before starting a theft!

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Chapter 275: System Upgrade!

Shadow and Ace were standing in a seclusion alley, right in front of a black five-meter-tall statue with a large pair of addax-horns and face of a goat and torso of a human while two legs of horse and wings like an eagle.

Ace naturally never seen this kind of creature before, but these statues were all over the ocean demon city, and every demon bowed toward it whenever they saw it.

"What is this creature?" Ace couldn't help but ask Shadow, who was also bending toward the statue.

Shadow berated Ace with disdain, "Blasphemy! Who are you calling a creature? This is the Deity of our demon race, Baphomet! If anyone heard you called the 'Great One' a creature, you'll be instantaneously killed!"

Ace smiled wryly as he nodded in understanding. Even though the concept of religions existed in the mortal world, he was never a heartfelt believer and after becoming a cultivator; he stopped believing that there was a God altogether.

But he never thought the demon race would worship a deity to such an extent, and they seemed quite devoted as well.

'But this is just a humanoid goat, while demons look more like humans? And we even eat goats.' Ace was perplexed, but he didn't dare to say it out loud in front of Shadow, or she will probably beat him silly.

"Let's hurry. This is the only spot where no one would look."

Shadow coldly said as she pressed her hand on the side of the statue platform and the very next moment thereafter, a small crevice appeared on the wall right behind the statue.

Ace was astonished at seeing the crevice and looked at Shadow with ambiguity and thought, 'It seemed she was planning the betrayal from the start and I just give her the motivation.'

He followed Shadow into the crevice and the moment they enter the pathway; the crevice closed just like it opened.

Ace looked around curiously; the pathway looked quite an old one, and they were going downward. He couldn't help but comment, "You're quite lucky to find this place."

Shadow only rebuke mildly, "This was built for my ancestors when this city was established." However, her eyes narrowed the next moment as she thought, 'Why the hell I'm even replying to him?!'

"Why did they build it, though?" Ace was intrigued, hearing this secret. If her ancestors held this much importance, then her status was quite high in this city.

"None of your business and shut your mouth, or I'll rip it apart!" Shadow coldly berated as she hurried her pace.

Ace only shrug his shoulder and quietly followed. He was just curious since he was new here and wanted to learn as much about demons as he could.

At the end of this passage was a blue steel door with a strange pattern engraved on it.

Ace expected Shadow to open the door but to this astonishment, she quietly sat beside the door and... that's it!

Shadow coldly stare dagger at Ace, who was strangely looking at her, and reprimanded with a hint of embarrassment in her voice, "Do you believe I'll gouge your eyes out if you keep looking at me?!"

"So, what if I don't have the key we can easily hide here for days and since I keep my promise to buy you one day, you'll have to keep your words to take us outside this city, or I'll take your eyes!"

'What an unreasonable woman. It's not my fault if you don't have the key.' Ace thought resentfully, but he only nodded with an apologetic smile outside and said, "Thank you, I won't disappoint you."

Ace wanted to use his soul-shattering eyes on that door and see if he could open it, but he didn't want to worsen his condition unless it was a last resort. He'll not use his soul skills.

Besides, just as Shadow said, she had bought him one day what he needed desperately, and now it's his turn. But he wasn't too sure about it either, since his actions depend on after the system's upgrade.

Ace sat down cross-legged and start circulating the soul Qi. After a long time, he was cultivating normally like other cultivators and only because this was the only way he could heal his soul right now.

But it was just too slow, and the time left behind by the system wasn't enough to heal it completely, but it was still better than nothing.

Shadow coldly looked at Ace, who was silently meditating, and couldn't help but wonder,

'How did he appear here from the human continent? I heard it was too far and humans don't even dare to approach those sneaky hunters' continent, much less send a spy here.

'He even took that name board that even a demon duke can't touch and even dare to say he can help us escape this city array. If he does this, then this means he can help me with the refinement technique, and I'll enslave him. But if he doesn't, I'll just discard this deadweight!'

Ace doesn't know Shadow has already decided how to deal with him if he didn't deliver what he promised because he was solely focused on soul cultivation, and he could feel the almost shattered half-soul-core was mending slowly, but it was still too slow, though.

Just like that, hour after hour passed, Shadow was also meditating now, but her focus was still on Ace because she didn't trust him and monitored him, so he could not pull something or escape.

But Ace didn't move nor did he do anything, he just sat there like a statue.

Finally, the wait come to an end, as Ace was now eagerly looking at the timer on the panel in his mind.

[System Upgrade is underway, please wait plenty!]

[Time: 00:00:08...07... 08... 07... 06... 05... 04... 03... 02... 01]

[System Upgrade has been complete!]

[The Eternal Thief System has been completely online!]

[System Upgrade Reward: Authority Level-1]

Information Level: 1

Living Thief's Space, New Upgrade Scheme: Unlocked

(New) System Function: 'Thief House' has been unlocked

(New) Host Status

Ace's eyes instantly glow like the sun. He quickly asked, "System, what is level-1 information?" He was eager to find out.

"[Level-1 information represents the information that the system can disclose to the host. Before host has level-0 Information Discloser Authority. But with host authority level increased, the information level also followed suit.]"

Ace suddenly felt the system voice contain emotions. Now it was not as emotionless as before, but it was still icy as ever.

"So, let me guess. Even with this information, level you still can't tell me what you are and where you come from and why you chose me, right?" Ace coolly stated.

"[Yes.]"

System answer with no pause.

"Heh, figures." Ace didn't have high hopes from the beginning and quickly move to the next thing. "Show me thief's space new upgrade scheme. I'm running quite low on this one, for sure."

Ace thief's space was now more than half full, and he needed this upgrade. But more than that, he wanted to unlock more of its function than once the system disclosed to him when he sealed Eva.

[Living Thief's Space Update Scheme]

[Note: Host currently has insufficient resources for any available upgrade scheme!]

Ace was staring at the prices and materials he required for the thief's space upgrades with incredulity.

Let's not talk about the millions of thief points, just those top grades storage space treasures required with thief points were enough to give Ace a massive dilemma.

'I can still gather the material from first to the third upgrade, but the fourth seemed like an impossible dream since I never heard of any time treasure nor seen any records. Well, I'm no longer in the lower lands anymore, though.' Ace smiled bitterly and close the upgrade panel.

Time was too mysterious of a topic for him right now, much less thinking about a supreme grade-9 time treasure!

He had a feeling before, that the system would raise the bars after the upgrade, but the reality was even more brutal.

Ace looked at the main interface, where all the pentagon icons were shimmering in gold. Nothing was changed much, just a new pentagon icon right next to the heavenly rune crafter panel icon has been appeared!

This new symbol was like a pagoda with nine floors. Ace instantly knew this was a new function that was unlocked after the system was upgraded, the Thief House!

But before he opened the Thief House, his eyes landed on the very first pentagon icon with a hood-like symbol. He wanted to see his new status promptly!

"Status!"

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Chapter 276: A huge discovery!

"Status!"

[Status Panel]

[Host: Ace White]

[Race: Human]

[Bloodline: Sealed]

[First Heaven: Mortal Sky Heaven]

[EXP: 0/10,000]

[Skills: 7]

[Thief Point (s): 1,818,400]

[Mission(s): 0]

[Pending Reward (s): 1 (Opportunity Makes a Thief)]

Ace's elation of getting a new status instantaneously vanished and turned into turmoil the moment he saw his bloodline column, which always had 'no bloodline', was now showing 'Sealed'.

He promptly asked, "System, what is the meaning of this sealed bloodline? Did I have a bloodline like hunters? But how is it possible, since humans never possess bloodlines?"

Ace asked a torrent of questions he wanted answers to. This discovery of bloodline completely caught him off guard. His entire understanding of humanity and himself will be shattered if this bloodline was real.

Furthermore, this will arouse further and more grave and solemn questions like why did he have bloodline and not others, why was it sealed, and who sealed it... why...!

"[For host's first question; before host bloodline was completely out of the system's reach because of system insufficient level. But after the system upgrade, the host sealed bloodline surface, but it's sealed with a powerful bloodline lock.]

"[As for Host second question: yes, humans can also inherit bloodlines like hunters, but for it to work, a human had to reach an extremely high cultivation level before it can pass on its unique bloodline to its descendants.]"

Ace suddenly felt like a lightning bolt hit his brain, and his heart turned extremely icy when he heard this answer. And this made him feel like he didn't know himself.

Because it would've been another case if he didn't have a bloodline, he simply didn't care and just consider it a piece of important information. But he had a bloodline that was sealed, and this made things completely different.

'Just who sealed this bloodline and why? What is my real background? Did my parents know and hide it from me? But why... why... why...!' Ace's mind was a mess right now. He had millions of questions, but no one can answer them.

'White Crown hunted my parents. Does this mean the sealing of my bloodline is also related to White Crown? But what I have done to deserve this!'

Ace suddenly emitted a dark aura which gave the feeling of bottomless despair and however it was only momentarily when it vanished the next moment.

However, Shadow, who was close to Ace, suddenly opened her dark eyes, which were filled with absolute horror. She just felt like she had escaped sudden death.

But after carefully examining the surrounding area, nothing came to her view and only status like Ace was sitting there with an expressionless face.

'Did my cultivation just go berserk?' Shadow thought with lingering fear but sigh in relief the next moment since it was just a false alarm. But no matter what, that feeling of death still lingered in her heart and she can't focus on cultivation anymore.

'Why didn't he wake up yet?' She turned her attention elsewhere, and only Ace was here. 'I should wait for while there is still one hour left before 24 hours.'

Ace, on the other hand, was feeling something completely different because of the sudden outburst that came from his heart. He again felt the despair deeply hidden within him and the dark despair lightning was flashing in his martial space.

But this wasn't the end. A dark wind suddenly blew in his mind space and his half soul core suddenly started to mend itself as the cracks on it started to fill.

After an unknown time, Ace snapped out of his trance in confusion, 'What just happened? I was just thinking about bloodline and then...'

Ace's mood again became gloomy the moment he remembered someone has sealed his bloodline, and this person was likely the one who was hunting his father and mother!

[5,000 EXP and SP have been added to host status.]

[Status has been updated.]

Ace was snapped out of his murderous thought process hearing this unexpected notification and quickly looked at his EXP and SP columns.

[EXP: 5,000/10,000]

Ace's eyes quickly constricted when he finally saw the fresh changes in EXP and SP.

"Why did the EXP drop from hundreds of millions to ten thousand and what happened to my soul cultivation and where are my previously accommodated SP?!" He sternly demanded an explanation from the system.

He wasn't in a good mood after he discovered that major truth about himself, and now the system had taken away his soul points. One had to know soul points were just too rare.

Even though he was happy about the EXP requirement from millions to thousands, the system has taken away his soul points, which was unacceptable. Furthermore, he also noticed now his soul cultivation was also showing stage-1 for some reason.

"[This is the effect of stepping into Heavenly Sea Realm. Before host, Soul Cultivation was also equivalent to martial cultivation, and it was balanced. However, the Sea Realm is ten times more powerful than the Perfect River Realm, and this will shatter the balance between the host's Soul and Body sooner than later.]

"[That's why the system has unlocked the hidden part of black wind soul as well, and now host soul and martial cultivation again reached an equilibrium. Now, the soul cultivation realm will have the same stages as the host's martial cultivation and the same EXP and SP. With total stages of each realm being Nine.]

"[But this also comes with a benefit. Now, as long as the host has a sufficient amount of EXP and SP, the host can breakthrough in the next realm immediately. However, if even one EXP or SP were insufficient, then the other, the host can't break into the next realm without accommodating the remaining points of either status.]

"[Host previously accommodated SP has been naturally destroyed with half of the soul core shattered.]"

Ace's eyes lit up when the system's explanation ended. "This means I don't need the enlightenment each time I wanted to enter the next realm and I can breakthrough continuously as long as I have sufficient SP and EXP?"

"[Yes]"

"... so, this means I don't need those elemental orbs anymore?"

"[Host still needed Elemental Orbs at the end of each realm, like before. But because of heavenly black wind soul hidden part has also been unlocked, host now had to form two more soul core after black wind core.]"

Ace's mood turned gloomy again when he heard he still required those elemental orbs, and he even had to form two more soul cores. He had always wondered why the soul cores were six if he counted the colorless soul core as well, while the martial realms were eight and his soul cultivation also doesn't have realms like normal soul cultivation path.

But after unlocking the hidden part of the heavenly crystal body, he always knew there had been a hidden part of the heavenly black wind soul as well, and he was right.

"What are the last two new soul cores?" Ace had to ask.

'White and Black White forms, huh? Well, it's not like I needed to search for something like elemental orbs for them as well. As long as I have EXP and SP and Elemental Orbs, I can become powerful with no restraint!' Ace mused and deemed.

"Now that this is out of the way, tell me system, can you unseal the bloodline within me or there is another way?" Ace's voice was filled with intense killing intent and hatred for whoever did this to him and caused his parents' suffering.

Before he didn't know why his parents were hunted by those people, but now that he knows about his sealed bloodline he had some idea, and he'll pay back everything by million-fold after he found out whoever did this to his family.

But first, he had to unseal this bloodline of himself, and his only shot was the system!

"[Yes, host just needed to endure the heavenly punishment all the way to the eighth realm's heavenly punishment, and the seal will be destroyed on its own! It's already weakened to some extent after two heavenly punishments!]"

"Heavenly Punishments?!" Ace's heart sank hearing this but the next moment his heartbeat with unbreakable resolved and decided, 'So be it, I'll deal with that person with the same bloodline he sealed so viciously!'

After that, Ace calm his mind and he also noticed his half soul core was no longer on the verge of shattering and all the cracks on it have been mended. This gave him more confidence in healing it with soul points.

"System, open the pending rewards!" ordered Ace. He has been waiting for these rewards for ages!

[Eternal Thief](#)

Chapter 277: Rewards & Thief House!

"System open the pending rewards!" ordered Ace. He has been waiting for these rewards for ages!

[Pending Rewards]

[Beginning the evaluation process...]

[Mission: Opportunity Makes a Thief]

[Mission: Steal everything from Three Giants' ten main branches in Top Ten Kingdoms of Middle-Level Lands.]

[Status: Complete]

[Evaluating Host Performance]

[Result]

Performance Rating: Above Average

[Reward]

Experience Point(s): 50,000

Soul Point(s): 50,000

Thief Point(s): 1,000,000

[Rewards have been added to host status.]

[Thief Point(s): 2,818,400]

[Three Hidden Rewards]

Detail: Now the system can give host small side missions with substantial rewards!

Detail: Talismans from Tier-9 to Tier-12

Detail: A secret technique of a thief to erase any lock between heaven and earth!

[Lock Eraser King Technique: Three levels]

Three lairs: Novice, Expert, Perfectionist

Detail: Erase any lock between Grade-1 and Grade-3

Three lairs: Novice, Expert, Perfectionist

Detail: Erase any lock between Grade-4 and Grade-6

Three lairs: Novice, Expert, Perfectionist

Detail: Erase any lock between Grade-7 and Grade-9

Ace impassively looked at the normal rewards and three hidden rewards he got. His gloomy mood quickly disappeared when he saw the last hidden reward, Lock Eraser King Technique!

'Finally, something useful! My treasure-opening hands can no longer keep up with all these grade arrays and formations. With this technique, who can keep me in one place now, and which lock will be able to stand between me and treasures?'

However, suddenly he felt a huge amount of refined heavenly soul Qi and heavenly martial Qi released inside his body, and he instantly knew these were the EXP and SP he just earned!

Ace scrutinized his mind-space since it was damaged to a great deal, and it was most important to heal it. And these SP were his only way.

The half soul core started to slowly restore under the huge amount of heavenly soul Qi he just received. After his soul core was seventy percent complete, he heard the system's notification.

[Congratulation, host, on achieving the second stage of Heavenly Sea Realm and second stage of Orange Soul Form!]

[Host status has been updated.]

However, this wasn't the end because there was still a large amount of heavenly soul Qi and heavenly martial Qi remained.

This time, his soul core restored eighty percent when he heard another notification.

[Congratulation, host, on achieving the third stage of Heavenly Sea Realm and third stage of Orange Soul Form!]

[Host status has been updated]

The refined soul Qi was nearly depleted, and it finally stopped when his soul core was restored to eighty-five percent of its spherical shape!

Ace mused, 'So fifty thousand soul points were only enough to heal it thirty-five percent, and it seemed the last fifteen percent will need another fifty thousand soul points as well!'

Ace didn't dwell on it because the pain in his head was now very mild, almost non-existent and his body felt even more sturdy while his Qi was like a raging beast right now. He observed his martial space and saw his sea bed was filled with black Qi mist!

'Hmm? Didn't it supposed to be filled with liquid Qi why it in the form of mist, and it's full as well!' Ace wonder in astonishment, 'Maybe it's probably because I'm following a completely different path and I have to cross nine stages while a normal Qi river realm had to cross only five!'

Ace deemed and quickly glance at the EXP and SP he needed for the fourth stage!

Ace mused, 'So, the second stage only required twenty-five thousand? It's much better than my previous EXP and SP stats. I can breakthrough continuously as long as I have EXP and SP. But it also took away my soul cultivation advantage before I can form a new soul core, making my soul cultivation higher than marital cultivation, but now I can't!'

He knew with every advantage come and disadvantage, but he wasn't too concerned about it because now he didn't need to pound over anything, and he only required resources to become stronger!

It also didn't take long before he got the information about Advance-Talisman Crafting Technique and Lock Eraser King Technique as well.

The talisman technique was locked away since he was still a Tier-1 rune crafter, but the Lock Eraser King Technique was completely disclosed.

As much as he wanted, Ace didn't jump right into it because he still had things he didn't take care of!

"System, show me what this Thief House is about!" He didn't forget the new panel he just opened after the system upgrade, and it had to be something big!

The pagoda-like symbol instantly lit up, and a new interface opened right in Ace's mind since he was still pretending to meditate.

[Welcome to Thief House Host!]

[Thief House Introduction: A Thief sometimes required help while planning and starting a theft, and a Heaven's Stealer can only have the best of the best. Thief House is a unique feature of the system which can help the host recruit talented thieves and train them. The thief house is not only provided with cultivation technique, skill, weapons, alchemy products, but it can also help the member thieves upgrade their talents and reached new heights which they will never in their entire life!]

[Rules & Regulations of Thief House]

0. Any violation of Thief House Rules & Regulations will result in Absolute Death!

1. The house members cannot betray, scheme, sabotage, or held malicious intentions against Thief House or its members.

2. The house members cannot insurgent thief house or rebel against the House Leader's (Ace White)!

3. The details about Thief House and its members cannot be shared with any non-members under any circumstances, or it will violate rule zero.

4. The house members cannot leave the Thief House once joined.

5. Internal fighting is not allowed, nor other members can have any kind of malicious intentions against a fellow member.

6. The house members will get House Points with every successful house mission, or any mission issued by House Leader (Ace White).

7. House Points are the currency of Thief House and members can use them in House Shop. No other sort of currency is allowed!

8. If any member failed the House Mission or House Leader (Ace White) Mission, the house points will be deducted, followed by a punishment based on the importance of that mission!

[Note: The first eight rules are absolute and cannot be changed or removed by the Host.]

[Host can also create two more rules or change them with rule changing token!]

[Rule Creation Remain: 2]

[Rule Change Token: 0]

[Thief House: Level-1]

[House Leader: Ace White]

[House Members: 0/3]

[House Mission(s): Lock]

[House Leader Mission(s): Lock]

[House Punishment(s): Lock]

[House Shop: Lock]

[Recycling Shop: Lock]

[House Points Exchange Platform: Lock]

[House Call: Lock]

[House Meeting: Lock]

[Note: Please recruit a member to unlock the features!]

Ace was gobsmacked by this introduction and rules of this Thief House and suddenly swallowed hard and asked with uncertainty, "Umm... system you want me recruited thieves? But I enjoy working alone!"

"[Host doesn't need to recruit any member if the host didn't want to, the system is not forcing the host to recruit anyone. But the system still suggests thinking about it, because thief house is a major function of the system and is very helpful to host.]"

Ace was perplexed, hearing the system's unexpected answer; the system was right this time. He can tell by all those strange 'Lock' features and all those unchangeable rules set up by the system were in his favor.

Furthermore, after wandering the lower lands alone and all his dangerous experiences there, especially the last one with Gordon, Ace knew he could use another pair of hands.

Because if he had a partner, he could've sent that person to scout the treasure mountain while waiting far away. He didn't know about other things, just the thought of controlling other thieves trained with the help of the system give Ace goosebumps!

'This is probably not a bad thing, just as the system said, the things I can do with a trained thief like myself are unimaginable! Besides, Eva always wanted to create a team, and she made me the team leader when we make the deal back then.'

Ace's heart softened when he thought about asleep Eva, and the little bit of hesitation in his heart faded.

'Well, since the system unlocked this function, I can't just let it collect dust, right?'

"System, how can I recruit someone?" Ace asked, since he already decided to use this function, he had to know how to recruit others!

"[Three Thief House Recruitment Tokens has been added to System Shop, Treasure Section, previously known as Weapon Section.]"

"Good, I was just planning to open the shop after this." Ace didn't mind the name at all.

Ace was just about to do it when Shadow's cold and annoying voice rang in his ears,

"If you keep pretending to be to meditate, do you believe I'll cut off your arm?"

Eternal Thief

Chapter 278: Thief House Recruitment Token

"If you keep pretending to meditate, do you believe I'll cut off your arm?"

Even though Ace didn't want to, he reluctantly opened his eyes and saw Shadow was eyeing him with a vexed stare.

Ace smiled wryly and answer, "I was just about to finalize my plan."

Shadow sneered in a crisp voice, "Hmph... lets me hear this plan as it is then!"

She didn't believe him at all, and she just wanted to show him his place, so he won't cause any trouble again. She never pinned her hopes on him in the first place.

Ace's eyes suddenly lit up as he looked at Shadow!

An abrupt thought surfaced in Ace's mind, 'If I could make Shadow join the thief house, I don't need to be wary of her anymore and she also can't hurt me or disobey my command as the matter of fact.

'Besides, her stealth skill is even more powerful than my breathless stealth and her unique demon species also seemed to be a sneaky type perfect for a thief.

'She will be perfect for the first member, and it's not like she'll be losing anything while joining my house. With the system's help, she can probably become the strongest demon in this world!'

Ace quickly decided to recruit Shadow. But the question was, will she join him if he sincerely invited her and tell the truth? The answer was a big no!

Foremost, she'll probably think Ace was messing with her and secondly, Ace didn't have the power to make her submit to him, and even if he had the power, he could tell this woman was too stubborn.

She'll probably attack him the moment he told her to become his subordinate and submit to him. Besides, Ace already knew demons would never submit to any other race, they would choose death over submission to any other race.

So, Ace has to use an underhanded method to make her enter his house and once she was in, there was no escaping according to the rules!

"Umm... sister demon, I can tell you the plan, but you have to sign an oath contract with me. It's not much. I just want your promise that you'll let me go alive once I help you accrue the technique you desire." Ace said with a straight face.

'Did he really have a path, or is he just bluffing?'

Shadow's eyes narrowed when she heard this and rebuked coldly, "Do you think you have the strength to negotiate with me? And didn't you say yourself that you'll be my slave once I help you?"

Ace's expression didn't change at all and said with a stoic face, "Very well, let's change the oath contract to 'Once I serve my means you won't kill me or make anyone nor will you hand me over to anyone until your life is in extreme danger!' what do you think about it? It only benefited you and if you don't agree to it, I prefer death sooner since I'll die later, anyway."

Shadow's eyes widen a little, hearing Ace's new condition. Truth be told, it was just as Ace said, she was planning to get rid of Ace once he served his purpose or even handed him to the authorities for the reward.

But now Ace has clearly seen through her and made things difficult.

'This human is too strange and cunning. He can steal that Soul Trapping Banyan Tree's timber without getting affected and even guessed my intentions. Did he really have a way out of here?

'It might be the cause since he won't dare to negotiate with me with no leverage, nor he would be so calm. I was planning to wait here until the Demon Duke was forced to deactivate the array since he can't keep all those people here for too long in a ghost search.

'But if this human can really get us out of here, then I prefer leaving now since there is still a chance of Demon Duke stumbling upon this secret passage. However, I can't risk tying him with me forever, either.' Shadow was perplexed.

"You shall die then!"

Shadow's figure suddenly moved, leaving a blur behind.

However, Ace didn't move from his position and remained expressionless. He didn't feel any murderous intent from Shadow at all, and he knew she was trying to intimidate him into submission.

But strangely, Ace didn't feel any fear anymore, and he deemed it was probably because of his new cultivation base. 'It seemed I can go toe to toe with a silver river core cultivator.'

Shadow figure suddenly appeared behind with massive killing intent, she thrust a red dagger toward Ace's head.

However, just as Ace presumed, the sharp dagger abruptly stopped after it touched his hair and the killing intent also vanished.

'He's not afraid of dying? Then did he really have a way to leave this place?' Shadow was vexed when she saw Ace was still sitting like a statue and didn't even look back at her.

This fearless action of Ace aroused many thoughts in Shadow's head.

'It's just a damn oath contract. This human probably didn't know there are ways to bypass these contracts, as long as they aren't Legendary Grade, and they're extremely rare.

'He probably shouldn't have one either, since he's from that weak race. I'll just deal with the contract later when I bought a legendary slave contract for him!'

Shadow quickly decided to play along with Ace since he was too important for her and she can't risk killing him. Not before he served his purpose.

"Fine, we'll sign an oath contract on the same terms as you said. But I don't have an oath contract on me." Shadow finally returned to her previous position and coldly stated while scrutinizing Ace, as if she wanted to see through him.

But to her dismay, Ace was just too good at controlling his facial expression.

"I naturally have one with me. That is why I purposed this deal. I hope you can understand, I just don't want to die, even if it's means living like a slave." Ace sighed helplessly while lamenting.

Shadow's eyes suddenly filled with disdain when she heard this and all the worries in her heart vanished, 'What a coward! I thought too highly of him and nearly forget he was just from a lowly race; how could he dare to scheme against my demon race?'

"Fine, take out the oath contract and get it over with." Shadow disdainfully spat, as she was no longer wary of Ace because of his cowardly nature.

"Open the new Treasure Section!" Ace didn't delay and quickly commanded. He knew the fish has taken the bait, and now he had to react quickly.

[System Shop: Treasure Section]

[Heaven's Stealer Disassembler Gloves]

[Thief House Recruitment Tokens: 3]

[Random Teleportation Life Coin]

Ace nearly cursed out loud when he saw the price of one million thief points, but he knew he had little time right now.

"I want one thief house recruitment token and everything else available in the treasure shop!" Ace reluctantly spend one million thief points, but he also didn't forget about two other things available, especially the life coin that can save his life!

[Total amount of host current purchase: 1,130,000 TP]

[TP has been deducted: Purchase has been successful.]

[Thief Point(s): 1,688,400]

[Heaven's Stealer Disassembler Gloves and One Thief House Recruitment Token has been delivered in the host's thief's space.]

[Random Teleportation Life Coin is now activated.]

[Life Coin: 2]

[Description: It will be used automatically when the system detects any life-ending danger in the host's life.]

Ace didn't have time to check Heaven's Stealer Disassembler Gloves since he had already taken ten seconds and now Shadow was getting impatient.

With a thought, a crystalline pitch-black palm-size round token appeared in Ace's hand. It was very smooth and warm to the touch.

Ace saw the engraving of his thief symbol the Dark Owl in the front of this round token and when he flipped it there were two words written on it in ancient god language, 'Thief House'.

Shadow also eyed the exquisite black token in Ace's hand with curiosity.

"System, how did I use it?" Ace asked, he didn't know the thief house recruitment token would have his thief symbol on it as well as the text of ancient god language.

But he still felt relieved when he thought no one know about this language or his plan of swindling Shadow into joining his Thief House would turn into smoke and might even backfire!

"[The person who wants to join the Thief House needed to willingly drop its blood on the recruitment token and willingly touched it with its Qi!]"

'Easy enough. Now came the tricky part.'

Ace impassively looked at Shadow, who was throwing a questionable gaze at him and the recruitment token in his hand!

[Eternal Thief](#)

Chapter 279: Path to Greatness!

"Ahem... as Sister can see, this is an oath contract made in my human continent. I only have this one since they're too rare." Ace 'introduced' the Thief House Recruitment Token impassively.

Shadow had guessed this much since he took out this strange token, and she wasn't fazed by its shape or color, since contracts come in many shapes and sizes. But what she was astonished about the strange owl engraving on it.

"Let me see."

She didn't wait for Ace's agreement and snatched the 'oath contract' and started to examine it with intriguing eyes.

Ace didn't stop her and merely observed Shadow. He wasn't fretting over this in the least bit because he knew this token has come straight from the system and if a silver river core demon with no experience in rune crafting seen thought it, he better commits suicide here and now.

Shadow also found nothing amiss with this 'oath contract' nor did she find those 'rune symbols' much complex, she has seen many complex runes since she lived in the duke mansion and there were many rune crafters there and there was even a legendary rune crafter under Livy's command.

She simply thought this was a low-level oath contract from the human continent, and it would be a piece of cake to overcome it whenever she wanted it. She was just curious about the owl symbol since she heard about one particular race that worshiped owls.

"Let's start." Shadow finally nodded after completely making sure this was indeed a normal 'oath contract' and probably a very low rank one at that.

Alas, if she just tried to break or damage it, she would've been astonished since she won't be able to leave a scratch on it even with her full power. But she didn't because it was a piece of common knowledge to never scratch a contract or use force, or it will be completely ruined.

Besides, Shadow thought Ace probably only had this contract since he said it himself, and she didn't want to miss this chance of making an oath with a low-level oath contract or things would get tricky if Ace resisted later.

Ace wanted to laugh out loud when he saw Shadow agree, but controlled himself.

He impassively said as he sighed in relief, "Thank you, sister, you are really a gentle demon to agree with my impertinent request."

Shadow nodded and said, "As long as you know your place. Now tell me how to use this contract."

"It's very simple, Sister, just has to drip your blood on it, and afterward all you have to do is say your promise while using your Qi on this oath contract." Ace recited respectfully with a gratifying expression.

A hint of disdain appeared in Shadow's dark eyes as she thought gleefully, 'It really is a lowly oath contract, since it only needed a merger blood drop and simple Qi. It won't even need my 'Life Qi Mark' or 'Soul Mark'. Even if I break it, I won't suffer that big of a backlash at all.'

Ace noticed Shadow's change of emotions and only derided inside, 'Hah, let's see who holds the last laugh in the end!'

Shadow quickly cut her slender brown finger and a drop of black blood dripped onto the Thief House Recruitment Token and instantly absorbed into it. Shadow didn't find this out of the usual and the moment dark Qi appeared from her hand and was about to engulf the token.

However, what happened next made Shadow flabbergasted! The moment her shadow element Qi touched the token, it instantly turned into a beam of pitch-black light and bolted toward her glabella!

Shadow didn't even have time to react as the beam of dark light has already penetrated all of her defensive and directly entered her head!

Ace also looked at this scene with astonishment, since it was also his first time seeing the Thief House Recruitment Token at work. It was truly marveled though since it didn't even give Shadow a chance to react!

Ace suddenly heard a notification.

[Thief House Recruitment Token has been used!]

[New member entry has been successful.]

[Please open the Thief House interface to see further information.]

Ace's lips curled upward, seeing this notification. However, before he could open the thief house panel, Shadow's deafening voice filled with killing intent and horror.

"Bastard! What did you put in my head? What is this voice!?" Shadow didn't care anymore about anything and attacked Ace.

However, something unexpended happened that sent Shadow into a pit of despairs!

The moment she thought of harming Ace, an unmanageable pain hit her head and a bolt of deadly lightning ran amok in her body!

"Ahhhhhhh...." She started screaming while struggling on the ground as one could see her skin start to burn.

Ace was horrified when he saw this, and he heard the system's cold voice again.

[Malicious and Murderous intention detected from a Thief House Member toward House Leader.]

[Punishment: Death]

Ace's heart trembled and blurted, "Stop it for now!"

[House Leader has stopped the Punishment]

Shadow, who was on the verge of death by that insane, soul-shattering pain and deadly lightning, felt those two powers vanish, and her Qi started to quickly recover her injuries.

But she didn't feel relief in the least bit, as she looked at Ace with fear and hate, but the former was far greater than the latter.

"What did you do to me?" Shadow's voice was hoarse as she questioned Ace.

Ace was also shocked by this and finally remembered the rules of thief houses. But he did not know it would be so deadly. Furthermore, he never knows the system had that kind of power since it never used it on him.

He suddenly remembered all those curses and how disrespectful he has been all these years to the system and this heart palpitated as cold sweat broke out on his forehead and he vowed to be gentler with the system in the future or if he really annoyed it, no one could save him.

"Ahem... sister demon, can you tell me what happened the token enter your head from start?" Ace cough to hide his own fear and question Shadow because she just said she heard a voice and this greatly alarm him.

Shadow didn't want to answer but after thinking about that, the voice just said she answered while healing her internal injuries, "I heard a static voice saying, [Welcome to Thief House] and then a transparent dark shade appeared in front of my eyes.

"But I didn't see it completely since I attack you. But then I heard that voice again saying, [Violation of Thief House Rule] [Punishment: Death] and then... and then you just see.

"Now, I heard this again saying, [House Leader has forgiven the House Member]. Tell me what just you did to me!"

Shadow was terrified, not by Ace, but that voice, since she can't seem to find anything amiss with herself no matter how much she searched with her martial sense. This made it even more horrifying and dreadful.

She knew Ace had played her and made her sign a slave contract, but she was perplexed since she knew a slave contract can't have its own voice nor would it just vanish inside a person's body.

It was something more terrible than the slave contract, and the most laughable thing was she didn't see it at all!

Ace, on the other hand, was shocked and quickly asked the system, "System, did you just make her your host as well?" He didn't have any other explanation than this about that voice and transparent shade.

"[No, there can only be one host of the System. However, now that demon is the member of thief house she can access to Thief House interface and hear notifications related to thief house nothing else.]"

Ace couldn't help but sigh in relief since it would be too good to be true if that were the case.

He finally looked at Shadow with a cold smile and said, "Hehe... don't be anxious, I know you're probably thinking I trick you signing a slave contract, but it wasn't a slave contract, it was something far better than anything you can achieve or get your hands on, in your entire lifetime. No one can offer it but me, not even your so-called deity!

"But if I told you the truth before, you would've never believed me and even tried to kill me. That's why I didn't tell you and used an underhanded method. But I want you to look at it now and then tell me if this is a curse or blessing. Just say 'Thief House' and you'll see the path to greatness!"

Ace deeply looked at Shadow's dark eyes without even blinking as he finished his grand speech. He wasn't joking, though.

Shadow suddenly felt this guy wasn't bantering and even felt he was like a grand existence. She decided to believe him for once and suppressed her injuries and said,

"Thief House!"

[Eternal Thief](#)

Chapter 280: Thief House First Member: Noa Night!

"Thief House!"

It was just the activation word, like 'Status' for activating the Thief House for members.

The dark transparent panel appeared again in front of Shadow's eyes, again giving her the shock of her life, but she didn't try to kill Ace this time though.

Ace, on the other hand, was looking at Shadow with astonishment because he could see the panel in front of Shadow as well.

But it differed greatly from his since it was written in a language that Shadow could understand, not in ancient god language.

First, the Thief House Rules and Regulations interface appeared in front of Shadow, and she read it attentively, not missing a single word. When she read the Zero Rule [Any violation of Thief House Rules & Regulation will cause absolute death!].

Shadow's heart turned cold, and she finally understood she had jumped the gun too soon before in a state of consternation and anger and quickly saw the next rule which made her even more assured.

But when she saw the third rule, she couldn't help but look at him with vexed eyes. "You are Ace White?"

Ace smiled broadly as he folded his hands behind his back and said, "One and only! I'm looking forward to working with you!"

"Hmph!" Shadow snorted coldly and continued to read other rules. 'I cannot leave once I join, this is really a trap!' she thought, reading rule four.

After reading all the rules, Shadow has some idea what this Thief House was. But she didn't understand how could this kind of thing even exist in the first place and how did Ace gain it since he was likely the owner of this treasure.

Shadow saw a (Next) word right in the corner of this page, and when she thought settled on it, the rules interface changed again.

Ace was also waiting for this. He wanted to see first what Shadow can and then compare it with his own Thief House interface later.

Shadow's eyes narrowed this time,

[Thief House]

[House Leader: Ace White]

[House Members: 1/3]

[House Member: Noa Night (Female)]

[Race: Demon]

[Bloodline: Night Demon (Grade-1 Bloodline)(Upgradeable)]

[Thief Genre: No Appointed (Only House Leader can appoint a Thief Genre)]

[Martial Cultivation: Silver River Core Stage of Qi River Core Realm]

[Talent: Low (Upgradeable)]

[House Point(s): 10]

[House Mission(s): 0]

[House Leader Mission(s): 0]

[House Punishment(s): 0]

[House Shop: Available (Empty at this moment)]

Shadow or Noa was completely gobsmacked when she read her real name on this new interface and many other things which enrage her, like her Grade-1 bloodline and low-level talent.

Even Ace was shocked after seeing Noa's interface and thought, 'Low talent and grade-1 bloodline, huh? So bloodlines also have grades. But what is that Thief Genre, and what does it have to do with me? And why is that shop empty?'

Ace was about to open his own thief house panel since he already saw Noa's, which was completely different, and there were some things he didn't understand.

However, Ace felt Noa's icy glare and looked at her. He knew she was probably angry because of her talent and bloodline, just like anyone else would. But sometimes reality was just more painful.

"Did you write all this?!" Noa glared at Ace, but she didn't dare to show any murderous intent anymore after what happened before, and she knew the rules.

They were absolute, and they protected Ace!

"How can I know your name and bloodline? Did we just meet a day ago? Didn't I tell you this is an opportunity for you? All those things were written by a... umm....," Ace suddenly thought of the status of that deity outside and quickly said, "God!"

Ace suddenly thought of making the system a God since it would be more convenient to tell this story and for others as well. Besides, the system wasn't any less than a God in Ace's eyes.

Just as he thought, Noa's eyes widen in disbelief when she heard the word 'God' and swiftly felt everything make sense.

Ace continue when he felt Noa was believing him, "Yes, a real God, not some stone sculpture!

"Let me tell you, all the things written about you in that interface are absolutely true, and you can even increase your talent and bloodline. Only a deity can help you do this, not a mortal or treasure, right?"

Noa's eyes widen even more when she thought it and all made sense even more because how could a mortal or treasure have all these abilities? Only a God can do this.

'Doesn't this mean I'm working for a God now, and I can even get reward directly from a God? This is really a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity!'

Noa's eyes were now filled with zeal and elation. She finally let go of her resentment toward Ace and even felt grateful to him for giving her this chance.

"Great Priest, thank you for choosing me, and I apologize for my previous rudeness for not seeing the Great One. Can you please tell me the name of our Great God who is so magnanimous to even help us, mortal?!"

"P-priest?!" Ace nearly fell hearing Noa calling him a great priest and shook his hand, "No, no, no, I'm not a priest. Just call me Leader or Ace or whatever you like. Just don't call me a priest. As for the name of our God, it's..."

Ace thought of something and blurted, "It's Eternal Thief... the Goddess of Thieves!"

He just made the system a real Goddess, but he didn't know just how far he was from the actual truth.

"Goddess of Thieves?!" Noa mumbled in incredulity and asked, "Then we are thieves?"

"Don't you see the 'Blessing' you just received and its name?" Ace sneered. He had gone through this once before and knew in her excitement she paid little attention to the word 'Thief'.

"Thief House, Thief!" Noa finally fully concentrate and understood what Ace was talking about, but her little bit of reluctance vanished after she thought of all those things she could receive from this God of Thieves, it was far better than worshipping some statue!

"Then, can Leader tell me, why is this shop thing empty and why I only have 10 house points? How did I get more?" Noa finally inquired about the thief house interface.

"Woman, slow your horses, let me ask the Goddess." Ace wasn't afraid of Noa anymore, nor did he was afraid she would know about his system.

She'll instantly die if she even thought about disclosing this information, so Ace was feeling much more secure around her. But Shadow still didn't know about the wonder of the real system since she only thought Ace was the same as her and selected by a 'Goddess'.

"You can talk to Goddess?!" Noa again felt her world turned upside down when Ace said so casually.

"Umm, you can too. Don't you hear her voice already? You just have to complete tasks given by her, and you can hear her again in the further. Now give me a moment." Ace again spout some bullshit.

Noa's eyes instantly shimmer in understanding after hearing Ace's words of 'enlightenment' and didn't disturb him anymore, afraid of offending the 'Goddess'.

"Open Thief House."

The thief house interface appeared in front of Ace and looked at Noa and asked with a hint of concern in his voice, "What did you see here?"

"Nothing, just you. Why?" Noa was confused.

'Oh, so this is only the privilege of House Leader. Good!' Ace sighed in relief since it would've complicated things if Noa could see his interfaces.

"Nothing, give me a moment." He looked at the new interface.

[Thief House]

Rule Creation Remain: 2

Rule Change Token: 0

[Thief House: Level-1]

[House Leader: Ace White]

[House Members: 1/3]

[House Point(s): 0]

[House Mission(s): 0]

[House Leader Mission(s): (Edit)]

[House Punishment(s)]

System Punishment: 0

House Leader Punishment: (Edit)

[House Shop]

Introduction: Please Select a Thief Genre for House Members to unlock a special House Shop just for them.

[Recycling Shop]

Introduction: House Leader can place anything in this shop for recycling it and turned it into House Points. Which he can then use as a reward for issued missions by himself.

[House Points Exchange Platform]

Introduction: Exchange Thief Points for House Points

Exchange Rate: 10 Thief Points = 1 House Point

[House Call: Lock] (Insufficient House Members)

[House Meeting: Lock] (Insufficient House Members)

Ace was astonished by seeing all those new functions and baffled regarding the house point exchange and recycling shop interfaces. He thought it would be useful for him, but that's not the case at all. They were all for house members.

There wasn't even one benefit for him, but he wasn't disheartened since he knew this was for training thieves, and he had the entire system, not just this one interface.

However, Ace still didn't know just how many benefits he was going to receive from this one function in the future!