

## Thief 451

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#### Chapter 451: Close to the Ruin

A few miles away, just as Ace suspected, the battle with the Ice Dire Wolves was being monitored by White Fire with the legacy formation of the blade demon tribe, the Myriad Threads Qi Detection Formation!

To control this formation, White Fire had to stay static, and that was why he wasn't following the team himself and using the earthen troll to monitor them from close while he was observing them with Myriad Threads Qi Detection Formation.

However, this formation didn't provide a view and could only sense the Qi of life forms, but it was far more convenient to detect hidden enemies.

Feng facing the ten grade-4 wolves was naturally noticed by White Fire, and he thought Feng was reckless and courting death by charging there alone.

He was about to stop the formation and go there to rescue Feng when the Qi thread representing the Wolf King suddenly vanished.

"What happened?!" He exclaimed and started to use the formation to make sure he wasn't seeing things.

However, thereupon, the nine other threads of grade-4 wolves also vanished!

With a bewildered expression, he mumbled, "Could it be that brat managed to kill all ten grade-4 wolves? Didn't this mean his strength is equivalent to a Platinum River Core expert? But this doesn't make any sense!"

On the battlefield,

Ace looked at the ten large wolf corpses. 'The dark life Plexus is really powerful. I can sense and target the acupuncture points with my sword fingers and destroy them with lightning.

'However, this skill scope is so broad that I can only sense 13 acupuncture point out of 361 acupuncture point and can only create two sword skills with it. As long as I can target 361 acupuncture points altogether, this sword art would be a terrifying one.

'But it seemed I need to the mind as sword realm and experiment on the livings to increase the sword art further.' Thinking about the latter, his expression couldn't help but change slightly.

Although, he somehow managed to create this sword art by being able to sense thirteen acupuncture points with his heavenly sense. But the reaming acupuncture points weren't something he could just imagine in their positions.

He had to experiment on the living test subjects to further increased his knowledge of acupuncture points, or he had to gain another book that further describes these acupuncture points more profoundly than the Life Plexus Book in his possession.

Because the knowledge in life plexus book was limited and most of it was based on theories by SLK, so he had to start his own research if he wanted to further go on this path of acupuncture points.

Notwithstanding, who knows, the world was so big he might get another profound book like life plexus.

"Brother Feng!" Peter's vibrant voice sounded.

Ace snapped out of his stupor and looked around. He saw Peter dashing toward him while blood was dripping from his sword.

However, Peter was dumbfounded when he saw ten huge corpses beside Feng and looked at him as if he was looking at a monster.

Although those wolves were dead, he could still feel their dreadful aura.

"S-So fast!" He couldn't help but utter.

Feng smiled and coolly said, "Nothing much. Thanks for coming, by the way. Let's help the others and leave this place."

Peter absently nodded and followed Feng.

After the wolf king was dead, those little wolves weren't able to last for long in the face of everyone's attacks.

The others were also startled when they saw the grade-4 wolves, and couldn't help but felt slightly apprehended by the bronze skin demon.

Thomas click his tongue and said, "Brother Feng, how did you kill this wolf king? There isn't any sword slash, but internal bleeding. It's like this wolf died by an extreme Qi deviation."

'This guy's mouth is really something.' Ace couldn't help but complain. No one noticed this but Thomas, and now everyone looked at him in astonishment.

However, he wasn't too worried about it and meaningfully replied, "It's a secret sword art. Do you want to spar with me, so you could experience it yourself?"

Thomas shamelessly retorted, "What? You want to murder your friend?"

Everyone gave side eyes to Thomas.

"You're not worth the trouble." Feng smirked, "I'll be taking the carcass of the wolf king, you guys can have others."

No one raised any objections. Even if Feng wanted all the grade-4 wolves, they wouldn't mind it, since he was the one who killed them.

The carcass of a grade-4 beast was full of treasures, especially their meat, which was very beneficial to the river realm and river core cultivators. The market price for such meat was sky-high!

After they collect the carcasses, they left the area before more wolves were drawn by the blood smell.

They spend the night on a remote hill and continue their journey of finding the ruin.

According to the map given by White Fire, they were still over a month's travel away from the damaged ruin. But as they continue to move forward, the temperature of the place continued to drop.

They all started to feel the cold despite their peak river realm cultivation, with only the exception of Ace, though.

But with different treasures, they could endure the cold quite easily.

Until this day,

"Beneath us, watch out!" This warning came as a surprise because it was from Feng, not Shepard.

Nonetheless, they all jumped back from their positions with full strength.

The very next thereafter, five ice blades appeared from where they all jumped.

However, it wasn't over as those ice blades vanished in the snow.

"I can't sense anything!" Shepard's exclaimed as he glanced at Feng with a look of admiration.

If he hadn't warned them, some of them would've suffered grave injuries.

"Attack there!" Feng said as he slashed with his swords on the snow ground.

Everyone attacked without any hesitation.

'sskkss'

Strange cries rang the moment those attacks fell on that spot and before long they all notice the ground started to fill with blue liquid, and it spread in the snow.

"Blood!" Carlee's eyes were filled with horror.

Alora used her dark fire to melt that area, and the appearance of their attacker was revealed.

It was a two-meter-long white worm, but it had two hands and a head while small tentacles on the rare, it didn't have any eyes, but a huge round mouth filled with sharp teeth and a pair of blue small horns with black patterns.

Thomas said with a graved expression when he saw this creature, "This isn't a demonic beast, but a mindless demon!"

Ace's eyes flashed, "You mean a demon without intelligence, a barbaric demon tribe?"

Thomas nodded, "Yes. You see those small patterns on its horns, only demons with early stages of development have them and that's why we called them barbaric demons.

"Although we called them the barbaric demon tribes, and they had very little intelligence, they didn't attack each other. Furthermore, they're very territorial, and once they sense someone infiltrating their territory, they'll swarm at the intruder without caring about any consequences."

Alora nodded in agreement and added, "Our territories are filled with these kinds of barbaric demon tribes and if we didn't control their numbers, they could cause huge trouble with their numbers and suicidal attacks."

Gibson's expression was ugly as he asked, "Didn't this mean we have to cross these barbaric demons' territory if we wanted to continue our journey?"

Peter shook his head. "Not necessary. We might encounter it by chance, and we still didn't know where their territory is. If we take another route, we might lose our way or enter their territory."

Carlee said, "Prince is right, we should stick to our route since the map didn't have details about the other routes. It's also quite possible that we have to cross this barbaric tribe's territory to enter the ruins. It might be a test."

Shepard looked at the map and his expression was helpless, "She's might be right, we're very close to our destination and that ruin is underground as well."

"This demon was moving in the snow, and I wasn't able to sense its presence, which means there might be tunnels beneath us and in the end, we have to clash with this tribe."

They all look at Feng since he was the leader, and the last decision fell to him.

"Stick to the route. Just as Shepard said, we have to find the underground passage that leads to the ruin as well. This demon might have appeared from that same underground passage."

"If we wander around, we might overlook the passage. The presence of this tribe might be a good thing since we can follow them and find the underground passage."

"There isn't any need to be afraid of them since Senior White Fire would leave no danger to our lives alive in that ruin, right?"

They all completely agreed with Feng's words and continue to move forward!

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#### **Chapter 452: An Underground Maze**

After moving a few miles according to the map, they were getting closer to the damaged ruin. But nothing changed in the scenery, it was still white as far as one could see, and they had to find the underground passage in this snow.

Ace was looking at the live fate map for any potential danger or any hidden pathways which weren't visible to the eyes.

This expedition was very important to him because Alora was also a part of it, and he hoped that the golden opportunity will be in this ruin.

'They're here!' Ace's eyes narrowed when he saw red fate points moving in their directions, and they weren't visible to naked eyes.

'It seemed the ruin might be the territory of that barbaric demon tribe, and we have to fight our way into the ruin and for opportunities. The demon king has put some thought into this expedition.' His lip curled up.

"The passage should be somewhere here." Said Shepard while looking at the map.

Feng retorted as he grabbed the hilts of his swords, "We have more important things to worry about than the passage."

Everyone became alert since they knew what he meant and took their fighting stances.

"Don't tell me we really have to fight with those worms?" Thomas's expression was bitter.

Feng said as he pointed his sword, "They're five of them this time. When I signal, focus your attacks on that area."

Thereupon, "Now!" Feng shouted as he performed the first sword draw move.

"Silver Cut!" Peter followed suit.

"Soul Phantasmagoria; Hallucination!"

They all use their skills on that spot, and it created a huge creator when all those skills landed on that spot. Only blood and body parts of those five demons were left. They didn't even have time to cry before they were dead.

"Easy." Gibson scoffed.

"Look, there's a tunnel!" Brenna pointed a few meters away from that creator, drawing everyone's attention.

"Hehe, it seemed we can finally start treasure hunting." Carlee lightly elbowed Alora.

Alora rolled her eyes. "Money grubber!"

"Although we reached our destination, it's not that easy to find treasures since this place might be crammed with these mindless demons. I want everyone to remain vigilant and not blinded by treasures. Life is more important than some worldly treasures." Peter declared.

Feng nodded, "He's right, look out for traps, don't get blinded by greed. Shepard will still lead with Peter and I'll be right behind you guys. Brenna and Gibson will take the rare while Thomas, Alora, and Carlee will remain in the center, so they could easily use their long-range skills."

With this setting, they all enter the dark tunnel, which was filled with a potent smell and icy air.

Because of their cultivation, it wasn't difficult to see in the dark, but it wasn't as good as their actual vision. The tunnel was old and not made recently because there were some old supporting pillars.

No one could see the end, as they slowly moved with vigilance.

But Ace could feel those earthen trolls were following them from a hundred-meter distance, while he also felt the White Fire's soul signature three hundred meters away.

'It seemed this place is still dangerous since he started to follow us now. But didn't they arrange this beforehand? Or they wanted to put us in danger to give us life and death experience?' Ace mused as he opened the live fate map for a few moments.

He can't always keep that map open because of the huge Qi exhaustion, so he would only open it for a moment or two to see the change before closing it.

This time he saw a web of tunnels around them, not just this one, but ten of them, and he frowned.

'This is like a maze,' Ace thought as two pathways appeared in front of them, and they all stopped.

Shepard's expression also changed seeing this, and he said, "We didn't have any map or detail about this? How should we choose our way?"

Thomas said in a grave voice, "I think we are in an underground maze, and we have to find a way to cross it without getting lost, which is quite impossible since we can't check one passage after another."

Gibson retorted, "How are you so sure we are in the maze and these two paths do not lead to two different ruin locations? Remembered we are in a damaged ruin on an expedition. We have to explore this place for opportunity, and it could be anywhere."

Peter spoke completely agreed with Gibson, "He's right, since Sir. White Fire didn't give us the map of this place. This means this is the damaged ruin, and we have to explore it on our own accord."

Alora couldn't help but narrowed her eyes. "So, you're suggesting we should split up? Don't you remember those worms loitering around? What if one of these paths leads to their layer, then what?"

Carlee nodded in agreement.

Thereafter, they all started to argue about their view of those two paths and, in the end, they all looked at Feng, who hadn't spoken all this time, and calmly looked at them.

Thomas pursed his lips. "Brother Feng, say something. Do you think we should split up or not?"

'If I told them this is a maze, then it might look suspicious. I have already shown my unusual strength and perception. It would be bad if White Fire started to suspect something about me. I should just play along,' Ace mused.

Feng said with uncertainty, "I agree with both sides' points of view, but we have to keep moving. We already wasted over forty-five days to find this place, and time is not on our side. How about we vote to split or not?"

Everyone agreed with Feng and started to vote.

Thomas, Carlee, and Alora voted for not to split while Gibson, Peter, Brenna, and Shepard voted to split. In the end, only Feng's vote remained.

"I vote for no separation. If we split now, what if we found more split pathways, and then we have to choose again? Will you split again until only one of you is left?" Feng sternly questioned.

Peter couldn't help but retorted, "We still didn't know if that's the case and I still think we should search for our lucky opportunity and without danger, there would never be any reward."

Thomas's expression went vexed because Peter wasn't thinking rashly right now, and he could tell the reason. It was all because he was shadowed by Feng during this entire trip, and he wanted to escape that shadow, and this was his chance.

Although Peter was well-behaved and had an outstanding personality, he was, in the end, still an ambitious and prideful person.

He had already seen Feng was more powerful than him by far, and he wanted to shorten that difference by finding something here. He wanted to do it himself without anyone's help, especially Feng's, or he'll never leave that shadow.

But Thomas didn't want to say it out loud since it would only create trouble for Feng, and he didn't want this silent rivalry to turn into enmity.

Ace could also sense where those words were coming from, and he always thought highly of Peter. He would never want him to lose his self-esteem or his path, so if he tried to suppress him now, Peter might lose his fighting will and his nature.

Although having a talent was a good thing, it was also a double-edged sword at the same time because it was capricious.

Suppressing and crushing a talent, that was what you do to your enemies to destroy their fighting will.

While surpassing and proving your talent was something you do to someone you admire and respect, you don't want them to stop chasing after you, even if you know they'll never catch up with you.

Ace had very little interaction with his own generation, and he didn't have many people he respects, so he cherished those who he does, and Peter was one of them.

He smiled and said, "Fine, you four can leave together, just don't die on me."

Peter smiled confidently. "Same to you. I still want to fight you after all this is over."

With that, Peter, Brenna, Gibson, and Shepard took the right pathway.

"You did the right thing, but I still think we should've stuck together." Alora gently said.

"Don't worry, he won't die. Besides, he's right about opportunities coming with danger and if he can't overcome this danger, he might never be able to advance." Feng smile.

They took the left direction and move forward.

Ace smiled as he felt something. 'Heh, White Fire followed in Peter's direction just as I thought, while trolls are following us. It seemed they had prepared for this in advance. At least he won't die now.'

Soon they move for a while before four pathways appeared.

Thomas couldn't help but exclaimed, "Damn it, we are really in a maze!"

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#### **Chapter 453: Light Silver Fate Map!**

Thomas couldn't help but exclaimed, "Damn it, we are really in a maze!"

Carlee questioned with a frown, "So, what now?"

"Any path we choose they will lead to an unknown place or more complicated pathways. It doesn't matter where we go, we'll still have to cross this maze, which we have no idea how long or where it led to. I wonder how they could find this place." Said Alora with uncertainty.

"Let's take the third pathway. Since we're already in a maze, it doesn't matter where we go. It all depends on luck." Feng chuckled as he suggested.

Thomas gave a side eye to him, "Even though you are right, don't you, taking it too lightly?"

"What, do you have another suggestion?" Feng looked at him teasingly.

Thomas fell into deep thought before he expressed seriously, "How about we go to the second pathway? It's my lucky number."

Everyone looked speechlessly at him and shake their head.

"Now I know which path I shouldn't take," Feng commented as he moved toward the third pathway and the two ladies follow behind.

"Hateful." Thomas cursed before following them.

This time they didn't encounter any more pathways, however, this time this pathway differed from before.

There was a layer of water on the surface, the ceiling cracked, and drops of water fell continuously. As they move forward, the water level was increasing.

"I think we should head back. If we continue, we might drown." Alora couldn't help but speak with trepidation.

Thomas sneered, "I told you guys we should've taken the second pathway. But no one listened."

However, Feng shook his head and continue to move forward, "It's a good sign. What if this tunnel leads to an open water source? Like a lake or a river? This might be the way out."

Everyone's eyes lit up as they quickly understood what Feng was implying and didn't speak of leaving again.

However, thereupon, sudden ripples appeared on the water, felt by everyone.

"There's something inside the water!" Carlee yelled as a violet wooden staff appeared in her hand.

However, Ace's expression changed as he shouted, "Quickly, attack the wall and hide or grab something. This isn't an attacker, but a flood!"

Thomas and the other expressions turned nervous, and they quickly create openings to support themselves, so they couldn't wash away by that flood. They didn't even have time to ask how Feng knows about this, but they trust his judgment.

Just a moment after Ace's warning, a torrent of water appeared and filled the entire tunnel and a powerful water current, which was flowing toward the entrance, appeared.

Despite creating those small openings in the wall that wasn't in the center of that water current, they could feel the water was pressuring them to move in its direction.

But it wasn't the only problem because there was some kind of strange power within that gray water which was affecting their consciousness!



Even Ace felt numb, and he had to use his heavenly soul Qi to remain stable, but he could sense the others weren't doing great either.

'There's something wrong with this water!' Ace's heart was filled with worry about this strange turn of events.

Thomas was the worst because he was a soul cultivator and his body wasn't as strong as a martial cultivator's body, and the water was affecting both his mind and body.

'A river cultivator without water element affinity could stay alive underwater for three months. But their fighting abilities will plummet as well. Especially someone with a fire affinity. They are completely powerless if they aren't strong enough.'

'But now they had to deal with this strange power in the water as well. Should I act or not?'

Ace's expression was grave, as he could feel the water current was becoming more and more violent.

Although he could endure, it wasn't the case for the others because they didn't have his abnormal physique and soul!

They can't even communicate because of the water while they were hiding in the distance from each other.

Right at this moment, Ace's heart sank to rock bottom as he looked at the opening from where the water was coming from.

Soon, a worm-like body appeared, which was none other than the barbaric demon, and it wasn't alone. There were three more behind it, and they were disturbingly at the fourth stage of the golden soul realm!

But the most abnormal thing was the water current was completely ineffective against them, as they were moving agilely in that powerful water current.

Ace instantly used his heartless stealth and vanished. He wasn't confident in fighting with these four soul realm demons in this powerful water current. He might suffer!

But others didn't have his stealth art or his soul sense.

They didn't sense those demons coming in their way until they were a few meters away.

Thomas was the first to notice those demons and when he felt their powerful pressure, his heart palpitated, and he wanted to flee with the help of the water current, but before he could, the demon waved its hand, and without any resistance, Thomas turned into an ice sculpture!

Ace wanted to use his talismans to help Thomas when he abruptly stopped because those demons didn't have any killing intent when they attack and that skill the demon just used didn't kill Thomas but restrained him as he was still alive!

Alora and Carlee also suffer the same fate as Thomas, and then those demons looked in Feng's direction, clearly confused.

Ace felt strong martial sense scanning multiple times, and he could guess they somehow know he was here and now searching for him since he had decamped.

After making sure there was no one, they grabbed Thomas, Alora, and Carlee's sculptures and left toward the entrance. They were clearly not done yet!

Ace remain static in his position while he observed those demons with a solemn expression!

'No matter how I looked at it, this flood only came after we entered the tunnel, which wasn't led toward another tunnel in the fate mapping.

'Now, those demons appeared right after the flood to capture us? There's something on this tunnel's end, and those demons aren't just mindless. Something is going on!' Ace's eyes shone with a sharp glint.

He didn't dare to go after those demons because he would be courting death, so he remained motionless for now.

As for their safety, he sensed the trolls were following them from underground, and the last one who stopped to find Feng, he also left after thinking that Feng had also escaped and followed them.

On the other side,

White Fire had a deep frown on his face as he calmly remained still in the water current, which was half as strong as where Ace was.

'What is going on? There wasn't any flood last time, and this maze was only a minor hurdle before the entrance of that ruined city.

'Although Aura had said there wasn't anything worth for soul realm cultivation, and he had already gotten rid of that soul realm barbaric demon. There might be something he missed.

'They should've remained together, but little Prince insisted on going independently, and I don't blame him, since that brat Feng is just too dazzling. But this variable is not good...'

He mused while deeply looking at the four struggling to keep their ground in the water current.

The water current remained strong for six hours before things started to calm down.

But in these six hours, Ace observed over fifty more worm demons appear from the same place and heading toward the exit.

They were going after the intruders, which made him even more curious about the end of this passage and their end goal.

'I should go,' Ace thought when he felt the water current won't be able to stop his advance.

Without creating any undulations, he moved forward in stealth.

After swimming for half an hour, he finally saw the end, which was the end of the tunnel, and after making sure it was safe, he exited the tunnel and appeared in a vast body of gray water and that soul suppression was stronger here.

Ace observed the tunnel from where he appeared, and he was shocked when he saw the wall around the tunnel was filled with dark runes.

'So, they didn't want anyone to find this runic door, and that's why they flooded the entire path and send those demons to capture the intruders from this passage.

'But only intelligent demons are capable of such things, and these runes are quite profound, mostly in the seventh grade. Something is wrong with this place, which the blade domain has missed.' Ace grimace.

"Moira, open the map." Ace commanded.

"Yes." Moira horridly obliged, and the fate map appeared.

His dark blue iris changed into a decagram before they went wide when he saw the fate map, which wasn't gray anymore, but light silver!

"This is a Light Silver fate map?!"

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#### **Chapter 454: Another Race?**

"This is a Light Silver fate map?!" He asked with rapture.

Moira replied, "Yes. It seemed your luck is quite good, Sir. Ace."

"Heh, it seemed that way. But since this is a map-type opportunity, didn't this mean I have to find it and there might be powerful beings protecting the treasure like those demons?" Ace presumed.

"Indeed, you have to be careful," Moira replied with a hint of worry.

Ace merely smile and started to paddle toward the surface slowly. He didn't create any ripple in the water, since for some reason his soul sense was blocked by that gray water, and he wasn't able to sense the outside while inside.

But the live mapping was completely unaffected, and he could see two red fate points on the surface, and he carefully moved as far from them as possible.

When Ace was close to the surface, he heard a voice, but the language wasn't the demon language which shocked him, but he could understand it clearly!

"Why did you stop the formation? Do you think all the intruders have been captured?"

In answer to this heavy voice, another feminine voice range,

"I don't know, but we can't waste this Soul Suppressing Lake freely. It has already lost more than half of its potency in all these years. According to the ancestor, if this lake lost its effect completely, the barrier protecting our clan all these years will also lose its power source and be demolished."

"Then why are we using the lake to capture those intruders? Why don't we just kill them?" the voice asked again with uncertainty.

"I don't know, but the patriarch said its ancestor's order. Don't worry, those Ghost Worms are born from this lake, and they're invincible in it. They might've already captured them and are on their way back. There's no need to waste any more lake water." The feminine voice assured with certainty.

Ace couldn't help but grimace after hearing these two mysterious voices, 'They're calling those mindless demons ghost worms? And they're ordered to capture us by this mysterious ancestor, then this means they could track us easily.'

Ace became extremely vigilant as he drifted toward the surface and kept as much distance as he could from those two red fate points.

After making sure it was safe, his head surfaced as he finally has a clear look at the outside.

The first thing he noticed was an icy grassland on the other side of the shore with towering palm trees, but these palm trees' bark was completely white while their crown was icy blue as if it was made of ice.

Then he noticed the gray lake which was tens of miles in size and on the far edge he could vaguely see a translucent blue layer while the sky was also covered in blue without any clouds or sun, but it was still lit.

'This should be that barrier they were talking about, but this kind of formation has to be a seven grade at least,' Ace mused as he looked in the direction of those voices, and what he saw left him in astonishment and incredulity!

Ace felt his eyes were playing tricks on him because the owners of those voices were not demons nor humans, but two beautiful foxes.

They were two meters in size, covered in jade-like white fur with a small patch of crystal pink between their eyes, and they had twin tails. They looked extremely exquisite while calmly sitting on that shore, just like a painting.

However, Ace didn't have time to admire them as his mind was filled with all kinds of speculation and only one thing can describe their existence, which he read in the library of the royal library in blade castle.

'Beast that can communicate and had this beastly aura can only be from the ancient beast race of beast continent! But how did they appear on the demon continent, and it seemed they're hidden for a very long time.' Ace thought as he looked at those two foxes with bewilderment.

The ancient beast race was the fifth hegemony of the golden sky world and the very first race ever to live in this world before the other races appeared.

Although they were forced to share this land with others and beaten down to fifth place by the others, this didn't mean they were weak. They were also intelligent life forms with the ability to learn and speak the language, as well as the royal beast bloodline, which can turn into humanoid forms as well.

Nevertheless, the ancient beast race only existed in the beast continent, but this was the demon continent, and they hate the ancient beast race as much as the latter hate them.

So, it was astounding that this fox clan was hidden here and survived all this time right in the middle of the demon continent, under demons' noses, and if this news spread, it would be a huge blow to their reputation, and it was far more serious than Ace infiltration.

Because the Devil, Demon, Hunter, and Humans could be said to be the arch enemies with the Beasts, while it was the same case with the latter as well.

The biggest reason for this kind of enmity was ancient beasts fed on anything, including their own race, to become strong and this was the biggest reason to suppress them!

Ace knew this time he had stumbled upon something grave and this place was also a light sliver map, so he was in a dilemma to leave or continue.

However, Ace suddenly sense something as he quickly left the gray lake without alerting those two foxes.

Thereupon, the two foxes suddenly stood tall with fierce expressions, as the lake rippled before those ghost worms started to surface.

Some of them were caring ice sculptures as they landed, carrying them to shore.

Ace's eyes dilated because those sculptures were the entire expedition team except him, and there were even eight earthen trolls and only white fire was missing!

'It seemed he managed to escape,' Ace concluded, but it wasn't a good thing because the others were captured, and their life might be in grave danger.

He only cared about Thomas in that group, but he knew if he made a move, he might alert the other powerful beasts in this place. He still didn't know the full extent of their strength, so he remained calm and observed.

At that moment, one wolf's pinkish beastly eyes suddenly glow as it released a pink misty Qi, covering a ghost worm of golden soul realm before a strange symbol which looked like a fox face appeared on its head.

"Did anyone manage to escape?" She asked.

The ghost worm started to mutter strangely in an uncomprehended voice.

She suddenly growled, "What do you mean, one went missing in thin air and one managed to escape with injuries?! Die!"

Just as her voice trailed off, the fox symbol on this ghost worm shone in a ghastly light before its body explode into bits!

Ace's eyes narrowed with fear and shock. 'So, that's how they could control those mindless demons, and that mark should be the Soul Brand of a powerful being. These fox beasts aren't simple. She killed it without batting an eye, like a disposable pawn.'

The Soul Brand was a secret technique that can be used by both martial and soul cultivators.

It was quite complex to cultivate because one has to forge their own soul brand with different materials first and then after this soul brand was forged, it can be used to enslave the others forcefully as long as they were weaker than the soul brand's owner.

It was far more overbearing than any slave contract. Because the soul brand was inherited and anyone from the soul brand owner's bloodline can use the soul brand as long as they had the corresponding method.

That was why this technique was so fearful!

However, this technique was considered destroyed in ancient times and if Ace hadn't read about it in the royal council library, he wouldn't know this fox clan has such a technique at their disposal!

This made him even more aggravated about this palace, especially, this ancestor who was controlling this place from the shadows.

The male fox unhappily snarled at this moment, "Hey, Hailee! I want to pop them too!"

"Shut up. It's not a game. It was their punishment!" She berated sternly and looked at those ghost worms again with killing intent, making them quiver.

Hailee yapped, showing her vicious teeth, "If you make such a mistake again, I'll eat your children in front of you before killing you! Now carry them back to the colony."

She then looked at the male fox and ordered, "Jairo, led them. I'm going to close the door and then report to the patriarch about these two escapees."

Jairo's eyes were filled with unwillingness, but still nodded obediently and led those ghost worms toward the icy grassland.

Hailee's right claw suddenly shone in pink light, but there was the same fox symbol within the light, and she put the shimmering claw gently on the gray lake!

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#### **Chapter 455: Incarcerate!**

Hailee's right claw suddenly shone in pink light, but there was the same fox symbol within the light, and she put the shimmering claw gently on the gray lake!

What happened next made Ace flabbergasted.

The entire gray lake suddenly shimmered in a ghastly light before it started to freeze and quickly, it became a frozen gray lake.

'They're prudent.' Ace looked at the frigid gray lake and then Hailee with thievish eyes, 'I should follow her into this colony and see what's their goal in capturing those demons before finding a way out of here... after finding this silver opportunity first, though.'

A few miles away from the underground passage,

White Fire appeared with an ashen complexion. His hair was messy, while deep open wounds were on his chest and his back.

He quickly consumed a pill before his expression turned slightly better, but the terror in his eyes wasn't faded in the slightest as he remembered how he nearly died.

"This is a huge blunder. I must inform his majesty. They're someone controlling those barbaric demons, and they're extremely terrifying with that lake water. My white fire was completely suppressed. I just hope it won't be too late." He quickly left toward the blade domain to report this.

If it was just other contestants, he won't be panicking this much, but Blade Demon King's son was also taken by those ghost worms. He knew if something happened to Peter, many heads would roll, including his!

On the other side of the frozen gray lake,

Ace finally reached the colony after crossing the palm tree forest while following Hailee.

This so-called colony was a tall mountain reaching the blue barrier edge, and it was filled with small caves, and many young foxes were playing around while adult foxes were sauntering around at the entrance of their caves.

Ace also notice the two hundred meters ice wall around the foot of the mountain and thousands of holes in the ice grass field.

His expression changed when he felt thousands of soul signatures in those holes. 'So, those ghost worms lived in those holes and foxes lived on the mountain. If someone attack that mountain, they had to go through these demons first. Furthermore, the pathway toward the mountain entrance is covered with a detection array. Well, it's not enough to detect me...'

His lip curled as he followed the group from a safe distance.

When they reached the ice wall, Hailee looked at the ghost worms. "Scram for now."

Those ghost worms put Thomas and co ice statues down and prostrate toward the ice wall before leaving toward those holes and vanishing into them.

Hailee's claw again shone as she put it on the ice wall and thereafter an opening appeared, and more foxes appeared and one of them was a meter tall than the others.

Hailee and Jairo lower their head seeing this fox and greeted him respectfully, "Fifth Elder."

Fifth Elder nodded as his aged voice sounded, "You work hard, children."

"Fifth Elder, can I have Ice Honey Fruit now?" Jairo quickly bellowed.

"Brat, show some respect." Hailee berated while baring her teeth.

Fifth Elder smile and nodded, "You brat always this playful, go tell six elder I approved."

"Yes! Thank you, Fifth Elder." With that, Jairo ran away happily toward the mountain.

"Don't worry about him, he'll be a good worrier. Let's go, the patriarch is expecting you." Fifth Elder gently spoke and single those foxes to pick up the status, and they headed toward the mountain.

Ace naturally followed them and cross the opening in the ice wall before it got close.

However, just as Ace cross the ice wall, at the very top of the mountain, the area was filled with pink icy mist and suddenly two ghastly eyes snapped open!

A thunderous voice rang in the entire mountain, "You dare to sneak around lowly demon?!"

The entire fox clan prostrate themselves in worship when they heard this voice and called, "Ancestor!"

On the mountain entrance, Hailee and Fifth Elder's expression turned ashen when they looked at the sculptures, but they were nothing amiss about them.

'Didn't we order by the Patriarch to bring them here? Did we commit a crime?'

They thought, and they were about to beg for forgiveness when that voice rang again.

"Hmph, still aren't showing yourself?"

The next moment, a huge torrent of pink mist gathered around the area close to the icy wall and then suddenly turn into a streak before shooting together in a particular direction.

"Someone has infiltrated the colony!" Fifth Elder's expression changed.

Ace's expression was ugly at this moment, as he was found by the owner of this voice.

He was extremely careful when he entered, and he sensed nothing amiss, nor did the live fate map point out anything. But it seemed whatever revealed this presence, it was above his compass's level!

When he heard this voice, he first thought it was for Thomas and other demons, but his heart palpitated when that pink mist suddenly appeared right where he was standing and if he hasn't used his movement skill, he was sure he would've been captured.

But to his fright, that pink mist was now chasing after him despite his heartless stealth. This also means the owner of this voice was a soul manifestation realm cultivator, and he won't be able to escape without using his trump cards.

'Should I use the Instant Flash Teleportation? But I didn't sense any killing intent from this mist, and it's clear they wanted to capture the intruders. What if I let them capture me and see what they're after? It'll be quite easy as well.

'I should take this chance to not waste this heavenly talisman or if things go awry, it won't be too late to escape at that time.'

Ace's eyes shimmered sharply before he stopped running and cancel his stealth. He appeared in Feng's disguise.

Just as he thought that cold pink mist enveloped his entire body, completely binding him to his position, there was also a strange oppressive power within that mist, but he remained unaffected by it.

"Interesting, bring him to me..." The fox ancestor's voice rang again, but there was a hint of astonishment within.



With that, the pink mist vanished and Ace saw the Fifth Elder in front of him, and he was glaring viciously at him with killing intent, but he didn't attack because of the ancestor's order.

Ace calmly looked at the Fifth Elder and spoke in demon language, he didn't want them to know he know the ancient beast language as well or they might get suspicious.

"This junior greets senior."

"How did you manage to enter here?" Fifth Elder didn't find anything amiss and coldly questioned in demon language.

Moreover, he didn't have time to think about anything because he was shocked by this demon's ability to conceal himself.

Even a seventh-stage diamond soul realm cultivator like him wasn't able to detect him when he was standing a few meters away from him.

Furthermore, he knew crossing the Soul Suppressing Lake in the presence of those ghost worms was even more difficult because they could easily sense anyone within that gray water as long as they weren't like their ancestor.

But he could also sense the peak Qi river realm cultivation on this demon, which made it even more strange for him to appear here while fooling everyone.

Ace calmly replied, "I use my skill to enter, but it was useless since I was captured in the end."

Fifth Elder eyes glow, "What kind of skill?"

Feng smiled coldly, "How about letting me and my friends go, and I'll teach you this skill?"

Fifth Elder growled viciously, "Don't push your luck, brat. You can't escape once you enter this side of the wall. Obediently comply and we'll not mistreat you."

Feng chuckled with disdain, "Do your worse!"

However, Fifth Elder felt something and fear surfaced in his eyes as he finally suppressed his greed and didn't dare to say anything.

No one here wasn't fearful of the ancestor because nothing can remain hidden in his mountain under the ancestor's eyes.

"Hmph! Follow me. If you dare to try anything, I'll break your limbs." Fifth Elder climbed the mountain while Ace calmly followed.

Hailee also approached them with the others and looked at Feng with a hint of curiosity and resentment since he escaped her detection, and now she felt humiliated, but she said nothing and only glared.

Ace saw those little foxes were looking at him peculiarly, while the adults were vigilant and ready to lunge at him if he dared to try anything funny.

He couldn't help but smile wryly. 'In the end, despite my skills and meticulousness, I was still incarcerated by a powerful being. I need to be more mindful in the future. I still didn't know all the mystics of this vast heaven...'

As they ascend the mountain, Ace noticed the caves were becoming lesser and lesser, and the foxes were also getting stronger.

At this time, a five-meter fox appeared, but it had a silver patch of fur between its eyes, and he had an aura equivalent to White Fire or slightly stronger!

### [Eternal Thief](#)

#### **Chapter 456: Elemental Orb's Altar!**

At this time, a five-meter fox appeared, but it had a silver patch of fur between its eyes and an imposing aura.

Noticing this fox's arrival, Fifth Elder and the other foxes lower their head with respect and greeted.

"Patriarch!"

The big fox was indeed the patriarch of this fox clan, Gage!

Gage nodded in acknowledgment. "At ease."

He looked at Ace with great interest since he managed to break into their small haven without alerting anyone except the ancestor, and he could guess if they weren't warned, it would be pretty fatal for them in a long run.

Nevertheless, he still thought this demon was over and above his head to dare infiltrate this deep into an enemy camp, instead of running away or calling for help, and now he was at their mercy or the Ancestor's mercy.

He smiled ambiguously and spoke in demon language, "It would be a lie to say, I'm not impressed by your courage, but it's a pity you're not one of us."

Feng replied without showing any nervousness, "It's indeed a pity, or I would also have to hide here."

"Impudent Demon!" Fifth Elder howled as his icy aura locked on Feng.

But to everyone's surprise, Feng remained unaffected and smiled disdainfully.

"And here I thought the ancient beast race was something." He shook his head in disappointment, while his voice was filled with scorn.

Gage's eyes turned cold, and he was also about to act when the imposing voice rang again.

"Bring him to me without any harm!" that oppressive voice rang again, but this time it was in demon language, which means it meant to Feng to know who was protecting him.

Gage and others quickly calm down, but they looked at Feng with deep hostility now.

Gage said coldly, "Follow me, but I'm warning you, if you keep this appearance in front of Ancestor, no one will be able to save you."

"Whatever." Feng shrugged his shoulder, completely brushing off Gage's warning.

"He's too arrogant." Fifth Elder spoke in beast language.

"Hmph, he won't be for too long. Throw those other demons and demon slaves into the dungeon for now." Gage snorted disdainfully as he ordered.

This time, only Gage and Feng moved toward the peak without anyone following them.

Ace's eyes shimmered subtly. 'It seemed that the ancestor wanted something from me, and he needed me alive. But I have to put that arrogant demon front in the face of inferior races all this time, or that ancestor might suspect something.'

Everyone in this world knows demons would never bow their head to another kind, even if they were mortal. They would rather die than help another race or become their servants.

Ace finally notice the pink mist around the top and felt a very dreadful aura from it.

As they approached, the pink mist suddenly opened a passage, and Cage also become somewhat fearful as he took every step like he was treading on thin ice. Ace remain calm as he followed Cage.

When they reached the end of the passage, they entered a snowy field, and right in the center of this ice field was a small pond filled with translucent water, and there was a figure sitting in the center of this pond, but for some reason, Ace couldn't see the appearance of this person, and it appeared blurry to him.

'An illusion skill?' Ace thought.

However, when Ace noticed the floating white crystal-like platform with myriad profound patterns under this figure, he nearly jumped in surprise and almost screamed out loud.

Although the color of this altar was crystal white, but could never forget those strange patterns and when he thought about that barrier above his head and that gray lake and the ghost worms which were born from that lake according to Hailee.

He instantly connected the dots and reached an astonishing conclusion!

Ace's heart raced as he quickly questioned the system, "System, did that person have the elemental orb or that altar is the Elemental Orb's Altar and that small lake is the Orb's essence?!"

Because he knew if it was true then this mean this person had defeated the orb's guardian, and now he was in possession of the elemental orb, and he might be controlling this entire space with that altar and this was probably the reason he got busted so easily.

But if that was the case, then it would be far more complex to acquire it from an intelligent being than the mindless guardian.

Furthermore, he knew this person was out of his league, and now he could only hope this was all just his speculation.

The same oppressive voice rang at this moment. "Gage, wait outside."

Gage felt he was just pardoned and quickly prostrate himself before leaving Feng and the blurry figure alone.

However, Ace's focus was on the system's answer he just received.

**"[That is indeed the Ice Elemental Orb's Altar and the Elemental Orb's Essence. But the orb isn't present in the vicinity!]"**

Ace's heart jumped hearing this, but his expression changed, and asked, "Ice Orb? This isn't on my list, right?"

He clearly remembered the eight elemental orbs he needed to collect, and Ice Orb wasn't part of that list. So, he felt somewhat relieved.

However, the system's next answer shattered that relief.

**"[When an Elemental Orb reached a certain level of intelligence and age, it can also mutate and become stronger. The Ice Orb is the mutation of Water Orb.]"**

"Why didn't to tell me sooner?!" Ace screamed, he was completely vexed.

**"[It was an irrelevant detail at that moment. A mutated elemental orb can only appear by heaven-defying chance, so it is a variable. Nonetheless, it won't change the fact that the host still required that orb because there won't be a water orb in this world anymore.]"**

Ace sighed helplessly because he knew the system was right, but the problem was if that orb wasn't here, then where it was, and who took it?

Because if those normal orb guardians were that scary, then what about the guardian of a mutated orb? He didn't dare imagine.

'At least I now know there's no water orb and someone had already taken care of the guardian for me. But this also means that the orb can be anywhere in this vast world,' He mused with a grim expression.

"Tell me, how do you cross the soul suppressing river?"

Ace was snapped out of his thoughts by this voice, which was now speaking the demon language.

'Well, it seemed this beast stumbled upon this place and somehow managed to control it with the orb's altar. At least I don't need it anymore, or it would be difficult to snatch it.' Ace became completely relaxed now and regain his composure.

He played his part and answered impassively, "That kind of suppression didn't influence me because of my sword intent."

"A complete Sword Intent!" That voice sounded in surprise.

Feng shook his head as he unsheathed his sword, and thereafter it suddenly shone in a white sheen.

"A half intent." The voice instantly noticed and praised, "But still impressed for someone of your age to comprehend the half sword intent and also able to hide in the presence of soul realm cultivators.'

Feng sneered coldly, "Just get to the point. I know you're hiding here and once the news got out, the entire demon race would attack this place. So, it is better if you let us go, and they might show some leniency or..."

"Heh, that damn demon pride of the demon race. But you said nothing wrong. I was sent here as a spy, but someone trapped in an ancient ruin for five hundred years before I found this place, which was a blessing in disguise.

"Now, I'm no longer a pawn but a king, and I'm planning to remain the same. So, I'm giving you a chance to pledge yourself to me, and I'll make sure you'll get far more than you could even get from your own race."

Feng coldly snorted, completely fearless. "I would rather die than be a traitor!"

However, Ace smiled slyly, 'Just do it already. Why the chitchat?'

From the moment he appeared here, he had noticed the hysteria in the eyes of other foxes and also fear, and when he thought about the soul brand technique, he knew this person was very cautious and won't let any variable appear under his nose.

That was why from the moment the ancestor started talking, he knew it was just a front because...

"Sigh... it wasn't a choice, little demon. If you had accepted my soul brand willingly, your soul would've remained intact. But now, however, I know you are as stubborn as a mule just like your kind, so it's pointless to talk anymore.

"Now, if you survived this or not will depend on you!"

Just as the voice trailed off, a pinkish streak shot like lightning and directly drilled into Feng's forehead without giving him any chance to resist!

### [Eternal Thief](#)

#### **Chapter 457: Fox Ancestor, Winter!**

Feng suddenly fell onto his knees while clutching his head and screaming in pain as if he was resisting something.

But the truth was it was all just an act of Ace, and he was actually fine as he saw the pinkish streak entering his soul space, and before it could do anything, the Eternal Thief Fate Compass suddenly spun.

"Hmph, wanted to enslave Sir Ace, not in my watch!" Moira's infuriated voice rang.

The pink streak seemed to become extremely jittery and wanted to rush back, but Ace's true soul has become like an arcane prison as the Eternal Thief Fate Compass shone in dark sheen, and it was all done by Moira.

Ace was astonished when he saw how easily this compass could resist this soul brand. He didn't even need a system to block this kind of soul attack anymore.

Furthermore, his true soul was now the Eternal Thief Fate Compass's territory, how could it let something inferior blemish it?

But despite that, he can't let Moira destroy that soul brand or that ancestor will know it instantly, and it won't end for him.

"Moira, don't destroy it." He ordered.

"Alright." Moira quickly agreed.

"System, create a fake conscious for it." Ace then commanded the system.

For some reason, the system didn't act this time, and it might be related to Moira.

Nevertheless, the function was still there, and with Ace's command, it'll activate.

=====

### **[Creating a Fake Soul Conscious for a Soul Brand (Grade-7)]**

**-Cost: 500,000TP**

**-Continue?**

=====

"Yes." Ace answered with no hesitation, but he was also shocked when he saw the grade of that soul brand.

Because to create a seven-grade Soul Brand, the technique has to be a Lower Sky Breaker Grade, which means this person wasn't simple at all!

=====

### **[Fake Soul Conscious has been successfully established!]**

**[Thief Point(s): 2,340,100]**

=====

It was at this moment that Ace notice his thief points, which were supposed to be far lesser than they were.

'Could it be Freya at work?'

He could only think of that possibility since he had told her the method to acquire the HP without relying on the house mission.

He also started to receive the thievery notifications soon after that day he left her, and he simply thought she was experimenting. But he didn't think she would be this good at this.

Nevertheless, he didn't have time to think over it since it was a good thing for him the more she stole, the more he got the TP.

Inside his true soul, a black misty orb suddenly appeared from his soul core, and it flew toward that pinkish streak.

The streak seemed to sense something and quickly shot toward that fake soul core and the moment he entered it, a ghastly fox face appeared on that black soul core.

This was a successfully formed soul brand!

Afterward, that fake soul core started to rotate around his real soul core.

A couple of seconds have passed outside.

The blurry figure sensed the connection established with the soul brand, and Feng also stopped resisting.

"Rise." The voice rang again, but this time it wasn't a deep husky voice like before, but a gentle voice of a female.

Feng's eyes were now respectful, and he greeted, "Master."

This was the true terror of a soul brand, it would make its bearer unconditionally follow the order of its master while they still maintain their will. But they could do anything to please their master, without them knowing about it, even if it meant death.

Ace, however, wasn't effective and just playing like those foxes. But he could now see the blurry figure on that orb's altar.

It was a dainty girl with delicate white skin and long pink hair, while the most noticeable thing about her was her silver fox ears.

'A beast that can transform, royal bloodline!' Ace couldn't help but get shocked.

He knew a beast that can transform into a humanoid form was known as a royal bloodline in the beast continent, and they were the true rulers of that place.

Nevertheless, it was still quite a unique experience to see a transformed beast personally.

The beauty smiled, seeing Feng's daze expression, and said, "I only allow the beings with my soul brand to see my true appearance. Let me officially introduce myself. I'm Winter, a Spirit Illusion Fox. They all call me ancestor since they are my children, but you can just call me Winter."

Feng bow and spoke with reverence, "I wouldn't dare, master."

"Where's your demon pride? Don't you just confront me a few moments ago?" She teased. She seemed to enjoy seeing an arrogant demon like Feng now bowing his head.

Feng quickly kneeled. "I was just muddle-headed before. I beg your forgiveness!"

Winter lose interest and coolly said, "Forget it. I want to know how many know about this place and why were you here?"

'So, that's why she first branded me the soul band, so I won't lie to her.'

Ace smiled coldly, but he answered truthfully since he couldn't sense her cultivation, which means she was way stronger than him, and she might detect something if he spoke too many lies.

"We were here for the competition of blade continent..." He told her everything about the completion and then getting the task for the expedition from the blade demon king.

"Besides us, there was Knight Commander White Fire who managed to escape, and I'm sure he'll report this to the Blade Demon King."

He still left the little detail about Peter being the son of Blade Demon King!

Winter fell into deep thought hearing this and couldn't help but asked with narrowed eyes, "It seemed they also found the entrance of that ruin where I was trapped for five hundred years."

But she smiled suddenly in ridicule, "But you won't be able to find anything since I took everything from there and then found this place. However, it won't be easy for those demons to find this place, as long as I took care of the pathway and strengthen the formation around the pathway in that ruin."

"Clever indeed, milord." Feng praise.

However, Winter's next words made Ace flabbergasted, "But I won't do it. It's time to leave this place since there isn't anything left here for me and I have some scores to settle in the home."

Ace could feel the deep resentment at this moment and a chilly killing intent when she said 'home' and he knew this fox was scheming something.

But he didn't dare to show anything, but he said with concern, "But Master, I would be impossible since you are in the fifth province and I heard they had formations in province borders to detect other races' beings."

Winter snorted, "It's indeed a hassle, but don't worry, I just need to find someone, and he'll be able to help me out of here. But I don't know where that person is since over eight hundred years has passed and that's where you lot come in." Her eyes turned sharp as she looked at Ace.

Ace felt a chill in his spine when those beastly pink eyes fell on him.

But he still acted, "Please give your order, I'll do anything for you. Master."

Winter nodded slightly and said coolly, "I know, but it isn't the time yet. Go back, stay with your friends for now, and don't let anyone know you have my soul brand or about my clan. Just act normal, as you usually do. I'll summon you again in a few days with others."

"As your order, Master." Feng nodded solemnly.

But inwardly Ace was disappointed since he didn't know what this fox ancestor was scheming.

At least he got the information on an elemental orb, and he doesn't have to worry about an orb guardian as well.

'I have to act before she could.' Ace's eyes shimmered with a thievish light.

A passage appeared in the mist and Gage appeared again, and when he saw Feng kneeling, he knew he was turned, and they won't have to worry about him anymore.



Winter looked at Gage and impassively said in beast language, "Go back and locked him with others. In two days, unsealed them, but make sure they don't see you. Use ghost worms for any interaction and every seventh day torture them all for six hours until I gave my next order."

Ace grimaced since he could clearly understand what she just said. 'She didn't want others to see the beast clan, and torturing us every seven days? I had to get out of here and get rid of this fox clan!'

Gage nodded respectfully, and they both left the mountain peak in the same way they came from.

Winter looked at the blue barrier with icy eyes and mumbled, "I'm very close to merging with this ghost-controlling altar, and then I'll be able to move freely and finally leave this damn place and kill that backstabbing bitch!

"Just you wait!"

### [Eternal Thief](#)

#### **Chapter 458: Thievish Plan**

The central area of fox mountain,

Ace was escorted by another soul realm fox to this dark prison, where he saw small cages and all the other demons and earthen trolls behind separate cages.

He was also locked separately, but the others were still unconscious because of the ice, and he could also sense these cages were special and there wasn't any Qi inside, or he can't circulate his earthen Qi as well.

Which made him even more curious about what the fox ancestor got in that ruin to make all this.

After locking him up, the fox left and eerily silent arose in the prison.

However, Ace wasn't bothered by it since he was completely fine and if he wanted these cages won't be able to stop him, but he was afraid Winter would be watching, so he remained static.

Out of habit, he opened the fate map to check where he was, and he was astonished when he saw the silver fate map has turned gray again!

"Moir, what happened?" He asked, he didn't get anything that he needed, so did this map change?

Moir replied with uncertainty, "I think the information Sir Ace got from that fox is what this silver fate map was indicating toward."

Ace's eyes narrowed. Now that he thought about it, the accurate information about any elemental orb was really worth a light silver opportunity for him.

"It seemed the case. Well, this is also good now. I don't need to worry about searching in this place. But I have to find a way to leave this place. Can you sense if someone is watching us?" Ace questioned with anticipation.

He knew asking the system this kind of meager question would only result in silence; he knew from experience, so he didn't bother to ask it.

"No, my grade is not high enough. I'm ashamed." Moira apologized.

"Don't worry about it. I don't think that old fox would bother to keep an eye on me after branding me with her soul brand." Said, Ace.

'She also seemed in a hurry about something after I told her about the Blade Demon King, but she wasn't overly worried. She knew her presence was still a secret, so only Blade Demon King would come, and he then had to go through that ruin she was entrapped within for five hundred years.

'Maybe that's why she wasn't worried about the demon king and was confident in getting out of here. Then there's still us. I don't know what she's planning, but it's nothing but bad.'

Ace fell into deep thought, but he still didn't take any action and waited for two days before making his move.

The lionheart shop, on the top floor.

Freya was looking at Aliya with a sharp glint in her eyes. She said, "How many did you find?"

Aliya respectfully said, "There are eighteen we could exploit. But I don't think it's a good idea..."

"Just do as I say. Don't worry about the backlash." Freya cut her short and changed the topic. "What about the 4 blade clans?"

Aliya bit her lips as she answered, "All of them show great interest in our proposition, but they want Feng's whereabouts first before they are willing to cooperate. But why did we need them?"

She couldn't help but ask in a doubtful tone. She didn't know why, but after that meeting with that demon, she could feel her mistress had changed somehow.

The most noticeable and vexed change was she starting to steal from the workers and then, strangely, she would return their belongings.

Furthermore, Aliya had to admit, that Freya was excellent at it as well. As the first victim, she knew it very well.

Nevertheless, she didn't dare to refute and let her do as she please as long as she returned those stolen goods, it was fine.

But the things she has been doing for the past months were completely out of her character, and it risked their entire operation being exposed if they failed or made any mistake.

That was why she was concerned.

Freya looked at Aliya with meaningful eyes. Although Aliya was completely loyal to her and can't betray her, she still had goodwill toward her since she was the very first one to follow her.

She sighed and said, "I can't tell you. But trust me, nothing would happen to us with any of this."

Aliya couldn't only nod and gave up. She knew Freya would never reveal her intentions unless she wanted, so it was meaningless to persuade her.

At this moment,

Freya's eyes suddenly widen slightly with a hint of astonishment, and she looked at Aliya and said, "I'll tell you when to approach the clans. Leave for now."

Aliya bow and left Freya alone.

'Is it time?' She thought as the main communication cube appeared in her hand, which connected with Ace.

She just received the notification about a mission, which contents were quite simple: 'Contact Me!'

Ace had told her he would contact her when he needed her this way, so she wasn't startled by it.

But she was still astonished at just how continent this mission function was.

The cube shimmered in her hand before Ace's voice rang. "Fate?"

Freya coolly replied, "Thievish!"

This was the secret phrase 'Thievish Fate' selected by Ace to make sure no other used these cubes.

Ace said, "I contact you to tell you there's a changed in plan."

Freya's eyes narrowed and said glumly, "What kind of change? You know, we can't just change plans because you feel like it? Our entire organization can be jeopardized because of it!"

Ace's apologetic voice rang. "I know, but it won't change the main point. On the contrary, I think the organization might receive some benefits because of it."

"Alright, tell me." She said, with indecision.

"I'm currently apprehended by an ancient beast with royal bloodline!" Ace's voice was grim.

Freya exclaimed, "What?! Are you sure? It's an ancient beast, not some demonic beast?"

Her reaction was expected because this was just too unbelievable for her.

'First, Ace and now ancient beast? Did the demon race start to decline?' She couldn't help but think like this.

But it wasn't her main worry right now, it was actually Ace's being apprehended!

Because she knew how scary Ace's ability of concealment was, and anyone who can capture him wasn't just a nobody.

"I'm sure. I talked with it and there's an entire colony of the same species here." Ace told.

Freya's expression sank, "Then why are you able to contact me? Didn't they take your storage ring or lock you somewhere special?"

"Don't worry, I have my means, and I'm not doing it in someone else control so, don't think too much into it. I can't be enslaved. You should know better." Ace assured.

He was afraid this woman would overthink it, and then it would be troublesome for him.

Freya indeed just thought of this possibility, but now that Ace remind her, she quickly brushed it off. Who can enslave someone blessed by a god, right?

She completely believed him and said, "Alright, what do you need me to do? If there's an ancient beast colony, we didn't need to do anything ourselves and let the demons take care of it."

Ace's jolly voice sounded, "Heh, I knew you would understand my intentions without me explaining them. But this beast isn't easy to deal with. It's controlling an army of mindless demons, probably over ten thousand, and trust me when I say they are scary when it comes to fighting in their own territory."

"It seemed you got captured by your own accord since you know so much about them. I was worried about nothing." Freya scoffed when she thought of how Ace fooled her, and a hint of resentment flashed past her eyes.

Ace chuckled, "Hehe, don't flatter me. It's far more convenient this way to achieve my first goal. Just make sure you arouse enough attention toward this place."

"I understand. But I need something more specific to arouse those eccentrics' attention." Freya reply.

Ace's confident voice rang, "No problem, just tell them this beast has got the intact inheritance of an old Demon Emperor and is now planning to escape with it from the ruin. Would it be enough to gain their attention?"

Freya's eyes shimmered with shock. "Are you serious?"

"Of course not, but when they see the soul brand technique in its possession. I'm sure they won't believe anything but their own eyes, right?" Ace's voice was filled with evil intent.

"Soul Brand Technique?!" Freya was shocked. She naturally knows about this lost ancient technique.

However, her expression changed further when she thought of something, "YOU... could it be even this technique wasn't effective on you?!"

"Hah, just be quick. I think it was about to succeed in whatever it was doing for hundreds of years. We'll reap enormous benefits with this borrowed knife."

Freya's eyes shimmered in elation as she said, "Don't worry, I know what to do. Give me more information about this beast."

"Alright...!"

## [Eternal Thief](#)

### **Chapter 459: Stirring the Eight Provinces!**

The very next day,

Inside the Blade Demon King's castle, the throne room.

Blade Demon King's eyes were filled with wrath and worry as he looked at the kneeling White Fire, who was still in his tatter appearance and broken armor.

"Y-you dare to escape while my son got taken away by some mindless shits?!" He bellowed in a fury.

He was extremely fond of his children, especially Peter, who was the youngest, and he inherited his personality the most.

Now he was hearing some mindless demons take him hostage and even force White Fire to escape for his life. How could he remain calm?

White Fire knew this would happen, so he was ready to receive any punishment, but it wasn't his fault entirely, and he knew his king wasn't an unreasonable person.

He said, "My King, I'm ready to receive any punishment. But I'm afraid there's someone behind those demons, and they took Prince and the other hostages for some other reason. If I haven't escaped, I would've been the same."

Blade Demon King's eyes shone with vexation. He knew White Fire was telling the truth, and he was loyal without question. But he still felt this was just too absurd, that those mindless demons could overpower White Fire.

Nevertheless, he had to deal with his son's matter first before White Fire.

He was about to stand up to go alone to that place to rescue his son when the throne hall door slammed open and Aura appeared with an ashen expression on his face.

"What now?!" Blade Demon King's expression sank further because he knew Aura would never barge into the throne hall like this if there wasn't something extremely important.

White Fire also sense something amiss when he saw Aura almost panting as if he was running at full speed.

Aura said nothing, and a scroll appeared in his hand and he handed it over to Blade Demon King, "Please look at this, my king."

Blade Demon King open the scroll with uncertainty, while White Fire looked curiously at Aura and the scroll in the demon king's hand, but he remained kneeling.

Blade Demon King's expression suddenly started to turn ashen as he read the context. In the end, his breath was rough as a sharp aura filled the entire throne hall.

He abruptly stood up and howled with abhorrence, "Ancient Beast Race, good, very good!"

Two days later,

Inside the cultivation chamber of Mist Demon King,

She also had a scroll and a map in her hands as they were trembling while the surrounding mist was becoming darker and darker.

"So, my son was killed by the ancient beast race member because he stumbled upon a Soul Crystal Source extracted by those animals!? If I go to this place marked on this map, I'll find the place where the Soul Crystal Source was extracted from.

"If it's true, I'll kill every last one of those animals!"

She quickly left her cultivation chamber and hurried toward the shadow mountain range to confirm that scroll's context.

Eight Days later.

The Eighth Province, which was the closest province to the royal zone, was known as the Mighty Demon Tamer Province, ruled by the Demon Tamer Tribe.

The Demon Tamer Tribe has a powerful demon tribe that can control demonic beasts, and all the exquisite and powerful demonic beasts present in the eight provinces were under their control.

Inside a bright, spacious hall,

A tall demon sat cross-legged as he looked at the scroll in his hand.

"So, an ancient beast with a royal bloodline is hiding and scheming against our race? Hmph, I was just thinking of going to those animals' land and taming one or two royal beasts to add to my collection.

"But they're counting death themselves. No one can blame me now. Little Fang, let's go to the blade domain in the council meeting. It's been a while since I saw Blade and others."

Just as his voice trailed off, a giant head beneath him opened its beastly snake eyes!

The first two outer provinces, 'Mighty Ghost Province, and Might Blood Province' the other two inner provinces, 'Might Earth Province, and Might Moon Province, and the seventh core province, 'Might Spear Province, Demon Kings and their strong aids were also summoned by the royal council in blade domain, shortly after they received the same scroll as every other domain.

All in all, because of this one scroll, the eight provinces were shaken because this scroll was from the All-Knowing Parrot, who was infamous nevertheless, a reliable information source.

If the contents on that scroll were true, then it was a huge conspiracy of the beast continent and if other races got the wind of it somehow, they would turn into the laughingstock of the world.

The content of these scrolls was further confirmed by two demon kings mentioned in them, and they were connected to this mysterious royal beast somehow.

It turned this way so quickly because Blade Demon King confirmed the appearance of that ruin where his son was abducted, and then Mist Demon King came forward to confirm the startling information, which made many cursed with anger.

It turned out there was a grade-4 soul crystal source in the shadow mountain, which was now entirely extracted by these beasts. She also confirmed the murder of her son when he discovered this soul crystal source by those beasts.

That was why the royal council quickly took notice of this and decided to act first and kill that beast to make a statement.

But a question remained unanswered: how did the All-Knowing Parrot get its hand on this startling information, and it was so precise they started to suspect this person was from the enemy camp?

Nevertheless, the All-Knowing Parrot was the least problem for the demons right now.

Because their entire focus was on this mysterious royal beast.

It was all because of a simple phrase in that scroll, 'That Beast is in the possession of an Ancient Demon Emperor Inheritance he found in that ruin!'

This stirred every demon king-level existence, and that was why they quickly agreed to this meeting in the blade domain. Because if this was true, then they had to capture that beast and get the inheritance.

However, nothing was confirmed until they see it for themselves, but just the chance was enough for them to move.

The masked demon and Killer have naturally seen these scrolls as well since they were contacted by the All-Knowing Parrot puppet as well.

Killer couldn't help but said with uncertainty, "Your Highness, are we going to that meeting in two days?"

The masked demon replied, "Of course, if an iota of that scroll is the truth, then we have to move. Forget about the inheritance. The presence of this royal beast is enough to declare war on those animals. It seemed they had forgotten about how we show mercy and let them live." His voice was filled with abhorrence for the ancient beast race.

Killer nodded, "Indeed, your highness, we can't let this offense slide by. But what if it really had the emperor-level inheritance?"

"If it's true, then we don't need that thief anymore. Heh, and who would dare to fight for it against me? Do you think those kings would be foolish enough to go against me?" He sneered without any hint of worry.

Killer's eyes shone coldly as he nodded, "Yes, but we have to be careful of this All-Knowing Parrot. We were searching for him for a while but haven't had any luck, but it knows where to find us instead. This person might be more dangerous than we think he is."

"Hmph, just a minor character who wanted to reap benefits in chaos by releasing this information. It's quite clear he can't deal with that barrier or the royal beast within, so he allows the information spread to others to do the job.

"But if his information turned out to be incorrect, then the entire continent bigwigs would turn on him, and at that time, he might come begging me for protection. Let me see if he remained arrogant at that time." He sneered coldly.

Killer bow in reverence, "Your Highness wisdom is indeed above us lowly servants."

"Go, tell the council I'll be attending this meeting personally and leading this charge in that ruin."

Killer received his order and left.

The masked demon was left alone, and suddenly he seemed to sense something as a golden cube appeared in his hand and he trembled slightly.

He mumbled with worry, "This is bad!"

The meeting place for this council meeting was none other than the outskirts of the White Hill Plains!

This place was chosen because Blade Demon King and Mist Demon King insist on going on doing this as soon as possible since their kin was involved.

They were also the first ones to arrive in this place before anyone else.

Following Blade Demon King were five blade envoys, including White Fire and five hundred powerful knights.

While the Mist Demon King was escorted by Six Misty Killers and a thousand train soldiers.

They all know about the army under this royal beast, so every demon king was bringing their powerful men!

### [Eternal Thief](#)

#### **Chapter 460: A New Demon King Candidate?**

On the same night,

Inside a spacious camp,

There were currently imposing demons sitting around a table, and every one of them had a scary aura around them. If anyone saw them together, they would be shocked silly because seven of them were the backbone of eight provinces, the Seven Demon Kings and only one was missing!

While the other five weren't as famous as the eight demon kings, but their authority wasn't a joke because they controlled the Royal Demon Council in eight provinces, they were none other than five high elders!

If other races know twelve manifestation realm cultivators were gathering together, they would have thought it was going to be a war.

Nevertheless, the atmosphere wasn't harmonized because these demon kings didn't get along with each other and rarely came in contact with.

However, the allure of the old demon emperor's inheritance was just too great for any one of them to reject that summons. Even if they didn't get any, they would've come on their own.

Blade Demon King broke the silence in an impatient tone. "What are we still waiting for?!"

High Elder Lora retorted as her pair of silver and golden eyeballs shone with hostility. "Just as impatient as ever!"

"I don't have time for you right now. My son was abducted by that animal and I didn't see the point of waiting anymore since we all are here!" He scoffed, completely ignoring Lora, which made her grit her teeth.

The burly demon with violet skin and sky-blue eyes spoke, "I agree with Blade Demon King. Our men are ready to storm that place." he had an icy demeanor, and he was the Moon Demon King from Might Moon Province.



This time, High Elder Crimson Flame replay amiably, "We know both Kings had valid reasons, but there's still someone missing and I don't think it's a good idea to leave that person behind."

A tall demon with an imposing demeanor sighed, "Let me guess, royal zone?"

He had a pair of crystal red bullhorns, his skin was crimson like blood, and his eyes were filled with bloodlust. He was the Blood Demon King from Mighty Blood Province.

A demon with ash pale skin curled his lips. He had a demonic face with ghost-like, empty eyes. "Indeed, we are waiting for our commander." There was a hint of ridicule in his voice.

He was the Ghost Demon King from Might Ghost Province, and he was also very ruthless because the Ghost Province was at the edge of the demon continent, and it was not relatively safe, as the other provinces were.

He wasn't there because he was weak, but because he was far more capable than anyone present to watch the front gate of the demon continent!

The Ghost Province had an excellent relationship with Blood Demon King because they were the closest and helped each other occasionally.

"Well, it can't be helped. How about we discuss the soul crystal source?" A brawny demon with sharp amber eyes and bronze skin spoke, drawing everyone's attention to the Mist Demon King, who was surrounded by dark mist.

He was the Spear Demon King of Mighty Spear Province.

Mist Demon King's melodious yet icy voice rang. "I have already told everyone what I found. There weren't any soul crystals left at that place, and it was completely absorbed. Even if there were soul crystals there, it won't be your turn to demand them."

Spear Demon King sneered, "I don't like your tone, Mist, even if you lose a son, this didn't give you the right to talk with your superior!"

Blade Demon King's expression turned frosty at this moment.

The Spear Demon King was the most arrogant of them all because he was the overseer of the seventh province and was also quite greedy.

He naturally wanted soul crystals, which were quite a rare commodity, and he won't let this chance slide by, even if Mist Demon King lost her son.

She was the only one in this room who received the map of that place, so this naturally arouse others' doubts. But no one was as direct as him.

The mist around Mist Demon King started to flutter as the cold aura surfaced. She was about to attack.

"That's enough." sharply spoke the high elder, with a three-centimeter diamond shape black gem embedded right between her eyebrows. She was called Grim Jade.

The black gem between her eyebrows shimmered in a faint dark light as the aura released by Mist Demon King vanished while the Spear Demon King who was scoffing, his expression changed as he caught up blood and looked at Grim Jade with anger and fear.

Grim Jade narrowed her eyes and warned, "We all know your nature, Spear, so don't provoke her, or I don't mind teaching you a lesson like old times."

"Hmph!" Spear Demon King harrumphed coldly but said nothing. He knew these High Elders weren't easy to trifle with, and only some of them were their match or stronger than those five.

"We should discuss this All-Knowing Parrot. Don't you all find it strange just how it had all this information and is so accurate at that?" A demon with brown skin and emerald eyes said in a doubtful tone.

He was the Earth Demon King of Might Earth Province, and he was the wisest of all demon kings.

Dark Hole replied, "We already did, but it hid its traces too well. As for those demons who delivered the scroll, they were just mortals with slave marks and according to them, they didn't even know who enslave them and when."

Earth Demon King's eyes shone brightly as his lips curled up. "That's why we should try another approach. How about offering him the title of Demon King?"

Everyone looked at Earth Demon King as if he was a fool.

How can a Demon King title be given to just anyone?

The first and foremost important threshold to become having a Manifestation Realm cultivation, which everyone knows was almost impossible, and the acknowledgment of the royal zone came afterward.

Although there were wild demon kings, they all deserve their titles.

As for All-Knowing Parrot, it was a ghost, and no one knows what kind of tribe it belonged to or how strong it was. So, the Earth Demon King's suggestion was more of a joke than something worth considering.

However, White Sword, who was silent for all this time, finally spoke with a hint of interest, "Please continue."

Now everyone looked at White Sword with doubtful eyes, but they didn't say anything. No one in eight provinces dared to go against or retort this demon, no one!

Earth Demon King said respectfully, "I think Senior White Sword had already noticed it. But I'll still be blunt and overstep my boundaries.

"Did any of you ever consider how this All-Knowing Parrot managed to create the biggest information network right under our noses? Not only do we have nothing on it, but we also didn't even know its gender.

"Don't you think this kind of person is worth having in the royal council? We have all been trying different approaches all this time, but those approaches have one thing in common: we were trying to find and control this fellow, right?"

"But we never try to recruit him even once, since we are too narrow-minded and blinded by small benefits. This person had the capability, and imagine if we provide him with ample resources and have him create such networks on other continents?"

Everyone's eyes lit up, they clearly understood what Earth Demon King was implying here.

Crimson Flame spoke with a hint of disbelief. "So, you want to create an ultimate spy?"

Earth Demon King nodded with a smile, "Yes. There wasn't a person like this before, but now there is, so there's no need to have a hostile relationship with it when it can be our strength, right?"

"Besides, I think this person had other intentions to disclose such information to us and not release it to the common public. Nonetheless, as long as it won't come in our way, why don't we reward him for this merit?"

White Fire nodded with a faint smile. "I have always heard rumors about Earth Demon King's wisdom, but witnessed it myself. I have to say, the rumors didn't come close to the real thing.

"Not only do we have a valid reason to reward this All-Knowing Parrot now, but if this royal beast was really a spy from the beast continent and in the possession of old Demon Emperor's inheritance, I don't know why we can't recommend him for a Demon King title."

Earth Demon King smiled and shake his head, "Senior, I know you must've thought the same. In the end, we all just thought about what is best for our race and this person is an asset."

The other also fell into deep thought. They couldn't help but admire Earth Demon King's judgment and also White Fire, who was willing to look at the bigger picture.

Right at this moment, a haughty voice sounded, "I hope we are not late for this party!"